

**PRESS RELEASE**4TH JUNE, 2024**TRANSFER OF VOTES- OBSERVANCE BY POLITICAL PARTY AGENTS**

On Sunday 2nd June, 2024 the Electoral Commission issued a directive to its Regional Directorate that, **in view of the clashes occurring at some of the District Offices**, Regional Directors should inform District Officers to discontinue the observation of the Transfer of Votes Exercise by Agents of Political Parties, effective Monday 3rd June, 2024.

The Commission has taken note of reactions of some stakeholders regarding the above directive and wishes to address the General Public as follows:

1. During the last meeting of the Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) preceding the Transfer of Votes Exercise, the Commission took the view that in the spirit of enhancing transparency, the Agents of Political Parties should be allowed to **OBSERVE** the Transfer of Votes Exercise. This was a departure from past Transfer Exercises where Agents of Political Parties were not allowed to **OBSERVE** the Exercise. The Commission was of the view that their observation would further deepen the trust and confidence in the electoral process, hence the decision to allow them even though the Law was silent on this.
2. The Commission places on record that unlike the Voters Registration Exercise and the actual Election Day where the law expressly provides for Political Party Agents to be present at Registration Centres and at all Polling Stations, no such provisions are made in the law for Political Parties to **OBSERVE** the Transfer of Votes. The Commission's decision to allow Political Party Agents to **OBSERVE** the ongoing Transfer of Votes Exercise is part of its efforts to deepen transparency, accountability and to encourage peaceful electoral processes ahead of the 2024 General Election.
3. After the Exercise commenced on the 30th of May, 2024 the Commission received reports of clashes between Agents of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The clashes stemmed from the fact that Agents of both Political Parties sought to unlawfully prevent Voters from transferring their votes at some of the District Offices.

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4. The General Public must understand that the law does not grant any right or authority whatsoever to an **OBSERVER** of any of our electoral processes to interfere with our work. Per law, **OBSERVERS** are to take a record of any issue they may have and deal with it through available legal or administrative processes. This is the same system that governs the Voters Registration Exercise. In that, **OBSERVERS** cannot prevent any Applicant from being registered as a Voter. They can however challenge the registration of the Applicant through the challenge process embedded in the law by applying to the District Registration Review Committees (DRRC) set up in all Districts to review the challenge cases from the Voters Registration Exercise.
5. Similarly, where Political Party Agents, as **OBSERVERS**, have any issue with the Transfer of Votes of any particular voter, the lawful thing to do is to use the window of the Voters Exhibition Exercise to object to a Voter's name on the Voters Register, on the grounds that the Applicant is not resident or ordinarily resident in the area where he/she intends to vote. (Regulation 23(2)(c) of the Public Elections (Registration of Voters) Regulations, 2016 (C.I. 91)).
6. The exercise to Transfer Votes is governed by Regulation 22 of the Public Elections Regulations, 2020 (C.I. 127). Regulation 22 does not provide Political Party Agents or any other **OBSERVERS** with the right to prevent Voters who apply to transfer their votes under the law. The Commission would like to repeat: Political Party Agents do **NOT** have any right or authority under the law to prevent a Voter who wants to transfer his/her vote under Regulation 22 of C.I. 127.
7. The Political Parties are well aware that one can object to a Voter's eligibility, **on the grounds of residency**, during the Voters Exhibition Exercise, and **NOT** during the Transfer of Votes Exercise. The Commission therefore finds the blatant interference with its processes by the Agents of the NPP and the NDC unacceptable.
8. Following internal discussions and in consideration of the concerns of some stakeholders, the Commission has decided to revert to its decision made at IPAC. The Commission has directed its Officers at the Districts to allow Agents of Political Parties to **OBSERVE** the Transfer of Votes Exercise with effect from tomorrow Wednesday, 5th June, 2024.



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9. We strongly urge the Agents of Political Parties to abide by the rules and refrain from any form of interference which could lead to violence as witnessed over the last few days.
10. We urge the leaders of the Political Parties to educate their Agents on the Commission's laws prior to assigning them duties as Observers of the various electoral activities.
11. The Commission will not hesitate to request the withdrawal of Agents who disrupt the Transfer process.

We emphasize that the directive to withdraw Agents from the Transfer Exercise was as a result of threats to our Nation's peace stemming from the actions of Political Party Agents at our District Offices. The Commission's decision was not to shield our work from scrutiny, neither was it to promote the interest of a particular Political Party.

The Electoral Commission would like to assure the General Public that it is committed to the principles of transparency and fairness. We reiterate that transparency and accountability remain the hallmark of all our activities, hence our decision to allow the Political Parties to observe the Transfer of Votes Exercise.

We call on the public to ignore statements seeking to suggest that the Commission is working for a particular political interest. This is not true.

Decisions of the Commission are made without partisan considerations. This is evident in all our operations. The Commission's decisions are cross cutting and apply to all Political Parties and stakeholders. They are for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Thank you.

ELECTION 2024: YOUR VOTE, YOUR FUTURE

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fred Tetteh', written over a horizontal line.

FRED TETTEH

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, RESEARCH, MONITORING AND EVALUATION