



SPEECH BY THE  
MINISTER FOR STATE PRESIDENT,  
DEFENCE AND SECURITY

**HONOURABLE MOETI CAESAR MOHWASA**

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

ORGANISATION 1600

**INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION**

**10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2026**



**Mr. Chairman**

**Honourable Members of Parliament**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

- 1. Mr. Chairman,** it is my pleasure this afternoon, to present the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)'s Recurrent and Development Budget proposals for the 2026/2027 financial year, for consideration and approval by this Honorable Committee.
- 2. Mr. Chairman,** this budget serves as a significant primary economic policy tool, which translates planning into actionable funding. It is also meant to ensure continuity in the provision of electoral services. I am therefore, hopeful that despite the economic adversities we are experiencing as a country, my Honourable colleagues will still find it prudent to provide the IEC with sufficient funding for them to be able to deliver on their constitutional obligations.
- 3. Mr. Chairman,** the IEC's 2026/2027 financial year budget proposals are aligned to the Twelfth National Development Plan (NDP 12) and Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP). This comes at an opportune time when the Commission is finalizing its Five-Year Strategic Plan, focusing on planning for the next five (5) years of the Electoral Cycle, following successful delivery of the General Elections in 2024.
- 4. Mr. Chairman,** inevitably, the IEC has to align its strategic commitments with the approved NDP 12 and BETP, and undertake

reforms to enhance citizen participation in the electoral process, as well as delivering on its overall constitutional mandate. This is important because as an Election Management Body, the IEC operates within ever-changing ecological realities characterised by shifting stakeholders' expectations, and requiring continuous improvement.

- 5. Mr. Chairman,** as a precursor to a presentation of the budget proposals, I would like to provide a synopsis of some of the achievements and challenges encountered by the Election Management Body (EMB) during the 2025/2026 financial year.

## **II. OVERVIEW OF THE PERFORMANCE DURING 2025/2026 FINANCIAL YEAR**

- 6. Mr. Chairman,** consequent to successful delivery of the General Elections in 2024, the IEC complied with Section 65A (13) of the Constitution of the Republic of Botswana, which requires the Commission to submit a report to the Minister on the conduct of such elections. I laid the report before this National Assembly on the 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2025. The same report has been widely distributed to various key stakeholders such as political parties; the media; Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Civic Society Organisations.

- 7.** In a similar vein, the IEC evaluated the 2024 General Elections through a National Stakeholders Evaluation Workshop held in May 2025. The

evaluation drew participants from key stakeholders such as representatives from Political Parties, Non-Governmental Organisations, Faith Based Organisations, People with Disabilities, Youth, Media, and poll staff, and came up with conclusions and recommendations on legal and administrative issues. The report arising from the evaluation exercise has been finalized and will be printed and distributed to all the stakeholders during the first quarter of the 2026/2027 financial year. More importantly, the evaluation of elections is a good governance practice which seeks to strengthen inclusivity, transparency and restore trust and credibility of the electoral processes.

**8. Mr. Chairman,** I must also highlight that after the elections in 2024, the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) extended an invitation to the IEC with a proposal for co-hosting an international symposium on electoral management in Gaborone. The ICPS is a research institution of the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN), based in London, though they have regional offices in Mauritius and Brussels. The organization exists to promote effective policy making and good governance through better interface between Parliaments, Governments and other stakeholders in society.

**9. Mr. Chairman,** the symposium was subsequently co-hosted by the IEC and the ICPS in Gaborone from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2025. This accorded Botswana through the IEC, a great opportunity not only to showcase the country's impressive strides in the arena of electoral management, but strengthened the commitment to enhancing

democratic governance globally. In this respect, the IEC shared its experience in managing and conducting the 2024 General Elections with participants from around the world.

- 10.** Moreover, the co-hosting of the symposium highlighted our country's leadership in electoral governance, whilst simultaneously providing a platform to engage with global electoral leaders and shape the future of democracy.
- 11. Mr. Chairman,** during the same reporting period, the IEC successfully delivered two by-elections: one at Kgalagadi South Constituency and the other at Moreomaoto Polling District in the Boteti West Constituency, held on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and 6<sup>th</sup> December 2025 respectively. Both of them fell vacant following the passing on of incumbent Member of Parliament and Councilor, respectively.
- 12. Mr. Chairman,** a total of 11,889 voters out of 18,456 registered voters for Kgalagadi South Constituency managed to cast their vote. This translated to a voter turnout of about 64%, which is less than the 81% recorded in the 2024 General Elections. The IEC believes that, had there been no rains on the day of the poll, the voter turnout would have been higher for the by-election.
- 13.** Similarly, a total of 471 voters out of 545 registered voters for Moreomaoto Polling District participated in the by-election. This translated to a voter turnout of 86%, increasing from the 84% recorded

in the 2024 General Elections. This voter participation rate was an encouraging development that the IEC will strive to maintain in the future.

- 14. Mr. Chairman,** I am also happy to give the assurance that those who were engaged for both by-elections were paid on time. In particular, a total of **262** out of **660** people engaged were paid in December 2025, whilst the remaining **398** including **217** Police Officers, were processed and submitted to Accountant General to be paid in the January 2026 payroll.
- 15. Mr. Chairman,** it also pleases me greatly to report that the IEC has successfully designed and installed a new Elections Management System. The old system had become obsolete with time. This is the system the Commission uses to manage huge electoral data. The new system has more capacity, as well as improved security and workflow features. The IEC has also completed migration of data from the old system to the new system.
- 16. Mr. Chairman,** as part of advance preparations for the General Elections in 2029, and at the same time addressing some of the issues raised by stakeholders during the evaluation of the 2024 General Elections, the IEC has just opened an office at Lerala, utilizing the offices of the Department of Broadcasting and Information Services there. The IEC has been operating and offering electoral services to their customers there since the 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2026.

- 17. Mr. Chairman,** other places targeted for opening of IEC offices include Sefhare and Mabutsane. Sefhare would be opened by end of April 2026, whilst Mabutsane would also be opened by end of June 2026, both after completion of procurement processes relating to office space and other requirements. Thereafter, the focus will be on Thamaga and Shoshong, to decongest IEC offices at Mogoditshane and Mahalapye respectively. The two would be opened by end of December, 2026. Now, what the IEC is doing is commendable and very much in sync with their strategy of bringing electoral services closer to communities. Our hope is that this would improve voters' participation rate in electoral processes.
- 18. Mr. Chairman,** from the 12<sup>th</sup> January to the 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2026, and from the 18<sup>th</sup> February to the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2026, the IEC conducted supplementary voters' registration exercises at all the 61 constituencies. This was an opportunity for Batswana who for any particular reasons, were not registered to vote at the close of the voters' registration period in May 2024, to register. A total of 949 voters registered during this period, with 755 registering from the 12<sup>th</sup> January to the 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2026, while 194 registered from the 18<sup>th</sup> February to the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2026. I urge Batswana to always take advantage of these openings to register as voters because it is both their constitutional right and a civic responsibility.

**19. Mr. Chairman,** zeroing in on some of the challenges the EMB encountered during the reporting period, shortage of office and staff residential accommodation remained unresolved. However, the IEC's purpose-built head office will be constructed during the 2026/2027 financial year. This will come as a package with some residential houses for the staff. Although this will be a drop in the ocean, it would assist greatly.

**20. Mr. Chairman,** I wish to also reiterate that the need for reforms regarding the laws governing the conduct and management of elections in Botswana remains a priority to the Government. Once the Constitution of the Republic of Botswana has been reviewed comprehensively, subsidiary legislations such as the Electoral Act would be reviewed as well, to create the necessary alignment and address issues of transparency in electoral processes.

### **III. 2026/2027 BUDGET PROPOSALS**

**21. Mr. Chairman,** at this point, allow me to present the 2026/2027 proposed Budget Estimates for "Organization 1600 – Independent Electoral Commission", to this Honourable Committee.

**22.** To that end, I propose a total of **Four Hundred and Thirty-Nine Million, Four Hundred and Thirty-Six Thousand, Five Hundred and Ninety Pula (P439,436,590)** for both Recurrent and Development Budget Estimates. This comprises of **One Hundred and Two Million, Five Hundred and Sixty-Five Thousand, Nine**

**Hundred and Fifty Pula (P102,565,950)** for the Recurrent Budget and **Three Hundred and Thirty-Six Million, Eight Hundred and Seventy Thousand, Six Hundred and Forty Pula (P336,870,640)** for the Development Budget.

#### **A. Recurrent Budget**

- 23. Mr. Chairman,** I propose a total Recurrent Budget of **One Hundred and Two Million, Five Hundred and Sixty-Five Thousand, Nine Hundred and Fifty Pula (P102,565,950)** for the 2026/2027 financial year. This represents a decrease of **Two Million, Three Hundred and Twenty-Seven Thousand, Nine Hundred and Eighty Pula (P2,327,980)** or **2.2%** from the 2025/2026 approved budget of **One Hundred and Four Million, Eight Hundred and Ninety-Three Thousand, Nine Hundred and Thirty Pula (P104,893,930)**.

The major cost drivers that comprise this budget proposal include the following:

#### **24. Parent Account 00110 – Salaries and Allowances**

**Mr. Chairman,** under this item, I request for **Seventy Million, Seven Hundred and Sixty-Six Thousand, Five Hundred and Sixty Pula (P70,766,560)**. This represents an increase of **Three Million, Three Hundred and Twenty-Four Thousand, Four Hundred and Twenty Pula (P3,324,420)** or **4.9 %** over the 2025/2026 approved budget of **Sixty-Seven Million, Four Hundred and Forty-Two Thousand, One Hundred and Forty Pula (P67,442,140)**. The increase is

attributable mainly to increase in housing and upkeep allowances as part of Government initiatives to attain the P4, 000.00 living wage.

**25. Parent Account 00160 – Pensions, Gratuities and Compensations**

**Mr. Chairman,** a total amount of **One Million, Ninety-Two Thousand, and Ninety Pula (P1,092,090)** is requested here, to cover gratuities for contract officers, whose contracts expire through effluxion of time during the 2026/2027 financial year.

**26. Parent Account 00200 – Travelling and Transport (Internal)**

**Mr. Chairman,** under this item, I request for an allocation of **Two Million, One Hundred and Twenty-Two Thousand, Two Hundred Pula (P2,122,200)**. This represents a decrease of **One Million, One Hundred and Twelve Thousand, and Thirteen Pula (P1,112,013)** or **34.4 %** from the 2025/2026 financial year approved provision of **Three Million, Two Hundred and Thirty-Four Thousand, Two Hundred and Thirteen Pula (P3,234,213)**. The funds will cater for local travel and subsistence costs, petrol, oil and lubricants. The decrease is explicable in terms of cost containment initiatives to be implemented by the IEC, such as the use of virtual platforms to reduce travel and lodging costs.

**27. Parent Account 00300 – Travelling and Transport (External)**

**Mr. Chairman,** I request for an allocation of **Four Hundred and Fifty-Five Thousand Pula (P455,000)**. This figure represents a decrease of **Five Hundred and Eighty-Eight Thousand, Seven Hundred and Seventy-One Pula (P588,771)** or **56.4%** from the 2025/2026 financial year approved provision of **One Million, Forty-Three Thousand, Seven Hundred and Seventy-One Pula (P1, 043,771)**. This will cover travel and subsistence costs requirements for external official trips.

**28. Parent Account 00400 – General Expenses and Supplies**

**Mr. Chairman,** an amount of **Eleven Million, Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand, and Fifty Pula (P11,250,050)** is requested under this item, representing a decrease of **One Million, Four Hundred and Forty-Three Thousand, Eight Hundred and Sixty Pula (P1, 443,860)** or **11.4%** from the 2025/2026 approved budget of **Twelve Million, Six Hundred and Ninety-Three Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ten Pula (P12,693,910)**. The funds will cater for among others, postal charges, service charges including utilities, uniforms and protective clothing, and printing of election materials for by-elections, if any.

**29. Parent Account 00500 – Departmental Services**

**Mr. Chairman,** for this account I request for **Eleven Million, Four Hundred and Twenty-Eight Thousand, Nine Hundred and**

**Seventy Pula (P11,428,970)**, representing a decrease of **Five Hundred and One Thousand, Four Hundred and Seventy-One Pula (P501,471)** or **4.2%** from the 2025/2026 approved budget of **Eleven Million, Nine Hundred and Thirty Thousand, Four Hundred and Forty-One Pula (P11,930,441)**. The funds will be used for office and warehouse rentals.

**30. Parent Account 00700 – Maintenance and Running Expenses (Equipment)**

**Mr. Chairman**, under this budgetary item, I would like to request for **One Million, Eight Hundred and Seventeen Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ten Pula (P1,817,910)**. This represents a decrease of **Five Hundred and Two Thousand, One Hundred and Ninety Pula (P502,190)** or **21.6%** from the 2025/2026 approved budget of **Two Million, Three Hundred and Twenty Thousand, One Hundred Pula (P2,320,100)**. The funds will be used for maintenance services for recording and visual aid equipment, computer systems and consumables, vehicle spare parts and general maintenance of the IEC's fleet.

**31. Parent Account 00800 – Maintenance and Running Expenses (Others)**

**Mr. Chairman**, for this account I request for **Six Hundred and Three Thousand, Five Hundred Pula (P603,500)**. This represents a decrease of **One Hundred and Sixteen Thousand, Five Hundred**

**Pula (P116,500) or 16.2 %** from the 2025/2026 approved budget of **Seven Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pula (P720,000)**. The funds will be used for minor works and maintenance of district offices and institutional staff houses, and grounds.

### **32. Parent Account 01100 – Government Hospitality**

**Mr. Chairman,** for this account I request for **Fifteen Thousand Pula (P15, 000)** only. This figure is the same as the 2025/2026 approved budget. The funds will be used to cater for hospitality activities for the visitors to the IEC.

### **33. Parent Account 01200 – Training**

**Mr. Chairman,** under this budgetary item, I request for **Three Hundred and Eighty-Four Thousand, Two Hundred and Forty Pula (P384, 240)**. This represents a decrease of **Four Thousand, and Eighty-Nine Pula (P4,089) or 1.1%** from the 2025/2026 approved budget of **Three Hundred and Eighty-Eight Thousand, Three Hundred and Twenty-Nine Pula (P388, 329)**. The funds will cater for various skills enhancement short-term courses and performance management activities.

### **34. Parent Account 01300 – Councils, Conferences and Exhibitions**

**Mr. Chairman,** for this item I request for the sum of **One Million, Six Hundred and Sixteen Thousand, Three Hundred and Thirty Pula**

**(P1,616,330)**. This represents a decrease of **Eight Thousand, Six Hundred and Seventy Pula (P8,670)** or **0.5%** from the 2025/2026 approved budget of **One Million, Six Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand Pula (P1,625,000)**. The funds will cater for Commissioners' sitting allowances, quarterly retainer fees and workshops and seminars.

**35. Parent Account 01700 – Grants, Subventions and Other Payments**

**Mr. Chairman,** for this account I request for an allocation of **Five Hundred and Two Thousand, Six Hundred and Eighty Pula (P502,680)**. This figure is almost the same as the 2025/2026 approved budget. The funds will be used to meet costs associated with workmen's compensation and annual subscription to the Electoral Commissions Forum for SADC Countries (ECF-SADC).

**36. Parent Account 04300 – Special Expenditure**

**Mr. Chairman,** for this account, I request for **Five Hundred and Eleven Thousand, Four Hundred and Twenty Pula (P511,420)**. This represents an increase of **One Hundred and Forty-Six Thousand, Four Hundred and Twenty Pula (P146,420)** or **40.1%** from the 2025/2026 approved budget of **Three Hundred and Sixty-Five Thousand Pula (P365,000)**. The funds will be utilised for acquisition of new furniture and equipment, and replacement of computers for employees of the IEC.

## **B. Development Budget**

- 37. Mr. Chairman,** for the Development Budget, I request a total of **Three Hundred and Thirty-Six Million, Eight Hundred and Seventy Thousand, Six Hundred and Forty Pula (P336,870,640)**. This budget will cater for the ongoing Review of Electoral Processes project estimated at **Fifty Million Pula (P50,000,000)**. As indicated in my presentation to this Honourable Committee last year, the project involves installation of electronic voter registration systems and may straddle two or three financial years due to its technical complexities.
- 38. Mr. Chairman,** a total amount of **Eleven Million, Six Hundred and Ninety-Two Thousand Pula (P11,692,000)** will also be used for the construction of new office block and staff houses at Bobonong, as well as staff houses at Shakawe. The bulk of the budget will be allocated towards facilitation of an anticipated National Referendum on the establishment of a Constitutional Court at an estimate of **Two Hundred and Seventy-Five Million, One Hundred and Seventy-Eight Thousand, Six Hundred and Forty Pula (P275,178,640)**.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

**39. Mr. Chairman,** this concludes my budget proposals for **Organisation 1600 – Independent Electoral Commission**. I now request that a total of **One Hundred and Two Million, Five Hundred and Sixty-Five Thousand, Nine Hundred and Fifty Pula (P102,565,950)** for the Recurrent Budget and **Three Hundred and Thirty-Six Million, Eight Hundred and Seventy Thousand, Six Hundred and Forty Pula (P336,870,640)** under the Development Budget Estimates, be approved and stand as part of the schedule of the Appropriation Bill 2026/27.

**40.** I move accordingly, thank you **Mr Chairman**.