

Churches seek probe of Zimbabwe elections: Widespread irregularities

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The All Africa Council of Churches has called on the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to “urgently” investigate claims of irregularities in Zimbabwe’s March 31 parliamentary elections. The election gave President Robert Mugabe’s ruling ZANU-PF Party an overwhelming victory, including the two-thirds majority it needed to amend the constitution at will. The opposition Movement for Democratic Change has charged that the election was marked by widespread fraud, fear and intimidation.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice accused Mugabe of policies “designed to repress, crush and otherwise stifle expressions of differences in Zimbabwe.” In its own report on the election the U.S. embassy in Harare said its monitoring of the vote found “several patterns of irregularities that raised concern about the freeness and fairness of the process.”