

SOUTH AFRICA

Date of Elections: 6 May 1987

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in the House of Assembly following the premature dissolution of this body on 27 February 1987*.

Characteristics of Parliament

Since 3 September 1984**, South Africa has had a tricameral Parliament consisting of the House of Assembly (for Whites), the House of Representatives (for the country's Coloured (mixed-race) community) and the House of Delegates (for the Indian community).

The House of Assembly is composed of 178 members. Of these, 166 are elected for 5 years. Of the remaining 12 members, 4 (one for each province) are nominated by the State President and 8 are elected by the 166 popularly-chosen members according to the principle of proportional representation, each voter having one transferable vote.

The House of Representatives comprises 85 members - 80 elected for 5 years, 2 nominated by the State President and 3 elected by the popularly-chosen members according to proportional representation, each voter having one transferable vote.

The House of Delegates has 45 members - 40 elected for 5 years, 2 nominated by the State President and 3 elected by the 40 popularly-chosen members according to proportional representation, each voter having one transferable vote.

Electoral System

In order to be eligible to register as a voter for a particular House in an electoral division, a person must be a South African citizen at least 18 years of age and his ordinary place of residence must be situated within the Republic. He must, in addition, be of sound mind. Persons convicted of treason (after 1950) and murder, as well as certain persons convicted of corrupt or illegal practices under the Electoral Act, of offences under the Internal Security Act, 1982, or of any other offence in respect of which imprisonment has been imposed, without the option of a fine, as well as persons convicted for certain offences under the Abuse of Dependence-Producing Substances and Rehabilitation Centres Act, 1971, are not entitled to registration.

Voters' lists are compiled from the population register and are amended from time to time by comparing them with this same register. Voting is not compulsory.

* See "General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections", below.

** See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and Developments J/IT* (1984-1985), pp. 15-16.

In order to be eligible to stand as a candidate for a House, it is necessary to be an 18-year-old South African citizen who has resided for at least five years within the territory of the Republic, and to belong to the race group represented in the House concerned.

Unrehabilitated insolvents, persons declared of unsound mind by a competent court, certain persons holding an office of profit under the Republic, as well as certain persons who have at one time been sentenced to imprisonment for at least 12 months without the option of a fine, are ineligible to be candidates for Parliament.

Nominations must be supported by two electors (proposer and seconder) from the division concerned. Nominations of candidates representing a political party are accepted only if these are official candidatures and if a deposit of 500 *rand* has been made per candidate. Candidates of a political party with no seat in Parliament or independent candidates must provide a statement signed by at least 300 voters supporting their candidatures, and make a deposit of 500 *rand* per candidate, which is forfeited if the candidate polls less than one-fifth of the number of votes obtained by the successful candidate in his division.

Members of Parliament in each of the 286 single-member constituencies (166 for the House of Assembly, 80 for the House of Representatives and 40 for the House of Delegates) are elected by simple majority. Electors vote for a single candidate to the exclusion of all others.

By-elections are held to fill elective parliamentary seats which become vacant between general elections.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The new tricameral Parliament came into operation on 3 September 1984. No elections were held at that time for the House of Assembly, which had last been chosen on 29 April 1981. Under Section 102(4) of the Constitution Act, 1983, the existing members of that House on the date when the new Constitution came into operation were "deemed to have been duly elected or nominated" under the new Act. For all three Houses, the normal term of five years therefore ran from September 1984 and the House of Assembly's dissolution in 1987 was consequently a premature one.

The polling date was announced by President of the Republic P.W. Botha on 30 January 1987, and the premature dissolution justified by the considerable time lapse since the previous Assembly elections and the large number of new voters.

During the three-month campaign, debate centered on the maintenance of internal security as well as reform issues. Nominations closed on 31 March. A record 478 candidates ran for the 166 seats at stake.

On polling day, the ruling National Party (NP), while being returned with an increased majority, lost a significant number of seats to the Conservative Party (CP). With the losses sustained by the liberal Progressive Federal Party (PFP), the NP is for the first time faced with an official opposition (CP) that is right-wing.

President Botha opened the new session of Parliament on 19 May.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats
in the House of Assembly

Number of registered electors.	3,053,417
Voters.	2,058,036*
Blank or void ballot papers.	15,782
Valid votes.	2,042,254

* Results apply to contested seats.

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained		Number of Seats	Number of Seats held prior to Dissolution	Number of Seats won at Previous Elections
National Party (NP)	164	1,075,642	52.26	123	111	131
Conservative Party (CP)	126	574,502	26.60	22	16	
Progressive Federal Party (PFP)	80	288,579	14.02	19	26	26
Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP)	86	62,888	3.06		1	
New Republic Party (NRP)	14	40,494	1.97	1	5	X
Independents	8	27,149	1.32	1		
				166*	159	165

* Popularly-elected members only. The breakdown of all 178 Assembly seats was as follows: NP 133, CP 23, PFP 20, NRP 1 and 1 Independent.

2. *Distribution of popularly-elected Members of Parliament according to Professional Category*

	<i>House of Assembly</i>	<i>House of Representatives</i>	<i>House of Delegates</i>
Legal profession . . .	42	2	3
Farmers	33	1	2
Businessmen	23	18	12
Politicians	16	2	—
Company directors . .	15	9	8
Lecturers	11	1	—
Teachers	6	22	7
Doctors	5	1	1
Clergy	4	2	—
Engineers	3	—	—
Insurance consultants	—	4	—
Artisans	—	3	—
Factory managers . . .	—	2	—
Estate agents	—	—	2
Others	8	11	4
	166	78*	39**

Plus two vacancies.

Plus one vacancy.

3. *Distribution of popularly-elected Members of Parliament according to Sex*

	<i>House of Assembly</i>	<i>House of Representatives</i>	<i>House of Delegates</i>
Men	162	75	39
Women	4	3	—
	166	78*	39**

* Plus two vacancies.

** Plus one vacancy.

4. Distribution of popularly-elected Members of Parliament according to Age Group

	<i>House of Assembly</i>	<i>House of Representatives</i>	<i>House of Delegates</i>
20-29 years.	2	2	—
30-39 »	16	14	2
40-49 »	64	17	X
50-59 »	65	25	14
60 and over.	19	20	15
	166	78*	39 [†]

* Plus two vacancies.

** Plus one vacancy.