

TOWARDS THE 13TH PARLIAMENT



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

PARLIAMENT

The word "Parliament" comes from the word "Parley," meaning to speak. It is here that the voices of all people of Botswana are heard through their Parliamentarians. Parliament exists to make laws, represent the people, and exercise oversight functions. It is made up of the National Assembly and Ntlo ya Dikgosi.

The Ntlo ya Dikgosi is an advisory body to the National Assembly in terms of Section 85 of the Constitution of Botswana.

COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The National Assembly comprises of the President and Members of the National Assembly. There are **61 Elected Members**, who are directly elected by the people of Botswana at a General Election to represent the 61 national Parliamentary Constituencies; six **(6) Specially Elected Members** of Parliament, who are elected in accordance with the First Schedule to the Constitution of Botswana; His Excellency, the President, as an ex-officio member with full rights to participate in all proceedings of the National Assembly, and the Speaker of the National Assembly who shall be elected from persons who are not Elected Members of the National Assembly.

BOTSWANA'S ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Botswana has adopted a multiparty democracy under the single member constituency plurality, or first-past-the-post electoral system. A voter is entitled to one vote in any election. In each Constituency or Polling District, a candidate who gains most votes over others wins an election regardless of the margin between candidates. Ordinarily, Botswana's electoral cycle is 5 years counted from the first sitting of the National Assembly after any dissolution.

Parliamentary and Local Government elections are held simultaneously every other 5 years. By-elections are conducted every time a National Assembly or local government post falls vacant. The nominated presidential candidate of a political party declared as President will be the candidate whose party has majority (more than half) of seats in the National Assembly.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Dissolution of Parliament

The 12th Parliament was dissolved on the 05 September, 2024 by His Excellency the President in accordance with Section 91 (2) of the Constitution of Botswana.

Dissolution of Parliament means every seat in Parliament, except for those of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker becomes vacant. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker continue in office until when the Assembly first sits after the dissolution of Parliament.

General Elections

The date for General Elections is determined by His Excellency the President. The 2024 General Elections will be held on the 30th of October, 2024.

Inauguration of the newly elected President

The date for inauguration is determined by the President Elect, in consultation with the Chief Justice. The Chief Justice, who, in terms of Section 38 (1) of the Constitution of Botswana, is the returning officer for purposes of the elections to the Office of the President, shall then declare such person as President whom support has been declared by not less than half the total number of persons elected as **Members (31 persons)** of the National Assembly in the election year (see Section 32 (3) (d) Constitution of Botswana).

Election of the Specially Elected Members of Parliament

Section 58 (2) (b) of the Constitution of Botswana creates six (6) positions of Specially Elected Members of Parliament. Therefore, as soon as practicable after a General Election of the Elected Members of the National Assembly and before the first meeting after that General Election, the Speaker shall cause for the election of Members to these six (6) positions. The elections are guided by the procedure laid out in the First Schedule to the Constitution of Botswana.

The 1st Meeting of the 1st Session of the 13th Parliament

In terms of Section 90 (3) of the Constitution of Botswana, it is expected that a 1st Meeting of a newly elected Parliament shall commence within 30 days of a general election. In this regard, it is therefore expected that His Excellency, will, by way of Proclamation nominate a date for the 1st Meeting of the 1st Session of the 13th Parliament and the public shall be notified of this date by publication of this Proclamation and the Government Gazette.

Swearing-in of newly Elected Members of Parliament

Before any Member of the National Assembly takes their seat in the National Assembly, Section 71 of the Constitution of Botswana requires that they take and subscribe to an Oath of Allegiance.

The Clerk of the National Assembly administers the taking of the oath.

Election of the Speaker of the 13th Parliament

Once Members of Parliament have been sworn in, they elect the Speaker. The Clerk of the National Assembly presides over the election of a new Speaker in accordance with Section 59 of the Constitution and Standing Order No .4. In accordance with the Standing Orders, the names of candidates for election to the office of Speaker shall be entered upon nomination papers obtained from and handed to the Clerk of the National Assembly at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time appointed, at which the House is to meet to elect the Speaker, and shall be accompanied in each case by the signatures of five (5) Members who support the candidate and a declaration by the candidate that he or she is willing to serve, if elected.

The Speaker, as with the Members of the National Assembly, is required in terms of Section 71 to, before assuming the duties of his or her office, take and subscribe to the Oath of Allegiance.

Election of the Deputy Speaker

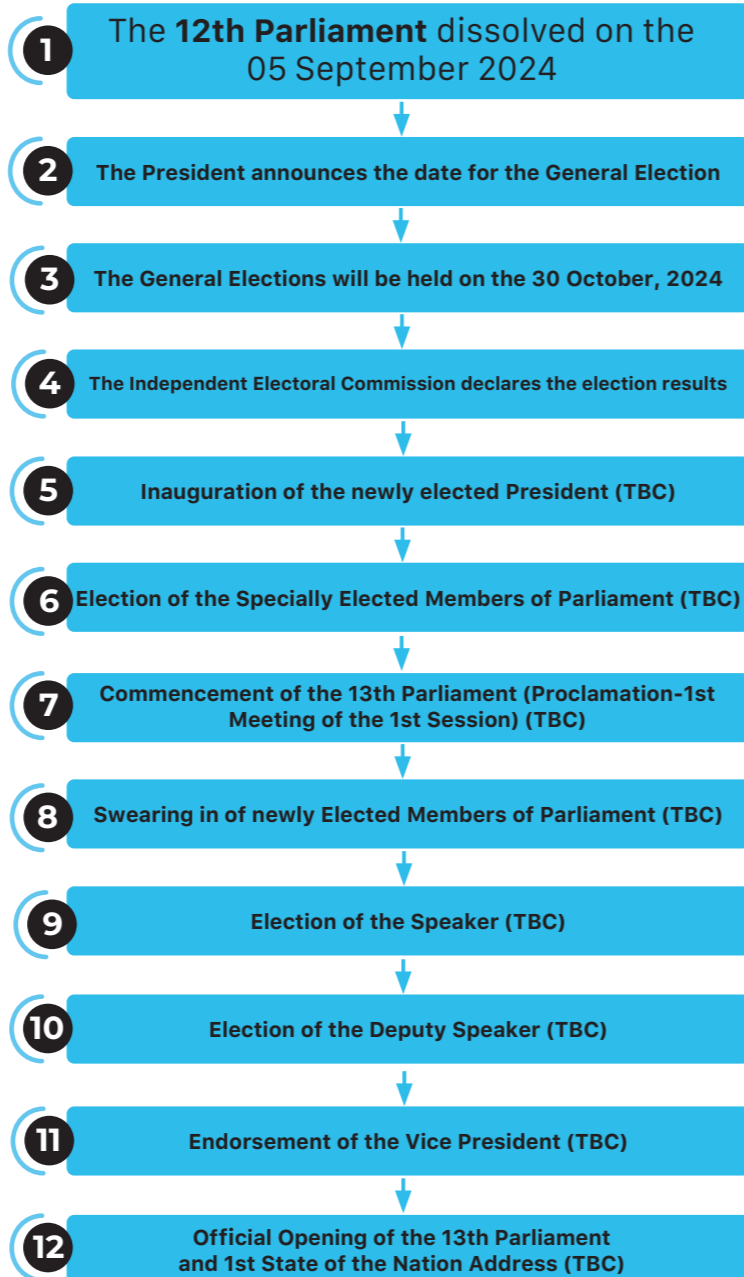
The position of the Deputy Speaker is created by Section 60 of the Constitution of Botswana. As with the Speaker, elections to this position shall take place at the 1st Meeting of the National Assembly after the General Elections. The procedure to be followed in electing the Deputy Speaker is exactly as that of the election of the Speaker described above except that these are now presided over by the newly appointed Speaker.

Endorsement of the Vice President

The Vice President is appointed by the President, in terms of Section 39 (1) of the Constitution, from among the elected Members of the National Assembly who are citizens of Botswana by birth or descent, and the appointment shall be endorsed by the elected Members of the National Assembly, in terms of the procedure outlined in the provisions of the Parliamentary Standing Order No. 6.

Official Opening of the 13th Parliament

When officially opening a new Parliament, His Excellency the President delivers the first State of the Nation Address to set the tone for Government activities during the five (5) year term of the 13th Parliament.



Key: To Be Communicated (TBC)



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