

Registered Overseas Voters Can Vote

Written by Rudi Prinsloo

Saturday, 14 March 2009 01:11 -



The Constitutional Court ruled on Thursday that registered voters living overseas can vote for the national assembly in the April 22 elections.

They must notify the chief electoral officer of their intention to vote by March 27, the court ordered.

Handing down the first of two separate judgments Justice Kate O'Regan said the right to vote had a symbolic and democratic value.

This follows an application by the Freedom Front Plus on behalf of a Pretoria school teacher working in the UK, as well as representation by the Inkatha Freedom Party, the Democratic Alliance, the A-Party, a lobby group, and an independent group of South Africans living overseas.

They had argued that it is their constitutional right to vote and that limitations in the Electoral Act which meant they did not fall into the certain categories allowed to vote, were unfair.

A judgment in favour of the teacher, Willem Richter, in the Pretoria High court in February ordered that the minister of home affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) extend the right to special votes to all categories of registered voters who are away from South Africa.

The IEC had to amend the Election Regulations accordingly.

Following that judgment the second judgment began, which relates to being able to register for the vote overseas.

Source : Sapa /jog/gj

Date : 12 Mar 2009 10:33