

Influential church question DRC poll results

The DRC's Catholic Church says election results tallied by its observers do not match official results announced by the election commission yesterday. [Legalbrief](#) reports that there are fears the result could spark violence although most parts of the country remain calm. The Church said its vote count showed a different winner but did not specify which candidate. Opposition candidate Felix Tshisekedi was declared winner by the commission in a surprise win with President Joseph Kabilu stepping down. A [TimesLIVE](#) report notes that the leader of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress won 38.57% of the more than 18m votes. Tshisekedi's opponents were Martin Fayulu, who received 6.4m votes, and Emmanuel Shadary with 4.4m votes. [BBC News](#) reports that **the intervention by the church could make it harder for Tshisekedi to win broad acceptance** as the first leader to come to power through the ballot box since Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba was overthrown in a coup less than three months after independence in 1960. The church is widely revered across the country of 80m and is believed to have accurate election data gathered by a 40 000-strong team of election observers who tallied results displayed at individual polling stations.

SA President Cyril Ramaphosa has 'noted' the provisional results. A report on the [EWN](#) site notes that he called on commission 'to finalise the process with speed to ensure the credibility of the election and also maintain peace and stability'. He congratulated all parties and stakeholders 'for ensuring peace and stability during the election processes' and urged all regional and international interested parties to 'refrain from speculation' and allow the commission to complete its work. **Tshisekedi's opponents now have one week to contest his win.**