



For Immediate Release

Press Statement

ARRIVAL OF THE SADC PARLIMENTARY FORUM ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION TO OBSERVE THE 2012 ANGOLA GENERAL ELECTIONS

The SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF), the regional organization of the national Parliaments of SADC Member States announces the arrival on 23 August 2012, of its 22-member delegation to observe the 31 August 2012 General Elections in the Republic of Angola. The arrival of the delegation is at the invitation of the Electoral Commission of Angola. This is the 28th such Mission to be deployed to a SADC Member State since 1999 when SADC PF Forum started observing elections. In the case of Angola, this is the first that SADC PF is observing the country's elections.

The Mission is led by the Speaker of the Parliament of South Africa, Honourable Max Sisulu, who is a Member of SADC PF's Executive Committee. The Mission comprises Members of Parliament from SADC National Parliaments, the Secretary General of SADC PF, Dr. Esau Chiviya, Parliamentary Staff and SADC PF Secretariat.

The Mission will be in the country from 23 August until 4 September 2012, during which time it will interact with electoral stakeholders and the electorate in the Provinces. At the end of counting of ballots at polling stations, the Mission will re-convene in Luanda to compile its findings, recommendations and conclusions on the freeness, fairness and credibility of the electoral process. These will be made public on Monday 3 September during a press conference at Hotel Presidente, before the departure of the Mission on 4 September 2012.

The observation process will be based on SADC PF's *Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region* and the *SADC Principles and Guidelines on Elections*, together with other regional and international election instruments.

In summary, the Mission will assess the following:

- i) The constitutional and legal framework within which the Angola elections are conducted;
- ii) The historical, socio-economic and political environment within which elections are taking place;
- iii) The extent to which the elections are conducted in line with the constitutional and legal framework provisions of Angola and in relation to the *Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region*, *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections* and the *African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance*;
- iv) The gender trends and voter turnout in comparison to previous elections;
- v) The organizational arrangements of the electoral process by examining the following:
 - a) Independence, impartiality and accountability of electoral institutions, including stakeholders' confidence in the election authorities;

- b) Secrecy of the ballot and the transparency and legitimacy of the electoral process;
- c) Voter registration and the state of the voters roll, paying special attention to the inclusiveness and availability of voters roll to stakeholders;
- d) The campaign process and the conduct of political parties;
- e) Publication of the election calendar, preparation and distribution of voting materials;
- f) Civic and voter education including the quality of the education, the role of the Electoral Commission of Angola, civil society organisations and political parties;
- g) Role of security forces;
- h) Gender mainstreaming in political activities and manifestos, electoral system/s, practices and processes, including the management and administration of elections;
- i) Role of the media with respect to fair and balanced media reporting and coverage on election activities;
- j) Polling stations with reference to adequacy, location and voters' access to information on polling stations;
- k) Polling arrangements with reference to opening of polling stations, availability of voting materials, secrecy of the ballot, and related administrative arrangements;
- l) Counting, reconciliation, verification, tabulation and announcement of results as well as the legitimacy of results in the views of stakeholders;
- m) Conflict resolution mechanisms in place with reference to the working relationship between the Electoral Commission, Government, political parties and other stakeholders; and
- n) Impact of HIV/AIDS on elections.

The Mission looks forward to the cooperation and assistance of all concerned.

Issued by the Secretary General of SADC PF, Dr. Esau Chiviya

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