



PRESS RELEASE

Launch of the Joint Election Observer Mission to the 2011 Republic of Uganda General Elections - 12th February 2011

Following the invitation by the Uganda Electoral Commission, three African Regional Economic Communities namely the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) will deploy their Observer Missions during the 2011 Presidential and Parliamentary elections in the Republic of Uganda.

Jointly, the Observer Missions comprises 70 people drawn from National and Regional Parliaments, Diplomats and Civil Society Organizations from 14 different African countries.

The Observer Missions have undergone two days training on Election Observation and had an interactive session with the Electoral Commission of Uganda, the police, Political Parties, Civil Society Organizations, Security Agencies and youth organizations, to mention but a few.

The launching of the missions has also be done jointly, presided over by the Executive Secretary of IGAD Eng. Mahboub M. Maalim.

The Observer Missions will be deployed in a coordinated to all the five regions of Uganda namely Northern, Southern, Western, Eastern and Central. The Observers will carry out this exercise in accordance with the legal framework of the host country.

COMESA, EAC and IGAD believe that democracy is an ongoing process and not an event that ends with the casting of the ballot paper. The Missions therefore will observe both pre-election process, the elections itself as well as post election process.

As observers, the missions are not meant to pass judgment, but to contribute to the transparency of the electoral process in the Republic of Uganda. To this effect, the observers call on all Ugandans, political parties, candidates, security agencies and the general public to maintain peace and tolerance with one another as the country goes to the polls.

The Missions of the three RECs will prepare a Joint Preliminary statement which will be issued soon after the general elections. The Missions will prepare reports which will be submitted to the respective Institutions and to the Electoral Commission of Uganda.

Ends