



**The African Union – Common Market for Eastern and Southern
Africa and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
Election Observation Mission
Preliminary Statement
to the Republic of Uganda
15 January 2026 General Elections**

17 January 2026, Kampala, Uganda

A. Introduction

On 15 January 2026, the Republic of Uganda held General Elections to elect the President and Members of Parliament. In line with its mandate to promote democracy, peace, and good governance among its Member States, and following an invitation from the Government of the Republic of Uganda, the African Union (AU), in collaboration with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) deployed an election observation Mission from 7 to 19 January 2026. Prior to the deployment of the Mission, the AU and COMESA undertook Pre-Election Assessment Mission (PAM) from 17 to 21 November 2025.

The AU–COMESA–IGAD EOM was led by H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, assisted by Ambassador Shemsudin Ahmed Roble, Member of the COMESA Committee of Elders, and Commander Abebe Muluneh Beyene, Director of Peace and Security, representing IGAD. The Mission comprised of 84 Short-Term Observers (STOs) including ambassadors accredited to the African Union, officials of election management bodies, civil society organisations, election experts, academics, human rights practitioners, gender and media specialists, and youth representatives. The observers were drawn from 27 African countries namely; Algeria, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Eswatini, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe representing all the five regions of the AU.

The joint Mission's objectives were to; (a) assess the extent to which the electoral process complied with national laws, AU principles, norms, and international obligations; (b) determine whether the political and security environment was conducive to the conduct of peaceful, transparent, and credible elections; (c) evaluate the preparedness and performance of the Electoral Commission (EC) of Uganda; (d) provide recommendations aimed at strengthening future electoral processes; and (e) demonstrate AU–COMESA–IGAD solidarity with the people of Uganda in their democratic and electoral processes, ultimately contributing to peace, stability, good governance and inclusive development.

In line with its methodology, the Mission undertook extensive consultations with key stakeholders that included the EC, political parties and candidates, the Inspector General of Police, the Deputy Chief Justice, relevant government ministries and departments, the Uganda Human Rights Commission, members of the African and International Diplomatic Corps, civil society organisations, the Uganda Law Society, the Inter-Party Organisation for Dialogue (IPOD) and media organisations, among others.

In addition, the 84 STOs were clustered into 32 teams covering all the five (5) regions of the country namely Western, Northern, Central, Eastern and West Nile, to observe the final phase of campaigns and opening, voting, closing, and counting procedures on 15 January 2026.

This Preliminary Statement presents the initial findings of the AU–COMESA–IGAD EOM based on observation and consultations with key stakeholders. It provides an analysis of the pre-election environment and Election Day processes and concludes with recommendations to address identified gaps and to strengthen future electoral processes in the Republic of Uganda, in line with national laws, continental and international democratic standards. The final AU-COMESA-IGAD EOM will be submitted to the Government of Uganda within one month.

B. PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

1. Political Context

The Mission observed that the 15 January 2026 elections marked Uganda's 7th general elections since the 1995 Referendum, which restored multi-party democracy. The consistent holding of elections after every five years underscores Uganda's commitment to the principle of holding periodic elections in line with the AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, as well as the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG). The Mission notes stakeholders' perspectives that the electoral events towards the 2026 General Elections were relatively peaceful compared to the 2021 elections. The 15 January 2026 presidential elections attracted eight candidates and 2,025 parliamentary candidates. Besides the elections for the President and Members of Parliament, lower-level and special interest groups elections will be conducted in a staggered manner until 9th February 2026.

The Mission noted that the elections were conducted within a political context marked by electoral competition polarised along regional lines. Also, the Mission was briefed on the involvement of military in the electoral process contrary to the Ugandan 1995 Constitution which prohibits the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) from engaging in electoral processes. Furthermore, the internet shut down implemented two days before the elections limited access to information, freedom of association, curtailed economic activities and further disrupted effective observation by the AU-COMESA-IGAD EOM. It also created suspicion and mistrust on the electoral process.

The Mission was briefed by the opposition political parties on restrictions in accessing campaign venues; unequal access to political parties' funding; biased media coverage; alleged compromised independence of the EC and the Judiciary; costly nomination fees; abductions and arrest of opposition figures, candidates, supporters, civil society actors and denial of bail; the late release and errors in the voters register among others. Stakeholders shared concerns regarding denominations of parliamentary candidates after they were duly nominated. These actions are alleged to have targeted the opposition parliamentary candidates and resulted in some ruling party candidates being duly elected unopposed. Given that some of the denominations took place after the printing of ballot papers, several denominated candidates remained on the ballot papers, risking confusing the voters. Overall, the Mission noted that these concerns infringes on political freedoms and

contributes to voter apathy. While there was notable improvement on the political environment, the Mission noted that more could be done to improve the electoral playing field as Uganda continues to strengthen its democracy.

2. Legal Framework

Uganda is party to several key international and regional human rights instruments that provide normative standards for democratic elections, political participation, equality, non-discrimination, and fundamental freedoms. The Mission noted that, at the domestic level, Uganda's electoral framework is anchored in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995), and other supporting laws such as the Electoral Commission Act, the Political Parties and Organisations Act, the Presidential Elections Act, the Parliamentary Elections Act, the Local Governments Act, the National Women's Council Act, the National Youth Council Act, the Persons with Disability Act, the National Council for the Older Persons Act, the Labour Unions Act, among others.

The Constitution affirms popular sovereignty, guarantees universal adult suffrage and the right to vote, entrenches the principle of regular, free, and fair elections and establishes the EC as an independent body. The Constitution also establishes fundamental freedoms essential to democratic participation, including freedom of expression, assembly, association and affirms the right of every citizen to participate in public affairs.

The Electoral Commission Act (Cap. 176) regulates the composition, mandate, and powers of the Electoral Commission, as well as voter registration, polling, counting, tallying, declaration of results, and the accreditation of observers, party agents, and the media. Section 13 of the Act affirms the Commission's independence by providing that it shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority. The Presidential Elections Act (Cap. 179) regulates candidate qualifications, nominations, campaigns, voting, and the declaration of results, while the Parliamentary Elections Act (Cap. 177) governs constituency-based elections. Political competition is further regulated by the Political Parties and Organisations Act, 2005, as amended in 2010, which governs the registration and management of political parties. Further, the Mission noted that the legal framework also provides for the use of technology in electoral management. Amendments to the Electoral Commission Act in 2020 introduced the use of technology in elections, operationalised by the regulations passed in December 2025.

The Mission observed that inclusive participation is enhanced through election of special interest groups in line with supporting legislation. For instance, the National Women's Council (Amendment) Act, 2010 strengthens women's political participation at the grassroots level by institutionalising women's councils and linking their elections to the Electoral Commission. Similarly, the National Youth Council (Amendment) Act, 2010 formalises Youth Council structures and mandates the Electoral Commission to oversee Youth Council elections. Other laws that have an effect on elections include the Uganda Communications Act (2013) and related regulations which require fairness and balance in broadcasting, the Press and Journalist Act, the Computer Misuse (Amendment) Act (2022),

the Data Protection and Privacy Act (2019), and the Public Order Management Act (2013), which impose regulatory and security-related constraints.

The Mission noted limitations and inconsistencies in application of some of these laws. There is absence of comprehensive laws governing campaign financing. Diaspora voting and prison inmates remain excluded from voting. The order for people to leave the polling stations after voting was repeatedly raised as contentious. While justified by the EC and the Police as a means to prevent overcrowding at polling stations and to reduce potential security threats, stakeholders perceived this administrative directive as contradictory to existing legal provisions under Section 31 (4) of the Presidential Elections Act and Section 30 (4) of the Parliamentary Elections Act which allow voters to maintain a 20-metre distance from the polling table after voting. The Mission noted that allowing voters to stay within the legally prescribed 20 meters radius enhances transparency of the electoral process. Thus, any potential security issues should have been dealt with through alternative means.

3. The Electoral System

Under Uganda's electoral system, presidential candidates are required to obtain more than fifty per cent of valid votes cast to be declared elected (50% + 1 vote rule). For parliamentary elections, the candidate who obtains the highest number of votes is declared elected.

Parliament comprises a total of 529 members, of whom 353 Members of Parliament are directly elected through the FPTP system in single-member constituencies. In addition, 146 district-based seats are reserved for women district representatives. 30 Members of Parliament are further elected through electoral colleges representing Special Interest Groups (SIGs). These include representatives of youth, workers, persons with disabilities, older persons, and the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF).

4. Election Administration

The Commission operates within a clear constitutional and legal framework that provides for its independence and mandate to administer elections. The Mission was informed that the 2026 General Elections were funded fully by the Government of Uganda. The AU–COMESA–IGAD EOM commends the Government for allocating resources to facilitate the conduct of the elections which contributed to the implementation of all electoral activities.

The EC launched the electoral roadmap in August 2023, revised it in July 2024, largely adhered to it and communicated changes publicly. Key milestones were implemented, including the conduct of nationwide voter registration and updates, the public display of the voters register, demarcation of electoral areas, updating and display of the voters register, nomination of candidates and the gradual integration of electoral technologies, including Biometric Voter Verification Kits (BVVKs).

Despite these efforts, the Mission received concerns regarding the independence of the EC, related to the nomination and appointment of Commissioners, financial autonomy and its

dual administrative and quasi-judicative roles. Stakeholders also raised concerns regarding the domestic observer accreditation process, particularly delays, unclear criteria, and limitations affecting some civil society organisations. Additional concerns received were on the boundary delimitation exercise which was alleged to have been characterised by limited public consultation, logistical delays, and disputes over demarcations.

Voter education initiatives for the 2026 General Elections were implemented by the EC and complemented by accredited civil society organisations. This enhanced public awareness of voting procedures and the use of BVVKs. While the BVVKs were introduced as an important safeguard against multiple voting and impersonation, concerns were raised regarding the spread of misinformation about the kits reportedly due to inadequate stakeholder engagement.

5. Campaigns and Campaign Finance

The 2026 General Elections campaign started on 29 September 2025 and ended on 13 January 2026. The presidential election was contested by eight candidates, however, political competition remained uneven, with significant disparities in access to state resources, media coverage, and campaign space.

While the electoral campaign was relatively peaceful compared to 2021 elections, the Mission received reports that the campaign period was marred by reports of intimidation, arbitrary arrests, and excessive use of force, particularly targeting opposition candidates and supporters, civil society actors and journalists. Security forces deployed tear gas, water cannons, and, in some instances, live ammunition to disperse opposition rallies resulting in injuries and fatalities. Whilst several candidates were able to campaign with relatively fewer obstructions, the main opposition candidate informed the Mission that their campaign venues, pre-booked accommodation were blocked and were denied access to both public and private media. The Mission further received concerns regarding vote buying and candidate bribery in the form of cash, goods or other material benefits.

While existing laws regulate certain aspects of campaign financing, the Mission noted that Uganda lacks a comprehensive legal framework regulating electoral financing. High campaign costs, combined with weak regulation, contribute to an uneven playing field, favour wealthier candidates and entrenched political actors, thereby limiting meaningful participation by candidates with fewer financial resources especially women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

6. Women's Political Participation

Uganda has a legal framework that provide for affirmative action for women. Women are allowed to run through the 146-district woman representative seats and in competitive seats as independent candidates or party flag bearers. The Mission noted that most women contest through district woman representative seats than in competitive constituency parliamentary seats (640 women competed for 146-woman district representative seats in the 2026 elections). Stakeholders' analysis estimated that, among the total of 2,025

parliamentary candidates, women constituted 8.6% (175) of the constituency parliamentary seats while men constituted 91.4% (1,850) of the candidates. No woman appeared on the list of eight presidential candidates.

Despite the existence of affirmative action policies, women who aspire to run in competitive constituency parliamentary seats continue to face systemic barriers including Violence Against Women in Election (VAWE), inadequate political skills, financial constraints, cultural norms, burden of care duties, low media coverage as well as being pushed to run for districts woman representative seats by the political parties.

7. Youth Participation

The Mission notes that Uganda's Constitution sets the minimum age of 18 years as eligibility for voting and allows any person who is 25 years old to contest for parliamentary seat and 35 for presidential seat. The law also reserves five (5) seats for youth representatives in the parliament, with at least two being women. Stakeholder's analysis showed that, 32 candidates (25 men and 7 women) contested for the five youth reserved seats. Political parties cited high nomination fees (20 million Ugandan Shilling for a presidential candidate and three million Ugandan shilling for constituency parliamentary candidates) as a hindrance for youth to contest in competitive seats.

8. Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

The Parliamentary Elections Act (2005) reserves five parliamentary seats for persons with disabilities elected through the electoral college, of which at least two must be women. The Mission appreciates the EC's initiative to map the locations and type of disability as part of the preparations to deliver an inclusive election. The Mission noted concerns from organisations for persons with disabilities that voter education was inadequate and most voting stations were inaccessible. The stakeholder's analysis showed that, 11 candidates (9 male and 2 women) contested for the five persons with disability parliamentary seats.

Overall, the Mission could not obtain official election data disaggregated by gender, age and disability status from EC. Further, stakeholders raised concerns that the effective participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in open seats is also hindered by high nomination fees (20 million Ugandan Shilling for a presidential candidate and three million Ugandan shilling for constituency parliamentary candidates).

9. Participation of Civil Society Organisations

More than 50 Civil Society Organisations (CSO) were accredited to provide voter education and election observation. Nonetheless, the Mission noted the constrained operating environment of civil society, including the arrest of civil society activists and restrictions in receiving accreditation to provide voter education and undertake election observation. The Mission further noted that, three days prior to Election Day, the National Bureau for Non-Governmental Organisations suspended the operation of a number Non-Governmental Organisations.

10. The Media Coverage of the Electoral Process

Uganda enjoys media pluralism with a total of 259 media entities, including 90 foreign media, 340 online journalists, 70 online platforms and 61 television stations accredited to cover the 2026 General Elections. Further, the EC trained journalists on objective and impartial reporting on elections. Nonetheless, the Mission noted the biased media coverage with the opposition parties receiving minimum coverage from both state and private media. In addition, incidents of unrest and violence in opposition rallies led to injury of some journalists and destruction of media equipment.

Despite previous assurances by the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) of continued internet availability throughout the electoral period, the Mission noted with concern that two days before the election the UCC shut down the internet. The action affected citizens right to access information, infringed freedom of expression and even affected the effectiveness of the AU-COMESA-IGAD EOM. The Mission understands the critical role of internet in facilitating media houses to obtain and disseminate information.

11. Electoral Disputes

On top of the EC's quasi-judicial powers to decide on election disputes, judicial adjudication of Presidential and Parliamentary electoral disputes is also handled by the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal and High Court. Based on the previous electoral dispute resolution processes, stakeholders raised concerns regarding the impartiality and independence of the judiciary in handling electoral cases.

12. Electoral Security

The Mission commends the EC and the Uganda Police Force (UPF) for providing security for all the presidential candidates. In this regard, the Mission noted the preparedness of the police force in providing security during key electoral phases including campaigns; guarding of electoral materials; ensuring security of the polling stations during voting and counting and of the tallying centres.

The Mission was informed about the recruitment of additional police constables and the collaboration with other security agencies for the 2026 General Elections. Stakeholders expressed concerns over the *ultra-vires* order issued by the Chief of the Defence Forces, later endorsed by the EC Chairperson and the Inspector General of Police for voters to immediately leave the polling station after voting, contrary to the provision of the law that allows voters to remain beyond the 20-metre radius of the polling table after voting. The Mission observed that the order raises voters and stakeholders' suspicion on the transparency of the voting, closing and counting of results at polling stations. Reports of intimidation, arrests and abductions of opposition leaders, candidates, supporters, media and civil society actors by the security forces instilled fear and eroded public trust in the electoral process.

C. ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION

The AU-COMESA-IGAD EOM deployed 84 STOs clustered into 32 teams in all the five (5) regions of the country to observe the opening, voting, closing and counting on election day.

Opening of Polls

The STOs observed opening of polls with most arriving at their respective polling stations at about 6:30am, 30 minutes before the official time of poll opening (07:00am).

The opening of polls was delayed by an average of three hours, and most did not open until 10am. In some extreme cases the polling stations open between 12-13hrs. For instance, at Katuba Playground polling station and Hope step School (Ntebetebe) in Bweyogerere ward, Kiira Municipality in Wakiso District opened at 12 noon and 1pm, respectively. The delays were mainly caused by late arrival of polling staff and materials and the malfunctioning Biometric Voter Verification Kits machines. At about 10am, most Presiding Officers started receiving instructions from the Electoral Commission to do a manual verification of voters using the physical voter's register. While most Presiding Officers received the instructions, others did not receive the same and as a result their stations remained unopened longer than others.

Some polling stations (for example at Kampala Hill in Kyebando, in Kampala central) did not have enough voters to witness the opening of the voting kits as voters in the queue had not reached 10 as required by law.

In most polling stations voters demonstrated calmness and patience despite the delay, however two teams in Kamwokya (Kampala Central) reported that, at about 10am, voters were starting to get angry and agitated due to the delay of opening of the polling stations.

Campaign materials were observed around many polling station visited, including polling station 016 YTK at JB Mbale Road; in 005 Kansanga Parish, 01 Mankinde division; 064 Makinde division west and at Mpalampa Station in Buziga.

Enough election materials were available in most polling stations visited, with some stations missing ink.

Most of the voting stations were inaccessible to voters with disabilities.

The majority of the polling stations gave voting priority to the elderly, persons with disabilities, expectants and nursing mothers.

Voting Process

The AU-COMESA-IGAD teams visited a total of 488 polling stations where the voting procedures were carried out. The teams observed manual voter verification process by the Presiding Officers after receiving instructions from EC, since no BVVKs were functioning in most polling stations. In a few areas where the BVVK worked (for example 001 Kaswa T/CA in Kaborole District; Basaja Bwankuba School, Afya ward in Mbale city; Nakoma Secondary School in Mbale City) the lines moved slower than in lines where manual registers were

used. The Mission observed inconsistencies in the sealing of the ballot boxes in some polling stations.

Voters were inked after casting their votes in order to avoid multiple voting.

The full complement of polling officials, clearly identifiable in their bibs, was observed in most polling stations and they were mostly young people as well as women. The Mission commends the EC for deploying large numbers of women and youth to carry the mandate of election officials.

The conduct of the polling staff was professional in most of the polling centres observed.

The Mission noted the presence of political parties and independent candidates' agents. Party agents observed were from NRM, NUP, The Common Man's Party, Revolutionary People's Party (RPP), National Peasants' Party (NPP), Conservative Party (CP), and Alliance for National Transformation (ANT). Overall assessment of the competence of party agents during voting process was commendable.

The Mission noted that citizen observers were few or none at the polling stations visited. Participation of citizen observers is crucial to the reinforcement of the credibility, transparency and legitimacy of the electoral process.

Security personnel, mostly police constables, were visibly present in all polling stations visited, and their presence was described as professional and discreet. However, some of our teams reported that some of the security agents were carrying guns. The teams could not ascertain whether these agents were from the police or the army.

In most polling stations observed, voters were able to cast their ballot in a calm atmosphere.

Closing and Counting

AU-COMESA-IGAD EOM observed the close of polls. While delays observed by the teams during opening was of the average of three hours, voting was extended by an hour in most polling stations. The best practice is to compensate for the exact time lost to comply with the prescribed duration of voting. This notwithstanding, the Mission noted some polling stations (Kashwa Primary School in Kiruhura and PH Public School in Lira City) closing at 16:00 despite the extension of one hour.

In the polling stations observed, the re-arrangement was done in such a manner that allows for easy observation of counting. Procedures relating to emptying the ballot boxes, reconciliation of used and unused ballots and ballots papers sorting were adhered to. However, the observers noted that the counting procedures were variably applied.

The presence of security personnel was observed as professional and discreet.

Party/candidate agents were present in all polling stations observed during the closing and counting process. These parties were NRM, NUP, FDC, NPP, SDP, CP, UPM, CMP, the Common Man's Party, RPP, ANT, and independent candidates.

Voters were also allowed to witness counting within the prescribed 20 meters limit.

The Presiding Officers publicly announced the results for the stations at the end of the counting process, then party agents signed copies of the results sheets and were provided with a copy of the result sheets.

The EOM reported that the counting process was orderly and transparent with few incidences of disruption. Except a polling station where the police had to use tear gas to disperse the crowd that was shouting. This happened at Luweero SDA-Lumu zone (NAM-Z), 019 Luweero Central Parish, 107 Katikamu County North constituency, 01 Butuntumula Sub-county, 023 Luweero District.

The AU-COMESA-IGAD EOM notes that at the time of issuance of this Preliminary Statement, the tallying process is still ongoing.

E. COMMENDABLE PRACTICES

Based on its observation of the electoral process thus far, the AU-COMESA-IGAD EOM summarised the following as constituting commendable practices:

- The calmness by the Ugandan citizens towards the polling staff despite the delay in opening.
- The provision for political parties and candidates with voters registers increased their monitoring of the vote, thereby strengthening their trust in the process.
- The high representation of women and youth among polling staff and agents advanced the principles of inclusiveness.

F. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mission commends the Republic of Uganda's efforts for undertaking regular elections. The 15 January 2026 was delivered in an environment that stakeholders considered to be calm compared to the 2021 elections. However, the Mission is concerned with reports of harassment, intimidation and arrest of opposition leaders, candidates, supporters' media and civic society actors, as well as the suspension of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the internet shut down. To support Uganda's continued democratic consolidation and alignment with its national laws, continental, regional and international standards, the Mission offers the following recommendations:

Government

1. The government should prioritise the ratification of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) to reinforce Uganda's commitment to continental democratic norms.
2. The Government should safeguard the right to information, fundamental freedoms of expression, assembly, association, throughout the electoral cycle, in line with constitutional and international obligations
3. The government should refrain from suspension of internet access close to the elections and devise alternative mechanisms of handling potential security threats as opposed to imposing a total national-wide internet shutdown.

4. The government should provide conducive and favourable environment for operation of civil society, traditional and new media as well as the opposition parties as key actors in delivering credible and transparent elections.

Parliament

1. The Parliament should undertake electoral reforms ahead of future elections through broad-based consultations with political parties, civil society organisations, and other stakeholders, to address persistent legal, institutional, and operational gaps identified across electoral cycles. The proposed legal reforms should consider:
 - a) Enacting a campaign financing law that provides for clear spending limits and effective enforcement mechanisms to curb the commercialisation of elections.
 - b) Review the Constitution and elections laws to strengthen the independence of the Electoral Commission by reconsidering the process for appointment of Commissioners.

Electoral Commission

1. The EC should ensure the consistent application and respect of the Constitution and electoral laws, without any interference.
2. The EC should improve and observe election nomination procedures to address the pitfalls of denomination of candidates duly nominated. The EC should fully finalise the nomination process before printing of the ballots.
3. The EC should consider introducing a waiver or reduction of nomination fees for women, youth and candidates with disabilities to incentivise and enhance their participation in competitive seats.
4. The EC should disaggregate electoral information including on disability status to allow targeted provision of sign language, ramps and accessibility adjustments.
5. The EC should facilitate early set up of the polling stations through timely delivery of the materials to allow voting to happen on the stipulated 7am-4pm window.
6. The EC should conduct robust test-run of new technologies (BVVKs) before voting day to ensure their effective use in the election day.
7. The EC should compensate equal time lost in each polling station in line with international and regional best practices.
8. The EC should consider providing shades in the polling stations to cultivate favourable and inclusive voting environment for polling officials, voters and other stakeholders.
9. The EC should invest in desegregation of election data based on age, gender and disability data.

Security agencies

1. Security agencies should operate within the law and mandate in a manner that is proportionate, impartial, and respectful of human rights, to ensure that electoral security measures do not create an atmosphere of fear, curtail human rights, fundamental freedoms, and undermine political participation.

2. Security agencies should refrain from issuing directive on elections related issues that are not within their purview to do so.

Political Parties

1. Political parties are encouraged to promote internal party democracy, introduce quotas in all leadership positions and equitable access to campaign resources, particularly for women, youth, and candidates from marginalised groups.

Issued in Kampala, Uganda, on 17 January 2026

H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, Head of the AU-COMESA-IGAD Observation Mission

(Former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria)

Ends/