



PRESS RELEASE

A very well-managed election day and a constructive campaign with, however, a process featuring transparency shortcomings and a degree of constraint with regard to political activity and voter choice at a local level.

Maputo, 30 October 2009. On 28 October three simultaneous elections were successfully held for the first time. Election day was carried out in a very well organised manner and participation was peaceful and calm. However, the electoral process exhibited various shortcomings. These are the main conclusions obtained by the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) after more than five weeks of observation all around Mozambique.

CNE and STAE prepared for an election that largely guaranteed universal suffrage. EU observers reported on the good job done by a highly committed polling staff who acted with integrity in the voting and counting processes. The Chief Observer of the EU EOM and Member of the European Parliament, Ms. Fiona Hall added: *“I want to commend the commitment to democracy demonstrated by the millions of Mozambicans who in a calm and orderly manner came to the polling stations to cast their vote. I also would like to thank the Mozambique electoral authorities for their cooperation and assistance.”*

The election campaign was generally more peaceful than in previous elections and reflected constructive messages by the political contestants. The Chief Observer however, stated that the rejection of several parties’ lists for the legislative and provincial elections, mainly as a result of the complexity of the electoral legal framework and some unclear procedures, had given rise to a restriction of voter choice at a local level. Moreover, basic measures meant to ensure full transparency of the process are still missing. These include full access to candidates’ lists and the publication of numbers of registered voters per polling station.

At local level, the EU EOM directly observed cases of government personnel campaigning with FRELIMO during working hours and cases of deliberate obstruction of opposition campaign events by FRELIMO support. With respect to the media, the EU EOM concludes that freedom of speech was respected during the campaign period and that the state-owned media covered the campaign by political parties in a reasonably balanced and neutral way.

The EU EOM which has been present in Mozambique since 22 September 2009, deployed 131 observers from 24 EU member states, as well as Canada, Norway and Switzerland, to all 11 provinces of the country to assess the election process against international and regional standards for elections as well as the laws of Mozambique. The EU EOM will continue to observe the ongoing results process, and any complaints that may be filed with the relevant authorities. Around two months after the conclusion of the electoral process, the Chief Observer will return to Mozambique to present a detailed report on the elections with possible recommendations for future electoral processes.

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