

European Union Election Observation Mission to Malawi 2009

Background to EU Election Observation

The main objectives of election observation are:

- to provide a comprehensive assessment of the election process
- enhance public confidence in the electoral process
- to deter fraud
- strengthen respect for human rights
- contribute to conflict resolution

The European Union deploys Election Observation Missions (EU EOMs) around the world to provide support for the development of democratic institutions and practice, and to assist partner countries in their objective to hold elections in line with international standards.

All EU election observers are bound by a strict code of conduct that guarantees their neutrality and impartiality. The EU EOM will collect and verify information concerning the election process, which will be used to prepare a preliminary statement of findings and conclusions issued within 48 hours of election day. A final report containing recommendations for the future is issued around two months after the end of the election process.

EU EOMs are funded under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights.

EU EOMs assess an electoral process in accordance with international standards related to democratic elections, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In doing so the EU EOM employ the following assessment criteria:

- the degree of impartiality shown by the election administration
- access for political parties and candidates to the media
- the degree of freedom of political parties and any other issues that concern their rights to assemble and express their views of the election (e.g. campaign violence, the rule of law)
- the universal franchise afforded to voters
- legal framework
- fairness of access to state resources
- conduct of polling and counting

Mandate of the EU EOM

The EU was invited to establish an EOM for the 19 May Parliamentary and Presidential elections by the Electoral Commission. The mandate of the EU EOM is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the electoral process in accordance with international and regional standards for genuine democratic elections. The EU EOM operates independently from the European Commission Delegation and EU member states.

Composition of the EU EOM

The EU EOM is headed by a Chief Observer, Luisa Morgantini, Vice-President of the European Parliament.



The mission's core team consists of seven experts who were deployed on 5 April 2009. Twenty nine long term observers have been deployed in all 28 districts of the country. EU EOMs use an established methodology for observing elections. EU EOMs do not interfere in the electoral process.

The EU EOM will observe the entire election process including:

- the legal framework and its implementation
- the work of the election administration
- campaign activities
- the role of State institutions and civil society
- the conduct of the media
- voting, counting and tabulation; and
- the environment in which the election is conducted in.

The EU EOM's core team analyses key political, electoral and legal issues and are supported by logistics and security experts. On election day the mission will be represented by more than 70 observers to observe voting and counting.



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