



## PRESS RELEASE

### **SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the Presidential, Legislative and Provincial Elections of the Democratic Republic of Congo scheduled for the 20<sup>th</sup> of December 2023**

**13<sup>th</sup> December 2023, Gaborone, Botswana:** In line with the five-year electoral cycle of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Member State will hold Presidential, Legislative and Provincial Elections on 20 December 2023. This is in line with Article 3 of the *revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2021)*, which provides that SADC shall observe all general elections held in its Member States.

In accordance with the SADC Guidelines, His Excellency (H.E.) Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia, and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, appointed Mr. Enoch Kavindele, former Vice President of the Republic of Zambia as the Head of Mission (HoM) and mandated the SADC Secretariat to coordinate the SEOM, including facilitation of in-country deployment of observers. H.E. further appointed Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe as the Alternate Head of Mission.

The SEOM will be deployed to eighteen (18) out of twenty-six (26) Provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo to observe the pre and post-election phases and the polling day. The Mission's objective is to assess the conduct of the elections in accordance with the revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections of (2021). These principles emphasise the importance of citizen participation in the democratic and development processes, the implementation of measures to prevent political violence, intimidation, and intolerance, and the promotion of equal opportunities for all political parties to access the State Media and for all citizens to access information. Furthermore, the Mission emphasises the significance of acceptance and respect for the election results by all political parties.

Accordingly, in line with the revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2021), the Secretariat is expected to coordinate technical, logistical and administrative arrangements for deploying the SEOM to the DRC. The Secretariat facilitated a Pre-Deployment Refresher Training for the observers and will manage the overall activities of the SEOM.

To promote electoral integrity, electoral justice, good governance, peace and stability in the SADC region, and to give effect to the commitment contained in the SADC Principles and Guidelines, the Launch of SEOM which will be held on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at Fleuve

Congo Hotel, Kinshasa, DRC will include various election awareness activities for the electoral stakeholders to learn and appreciate the work of the SEOM.

**The key activities for the SEOM programme of schedule comprises the following;**

| <b>DATE</b>                                       | <b>ACTIVITY</b>   |
|---|---|
| <b>15<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>LAUNCH OF SEOM (AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES)</b><br/>Open to the Public and Media</li> </ul>   |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HoM / Organ TROIKA / SEAC Consultation Meetings with Electoral Stakeholders</li> </ul>   |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2023                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-Election Peer Exchange with Heads of Electoral Observation Missions - <b>SEOM to Host</b></li> </ul>   |
| <b>20<sup>TH</sup> December 2023</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PRESIDENTIAL, LEGISLATIVE &amp; PROVINCIAL</b></li> <li>• <b>ELECTION DAY [FIELD OBSERVATIONS]</b></li> </ul>   |
| <b>21<sup>st</sup> December 2023</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Preparation of SEOM Preliminary Statement</b></li> <li>• <b>Post-Election Peer Exchange with Heads of Electoral</b></li> <li>• <b>Observation Missions – AUEOM to Host</b></li> </ul> |
| <b>22<sup>ND</sup> December 2023</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>RELEASE OF THE SEOM PRELIMINARY STATEMENT TO THE PRESIDENTIAL, LEGISLATIVE &amp; PROVINCIAL ELECTION OF THE DRC</b><br/>Open to the Public and Media</li> </ul>                       |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> December 2023                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Departure of Short-Term Observers (STOs)</li> </ul>  |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> –27 <sup>th</sup> December 2023  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deployment of Long-Term-Observation (LTO) in Kinshasa Province, Comprising of One (1) Observer from Each Member State</li> </ul>   |
| 30 <sup>th</sup> December 2023                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closure of the SEOM Headquarters</li> </ul>  |

For enquiries: Ms. Barbara Lopi, Head of Communication and Public Relations, email [blopi@sadc.int](mailto:blopi@sadc.int), Ms. Anethe Mtambanengwe, Email: [amtambanengwe@sadc.int](mailto:amtambanengwe@sadc.int) and Mr. Magabolle Mafiri, Email: [mmafiri@sadc.int](mailto:mmafiri@sadc.int) and copy [prinfo@sadc.int](mailto:prinfo@sadc.int)

.....

SADC is an organisation of 16 Member States established in 1980 as the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) and later, in August, 1992 transformed into the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The mission of SADC is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient, productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security; so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy. Member States are Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

**Issued by the SADC Secretariat  
Gaborone, Botswana**

**13<sup>th</sup> December 2023**