



**SADC ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (SEOM) TO
THE REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES**

STATEMENT

BY

HONOURABLE NYELETI BROOKE MONDLANE

DEPUTY MINISTER OF

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE,

AND HEAD OF THE SEOM

TO THE 2015 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

IN THE

REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES

Delivered on 7 December 2015

Victoria, Avani Hotel

Mister Hendrick Gappy, Chairperson of the Electoral Commission of Seychelles;

Your Excellency Emilie Ayaza Mushobekwa, Acting Executive Secretary of SADC;

Fellow Heads of International Electoral Observer Missions;

Leaders and Representatives of Political Parties;

Your Excellencies, Heads and Representatives of the Diplomatic Missions accredited to the Republic of Seychelles;

Members of the SADC Electoral Observation Mission;

Representatives of Local Election Observers;

Religious Leaders and Representatives of Civil Society;

Members of the Media;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my privilege to welcome you to this occasion of the presentation of the pronouncement of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM), on the first round of the 2015 Presidential Election which took place from 3 to 5 December 2015, and I thank you for your presence.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Electoral Commission of Seychelles (ECS), established under the Elections (Amendment), Act 27 of 2014, invited SADC to observe the Presidential Election scheduled to take place on 3 to 5 December 2015.

In accordance with the established practice to observe elections in SADC Member States, His Excellency Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique and Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation constituted the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) and mandated the Executive Secretary to facilitate the deployment of the Observation Mission to the Seychelles.

In my capacity as the Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique, I was entrusted to lead the SEOM to the Republic of Seychelles, assisted by the Deputy Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Mozambique and the Outgoing-Chair the Republic of South Africa.

Electoral observation within our region has been a practice of SADC Member States. This has enabled us to deepen democracy through the participation of citizens in political and decision-making processes. The SEOM encourages and pursues the adherence to the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections*, thus enhancing transparency and credibility of electoral processes. These principles and guidelines:

1. Encourage the full participation of eligible citizens in the electoral processes;
2. Recommend that citizens enjoy fundamental freedoms and human rights, including freedom of association, assembly and expression;
3. Promote the values of electoral justice which include integrity, impartiality, fairness, professionalism, efficiency and regulatory of elections;
4. Promote necessary conditions towards transparency, freedom of the media, access of information by all citizens and equal opportunities for all candidates and political parties to use the media;
5. Uphold and guarantee the impartiality and independence of the Judiciary, the Electoral Management Body (EMB) and all other election institutions. And thus recommend,

6. That voter education capacitates and empowers all eligible citizens, as well as fostering ownership of the electoral process and the democratic political system;
7. The adherence to a binding Electoral Code of Conduct (ECC); and
8. The acceptance of the election results by all stakeholders provided that they are deemed to have been free, fair, transparent, credible and peaceful by the competent and independent national electoral authorities in accordance with the respective laws of the land.

**Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The SEOM was officially launched on Friday, 27 November 2015, after which our deployment was activated on 28 November 2015 with 42 observers comprising 8 teams.

The SEOM observed that the Pre-Election phase was characterised by a calm and peaceful political atmosphere.

The SEOM further noted that political campaigning ended on 29 November 2015.

On the three Election Days of the first round, the SEOM observed the following:

- In general, polling stations opened on time and all the procedures were followed in accordance with the provisions of the Elections Act. However, the process of registration of names on special votes casted, impacted on opening and closing times;
- Presiding and Electoral Officers, Party agents, other observers and police officers were present during the opening and closing of polling stations;
- The layout of most polling stations promoted easy flow in the voting process, until the prescribed closing time;
- All citizens who produced their voters cards, ID or Passports were able to vote, if duly registered;
- Most polling stations closed on time as provided for in the Elections Act, and voters who were still in queues at the formal closing of the polling stations were allowed to cast their votes;
- There were no incidents of violence reported by the SEOM Observers during the Election Days;
- Counting at most polling stations started after closing and the prescribed counting procedures were adhered to by the Returning Officers; and

- The Electoral Officer or the Designated Electoral Officer transmitted the statement of the result of the elections to the Electoral Commissioner.

In the course of observing the elections, the SEOM noted that there was general adherence to the relevant national legal instruments as well as the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections*.

**Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

SEOM wishes to congratulate the people of Seychelles for the orderly and peaceful manner in which the three days of the first round of the Presidential Election was conducted.

The SEOM at this juncture is aware that the electoral processes are still on-going as the People of Seychelles embark on a second round.

We commend all the voters, electoral officials and candidates for the responsible manner in which they conducted themselves. We observed how the people of Seychelles exercised their democratic right by coming in numbers to cast their votes.

May I take this opportunity to state that SEOM will continue its observation mission and interaction with stakeholders in strict adherence to the laws of the country and the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections*.

The SEOM pronouncement we make today conveys our views on the elections proceedings as observed. The Preliminary Statement will be issued on the 20 December 2015, after the completion of the second round.

We urge the people of Seychelles, political leaders and all stakeholders to continue to demonstrate a sense of responsibility, political tolerance, full participation and engagement in the coming second round of this election.

Thank you very much!
Merci beaucoup!
Muito obrigado!