SADC ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (SEOM) TO
THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

PRELIMINARY
STATEMENT

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY OLDEMIRO JÚLIO MARQUES BALOI

MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

AND HEAD OF THE SEOM

TO THE 2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS

HELD IN THE
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

Delivered on 27 October 2015
Dar es Salaam
Esteemed Members of the National Electoral Commission and Members of the Zanzibar Electoral Commission;

Your Excellency Armando Emílio Guebuza, former President of the Republic of Mozambique and Head of the African Union (AU) Election Observation Mission to the United Republic of Tanzania;

Your Excellency Goodluck Jonathan, former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Head of the Commonwealth Election Observation Mission to the United Republic of Tanzania;

Your Excellency Moody Awori, former Vice-President of the Republic of Kenya and Head of the East African Community Observer Mission;

Your Excellency Thami Mseleku, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa to the United Republic of Tanzania, representing the Outgoing Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation;

Your Excellency Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax, Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community (SADC);

Distinguished Members of the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC), Advocate Orlanda Rafael Duarte and Judge Esme Chombo;

Representatives of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania;

Leaders and Representatives of Political Parties;

Heads of International Election Observation Missions;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps and International Organisations;

Religious Leaders;

Members of the Media;

Members of Civil Society, Women, and Youth Organisations;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, Habari Zenu, na Karibuni!
It is my honour and privilege to welcome you to this occasion, where I present the Preliminary Findings of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM), on the 2015 United Republic of Tanzania Presidential, Parliamentary and Councillors’ Elections, which took place on Sunday, 25 October 2015. I thank you all present here for gracing this occasion.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,


Subsequent to the proclamation of the election date, NEC had on behalf of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, extended the invitation to SADC on 14 August 2015 to observe elections in the United Republic of Tanzania.

In accordance with the established practice to observe elections in SADC Member States, His Excellency Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania (URT) invited His Excellency Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation to constitute the SEOM to observe the Presidential, Parliamentary and Councillors’ Elections which were held on Sunday, 25 October 2015. Following this invitation, President Nyusi mandated the SADC Executive Secretary, Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax, to facilitate the deployment of the Observation Mission.

The Chairperson appointed me in my capacity as the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique to lead the SEOM to the United Republic of Tanzania. I was assisted by Her Excellency Nyeleti Brooke Mondlane, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique.

Electoral observation within our region has been the practice of SADC Member States over the years. This practice has enabled us to deepen democracy in our region through the participation of citizens in political and decision-making processes. The SEOM has the mandate to ensure
adherence to the 20 July 2015 Revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, thus

enhancing transparency and credibility of the electoral processes. The revised guidelines and principles include among others:

1. Encourage the full participation of all citizens in democratic and development process;
2. Ensure that all citizens enjoy fundamental freedoms and human rights, including freedom of association, assembly and expression;
3. Promote and respect the values of electoral justice which include integrity, impartiality, fairness, professionalism, efficiency and regulation of elections;
4. Promote necessary conditions to foster transparency, freedom of the media, access of information by all citizens and equal opportunities for all candidates and political parties to use the state media;
5. Uphold and guarantee the impartiality and independence of the Judiciary, the Electoral Management Body (EMB) and all other election institutions;
6. Ensure that voter education capacitates and empowers all eligible citizens, as well as fostering ownership of the electoral process and the democratic political system;
7. Ensure the adherence to a binding Electoral Code of Conduct (ECC); and
8. Ensure the acceptance of the election results by all electoral stakeholders as proclaimed 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 deployment was preceded by the Goodwill and Pre-deployment Assessment Mission undertaken by SEAC from 30 August 2015 to 5 September 2015. The aim of the SEAC Mission was to assess the level of preparedness of the country to hold the 2015 General Elections. The SEAC Mission concluded that the political atmosphere and security environment were generally conducive for holding peaceful elections.

The SEOM was officially launched on Wednesday, 14 October 2015 at the White Sands Hotel, Dar es Salaam after which the deployment was
activated on 17 October 2015 with a strength of 86 observers comprising 24 teams deployed at both SEOM headquarters and 25 regions of URT.

Prior to the launch of the Mission, the SEOM paid courtesy calls on the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Attorney- General.

The SEOM further engaged various stakeholders to gather information on the electoral process in the URT. These engagements also provided the opportunity for the Mission to learn about the views and concerns of various stakeholders. The stakeholders interacted with included:

1. The Chairperson of the National Electoral Commission (NEC);
2. The Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner of the Tanzania Police Force;
3. The Registrar of Political Parties;
4. Chairman of Political Parties’ Council;
5. Representatives of the following contesting Political Parties:
   a) African Progressive Party of Tanzania (APPT – Maendeleo);
   b) Alliance for Democratic Change (ADC);
   c) Chama Cha Kijamii (CCK);
   d) Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM);
   e) Chama Cha Ukombozi was Umma (CHAUMA);
   f) Democratic Party (DP);
   g) Demokrasia Makini (MAKINI);
   h) National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR-Mageuzi);
   i) National League for Democracy (NLD);
   j) Tanzania Farmers Party (AFP);
   k) Union for Multiparty Democracy (UMD);
   l) United Democratic Party;
   m) United Peoples’ Democratic Party (UPDP);
6. Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance;
7. Representatives of the Media;
8. The AU Election Observation Mission;
9. The SADC Heads of Observation Mission in the United Republic of Tanzania (SADC-ECF, and SADC-PF);
10. East African Community Observer Mission;
11. The Commonwealth Election Observation Mission; and

During the engagements with the stakeholders, various concerns were raised and the Mission sought clarification from the relevant authorities. These concerns included, amongst others:
1. The lack of independence and impartiality of the NEC and ZEC; 
2. Lack of knowledge and training in the use of the Biometric Voters Registration (BVR) system, which, during registration posed logistical challenges; 
3. Erroneous information captured on the voters’ roll and cards; 

4. The 200 meter requirement for voters to be away from polling stations after voting as provided in Section 104 (1) of the National Election Act, Chapter 343 (RE2002); 
5. Biased Media; 
6. Lack of political party subsidy from Government compared to the 1995 General Elections; 
7. Alleged utilisation of Government resources by the ruling party; 
8. Lack of confidence from political parties on the transportation of ballot papers to and from polling stations to central district offices, NEC and ZEC headquarters; and 
9. Absence of legal recourse once Presidential results have been announced, Section 41(7) of the Constitution of URT.

Your Excellencies, 
Ladies and Gentlemen,

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

The SEOM further noted that political campaigns on Mainland ended on 24 October 2015 and in Zanzibar on 23 October 2015 at 6pm and that no other political campaign took place on Election Day.

Your Excellencies, 
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the Election Day, the SADC Electoral Observation Mission observed the following:

1. In general, polling stations opened on time at 07:00am, and the opening procedures were followed in accordance with the provisions of the National Elections Act; 
2. Party agents, other observers, election monitors and police officers were present during the opening of polling stations; 
3. The layout of most polling stations promoted easy flow in the voting process, until the prescribed closing time;
4. Whilst errors with the voters roll and cards were acknowledged, logistical challenges did not appear to hamper voter turnout;
5. Most polling stations closed at 4pm as provided for in the National Election Act. Voters who were still in queues at close of the polling stations were allowed to cast their votes;
6. There were no incidents of violence reported, except minor disruptions.
7. The presence of the police was noted;
8. Counting at polling stations started immediately after closing;
9. The prescribed counting procedures were adhered to by the Returning Officers; and
10. Returning Officers announced the results immediately after counting, as provided for in the National Elections Act.

**Excellencies,**
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

During the observation exercise, the SEOM noted some best practices in the electoral process of the URT. These included:

1. Professionalism of NEC and ZEC staff;
2. Generally peaceful political environment throughout the electoral period;
3. Freedom of association and expression during the electoral campaigns;
4. Political tolerance demonstrated during the campaign period;
5. Political debates among candidates facilitated by radio and TV stations;
6. Voter education conducted through TV, Radio, social media (website, Facebook, Twitter, and Streams Radio), and call center;
7. Accreditation of social media e.g. bloggers; and
8. Assistance of voters with special needs, and notably the introduction of the braille ballots for visually impaired voters.

In order to further improve the quality of the electoral process in the URT, the SEOM makes the following recommendations for consideration by the Government of the URT and other relevant stakeholders:

1. Amendment of Section 41(7) of the Constitution to allow for legal recourse once Presidential results have been announced;
2. Address reported challenges on the use of BVR system;
3. Review of the process of appointing the NEC and ZEC executives;
4. Political parties to engage effectively with their supporters during voter education;
5. Increase participation of women at party level and as candidates;
6. Special measures to encourage the participation of marginalised groups (e.g. albinism, hearing and visually impaired); and
7. Any challenge to the election results to be done in accordance with the laws of the country.

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 July 2015 Revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections.

Based on its observations, the SADC Electoral Observation Mission concludes that the 2015 General Elections in the United Republic of Tanzania were free, fair, transparent, credible and peaceful, and thus reflecting the will of the people of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The SEOM congratulates the National Electoral Commission and the Zanzibar Electoral Commission which, despite the challenges, were able to professionally organise, conduct and deliver credible elections.

Finally, on behalf of the Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, His Excellency Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, the SEOM congratulates the people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the manner in which they conducted themselves during the electoral process.

On behalf of myself and all SADC observers, I would like to express our collective and sincere gratitude to the people of the United Republic of Tanzania for their warm welcome and cooperation during the work of our Mission.

Asanteni sana.
Thank you very much
Merci beaucoup
Muito obrigado
White Sands Hotel,

Dar es Salaam, 27 October 2015

United Republic of Tanzania