



**STATEMENT BY HON. NETUMBO NANDI- NDAITWAH, MINISTER
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SADC CHAIRPERSON OF THE
ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY
COOPERATION, H.E HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBAMBA, PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
AND HEAD OF THE SADC ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION
(SEOM) TO THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND NATIONAL
ELECTIONS**

**ROYAL SWAZI SPA HOTEL CONVENTION CENTER
EZULWINI, SWAZILAND**

ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2013

- CHAIRPERSON OF THE ELECTIONS AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION (EBC) OF THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND;
- THE DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OF SADC, MRS. EMILIE MUSHOBEKWA;
- YOUR EXCELLENCIES, HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ACCREDITED TO THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND;
- HEADS OF ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS TO THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND;
- TRADITION LEADERS;
- RELIGIOUS LEADERS;
- ESTEEMED MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA; AND
- LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

Good morning!

Following the invitation from the Kingdom of Swaziland to SADC to observe the upcoming 2013 National Elections to be held on 20 September 2013, as a Representative of the Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, His Excellency Mr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of Namibia, I wish to formally announce the presence and engagement of the SADC Election Observation Mission (SEOM) in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

Indeed, SADC in its efforts to deepen regional integration has the determination to bring about and to uphold the democratic values and principles in the process of building, strengthening and consolidation of democracy and governance in our Member States; and translating them into practical and tangible benefits for our citizens in the region. In this context, it is fundamental that provisions for full participation of our citizens in the political process and governance, whereby people by way of electing their legitimate leaders is assured.

As a regional Election Observation Mission, SEOM is guided by various instruments which include, the SADC Treaty, the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, as well the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. These instruments not only provide guide and benchmark for shared political and democratic values, but also is a commitment by our Member States, as a whole, to provide an opportunity for a Member State that is holding elections, in particular, to go through an electoral

peer review process as far as peaceful, free, fair, transparent and credible elections are concerned.

At this juncture I wish to express our gratitude to be honored and privileged by the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to the SEOM by the people of Swaziland, in particular, in allowing and trusting the engagement of the SEOM in this electoral process.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you may recall, the last SEOM engagement in the electoral observation exercise in this country was in 2008 and the mission in the same light undertake to a systematic assessment of the electoral process in accordance with the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections which remain our benchmark. To that effect, the scope of the SEOM will include, among others, the following aspects:

1. Constitutional and legal guarantees of freedom and rights of the citizens;
2. Conducive environment for free, fair and peaceful elections;
3. Non-discrimination in the voters' registration;
4. Existence of updated and accessible voters roll;
5. Timeous announcement of the election date;

6. Polling Stations should be in neutral places;
7. Counting of the votes at polling stations;
8. Establishment of the mechanism for assisting the planning and deployment of electoral observation missions.

The SEOM, as guided by the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections as well as the laws of the Kingdom of Swaziland, will uphold the principle of impartiality and independence in its observation exercise.

At this juncture, allow me to address specially to the candidates contesting in the current elections by way of pleading them to ensure adherence to our regional set principles and standards in the conduct of democratic elections. In this regard, all candidates and stakeholders are called-upon to exercise tolerance and restraint.

In the conduct of its observation exercise in the Kingdom of Swaziland, the SEOM will deploy Observers in all the four (4) Regions of the country. The SEOM will interact with relevant stakeholders and other Election Observation Missions as well, aiming at gathering, sharing and verifying information.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is important to underscore that the election observation exercise in an endeavor to ensure adherence to the regional democratic

standards, norms and values; also provides an opportunity to learn and share the best democratic practices among Member States in the conduct of democratic elections, thus contributing to the enhancement of democracy and governance in SADC Member States and the Region as a whole.

The SEOM purpose in engaging relevant stakeholders in a consultative process is to enhance the transparency and credibility of the electoral process in Swaziland.

In concluding, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage the people of Swaziland to exercise their political and democratic right to participate in the electoral process either as voters or as contestants.

With these remarks, I wish to formally announce, on behalf of the Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation and President of the Republic of Namibia, H.E Hifikepunye Pohamba, that the SADC Election Observation Mission (SEOM) to the 2013 National Elections in the Kingdom of Swaziland is officially launched.

Thank you for your attention!