



**STATEMENT BY HON. BERNARD KAMILLIUS MEMBE,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AND
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SADC
ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY
COOPERATION , HIS EXCELLENCY JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE
AND HEAD OF THE SADC ELECTORAL OBSERVER MISSION
(SEOM) TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE 31 JULY 2013
HARMONISED ELECTIONS**

**RAINBOW TOWERS HOTEL
HARARE, ZIMBABWE**

ON 15 JULY 2013

- **THE CHAIRPERSON, THE ZIMBABWE ELECTORAL COMMISSION;**
- **FORMER VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA, LT. GEN. MOMPATI MERAFAHE;**
- **THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF SADC, DR TOMAZ SALOMAO;**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCIES, HEADS OF MISSIONS ACCREDITED TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS;**
- **POLITICAL LEADERS;**
- **ELECTION OBSERVER MISSIONS TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE;**
- **ESTEEMED MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA; AND**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

The SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) is in the Republic of Zimbabwe at the invitation of the government of the Republic of Zimbabwe following the proclamation of the elections for the observation of the 31 July 2013 Harmonised polls.

You will recall that the SEOM to the Republic of Zimbabwe is the second electoral mission fielded to this country and a follow up to the first deployment to the Constitutional Referendum that was held on 16 March 2013.

On behalf of the mission, I wish to express our humble gratitude to the people and the electoral stakeholders to the upcoming 31 July 2013 Harmonised election for the invitation, trust and confidence placed in our team and the region as we undertake to our role in this elections.

Following the invitation by the Government of Zimbabwe, the SEOM was formally constituted in accordance with the provisions of the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections in the Region.

I must also state that in line with the proclamation and the Extraordinary Summit in Maputo, Mozambique, held on 15 June 2013, the SADC Electoral Observation Mission was deployed to observe the upcoming Harmonised elections.

Distinguished guests, at this juncture, I wish to formally communicate on behalf of the mission, the engagement of the SEOM to the Republic of Zimbabwe 2013 Harmonised elections.

The expectations of the SADC Electoral Observation mission will be guided and measured against the provisions and requirements of the SADC Treaty, the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, hand in hand with the legal provisions of the land, being the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the Electoral Act, and any law relevant to the electoral process in the country.

The SADC Electoral Observation Mission is deployed to the Republic of Zimbabwe as part of the electoral and political support mechanism that seek to encourage a conducive electoral environment that will guarantee the integrity of the vote. The Mission is in this country in support of our brothers and sisters of this Country as they undertake to select their political leadership.

You will also recall that SADC has been engaged and has been facilitating the political processes in this country since 2008 that culminated with the signing of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) that realised the Government of National Unity (GNU).

The mission and the region is pleased to note that the 2013 Harmonised elections in the Republic of Zimbabwe marks yet another significant milestone in the political life of the country.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, the electoral process and elections in particular, is based on the premise that ensures the participation of the ordinary citizens of the country's political processes.

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, you will agree with me that as in every other country, the election process of political office bearers remains a highly contested activity and as such raises deep political passions and opinions. Though the electoral mood is highly competitive, the mission will seek to encourage the nation to stay united in spite of the political differences and affiliation

As a region, we are here to encourage the people of Zimbabwe settle the political challenges that has beset the country in the recent past through the ballot.

The SADC Election Observation Mission takes cognizance of the fact that the mission has a two pronged approach, that is, as much as we are in this country to observe and encourage adherence to the regional benchmarks and the electoral process as a whole, the individual observers from the Member States represented in this mission take with them lessons learnt to our

country's for the enhancement of the electoral processes in the individual Member States.

I therefore would wish to state that electoral observation is a form of peer review process in electoral processes as well as an opportunity to mirror our different electoral processes and experiences in our Member States.

I wish to reiterate my earlier statement for the Constitutional Referendum that the mission checklist and scope of operation will generally focus on the constitutional and legal guarantees of freedom and rights of the citizens and the electoral management body in their execution of the duties as provided in the statutes

In view of the above stated benchmarks and in line with the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, the mission implores the various authorities and stakeholders facilitating for this election to ensure that the political and civil liberties of the citizens are protected to enable the free expression of the voters.

To the people of Zimbabwe, both contestants , political cadres and voters alike, I wish to encourage and add my voice to the plea of the political leadership in this country to exercise political tolerance and ensure peace before, during polling and after the 31 July Harmonised elections.

The SEOM has as today, 15 July 2013 deployed Four Hundred and Forty Two (442) observers in the ten (10) provinces and all the Two Hundred and ten (210) constituencies in Zimbabwe. The Observers deployed will be the process through which the mission will observe the electoral activities in the country.

The mission will collaborate with the other observer missions, both, local and foreign in their areas of deployment to their analysis and verification of the information obtained.

The Mission leadership will in addition to the teams deployed, engage in extensive consultations with the stakeholders so as to further understand on the various issues relating to the upcoming elections.

The mission will henceforth provide periodic contact with our stakeholders to provide update on the activities of the mission.

The mission would like to take this opportunity to wish all the contesting parties, candidates and the electorate a successful and peaceful electoral contestations.

To the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, the mission would like to encourage the Commission to ensure the credibility and transparency of the upcoming elections as entrusted by the citizens of this country.

With these remarks, I wish to announce on behalf of the Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation and President of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete that the SADC Electoral Observer Mission to the 31 July 2013, Harmonised Elections Republic of Zimbabwe, is officially launched.

Thank you for your attention!

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