



**STATEMENT ON THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE SADC
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION (SEOM) TO THE 2013
NATIONAL ELECTIONS**

IN

THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND

BY

**MS. EMILIE MUSHOBEKWA
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE – SECRETARY FOR FINANCE AND
ADMINISTRATION OF SADC**

**ON BEHALF OF THE SADC EXECUTIVE-SECRETARY, HE
DR. STERGOMENA LAWRENCE TAX**

MANZINI, 15 SEPTEMBER 2013

- HONORABLE NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, CHAIRPERSON OF SADC MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THE ORGANISATION ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY COOPERATION (MCO); AND HEAD OF THE SADC ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION (SEOM) TO THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND 2013 NATIONAL ELECTIONS;
- THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE ELECTIONS AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION (EBC);
- ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS;
- YOUR EXCELLENCIES, HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS ACCREDITED TO THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND;
- MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS;
- TRADITIONAL LEADERS;
- RELIGIOUS LEADERS;
- MEMBERS OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY;
- ESTEEMED MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA;
- LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

It is a privilege and honor for me, on behalf of the SADC Executive-Secretary, HE Dr. Stergomona Lawrence Tax, to welcome you to this gathering on the occasion of the launch of the SADC Election Observation Mission (SEOM) to the 2013 National Elections in the Kingdom of Swaziland, scheduled for 20 September 2013. With your permission, I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude for your presence in this event.

In accordance with the provisions of the 'SADC Treaty', 'SADC Protocol on Political, Defense and Security Cooperation' and 'SADC Principles and Guidelines governing Democratic Elections' the Kingdom of Swaziland invited SADC to observe the 2013 National Elections. To that effect, the SADC Election Observation Mission, that is being launched officially today in this splendid Ezulwini Valey, has been constituted and deployed in the country.

It is important to state that SADC Member States in the process of enhancement of Democracy in the Region have rooted and entrenched the universal values and principles of democracy, respect for human rights and adherence to the principle of the rule of law.

Being eradication of poverty an envisaged ultimate goal, through deeper regional integration, economic growth and sustainable development; SADC is committed to continuously consolidate peace, security and political stability and enhancement of democracy in the Region in order to enable the achievement of that objective.

The SADC attaches importance to these Elections, since they are part and parcel of the process of consolidation of the democracy in the country and Region. I am pleased to notice that over the past years, SADC election observations missions have made a meaningful contribution to the consolidation of Democracy in the region through sharing lessons learnt and best practices.

As a matter of fact, SADC has embarked on a process of revision of the 'SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections' as well as formulation of the 'SADC Elections Handbook'. Indeed, we are confident that these instruments will enhance the capacity of SEOM to undertake its mandate in accordance with continental and international best standards.

At this juncture, it is equally important to underscore that for a peaceful, free, fair, transparent and credible electoral process; the dissemination of democratic values and principles among all relevant stakeholders and society in general is responsibility of all stakeholders.

The presence of the SADC Election Observation Mission (SEOM) in the Kingdom of Swaziland is also to ensure that the provisions of the 'SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections' are adhered to in the conduct of democratic elections.

In this regard, the SEOM will deploy a sizeable number of Observers from the SADC Member States as well as from SADC Diplomatic Missions accredited to the Kingdom of Swaziland, thus, allowing the Mission to cover extensively the electoral process in the country before, during and after the Elections.

In addition to the 'SADC Treaty', 'SADC Protocol on Political, Defense and Security Cooperation' and the 'SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections', the conduct of the Mission will be guided by the relevant legislation of the Kingdom of Swaziland and other relevant continental

international instruments governing democratic elections, namely:

- the Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland;
- the Electoral Regulations;
- the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance;
- the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation; and
- the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers.

As a part of the best practices and aiming at enhancing reliability and validity of its findings, the SADC Electoral Observation Mission will share information with other Election Observation Missions in the country. In this respect, consultations with stakeholders involved in the process will be ongoing and undertaken by the Mission in order to be seized with the electoral environment and momentum.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that the activities of the SADC Election Observation Mission (SEOM) in the Kingdom of Swaziland will be conducted from its Headquarters at the **LUGOGO SUN HOTEL**, in MANZINI.

It is our expectation that, after the election observation exercise, we will gather once again here at the same venue for the Mission to present its findings and Preliminary Statement on the 2013 National Elections in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

With these remarks, it is now my honor and privilege to introduce and invite the Head of the SADC Election Observation Mission (SEOM) to the 2013 National Elections in the Kingdom of Swaziland, Honorable Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Namibia; Chairperson of SADC Ministerial Committee of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (MCO); and also Representative of His Excellency Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of Namibia and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, to now officially launch the Mission.

Thank you very much

Muito obrigado

Merci beaucoup