



PRESS RELEASE

SADC Electoral Observation Mission to the 2023 General Elections in the Kingdom of Eswatini

19 September 2023, Gaborone, Botswana: In accordance with the five-year electoral cycle of the Kingdom of Eswatini, the Government of Eswatini has invited the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to observe the Kingdom's General Elections which are scheduled for 29th September 2023. In accordance with the Revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2021), and in response to the invitation from the Kingdom of Eswatini, His Excellency Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia, and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation deployed a SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM). H.E. Hichilema further mandated the SADC Executive Secretary, H.E. Mr. Elias Magosi to coordinate the SEOM and facilitate in-country deployment of observers.

The SEOM will be deployed to all four (4) Regions of the Kingdom of Eswatini to observe the pre-election, and post-election phases. The Mission will assess the conduct of the elections against a set of principles stipulated in the *revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections of (2021)* which include, amongst others, full participation of the citizens in the democratic and development processes, measures to prevent political violence, intimidation and intolerance, equal opportunity for all political parties to access the State Media as well as access to information by all citizens, and acceptance of and respect for the election results by all candidates.

To promote electoral integrity, electoral justice, good governance, peace and stability in the SADC region, and to give effect to the commitment contained in the *SADC Principles and Guidelines, the launch of the SEOM on 22 September 2023 will include various election awareness activities for the electoral stakeholder to learn and appreciate the work of the SEOM.*

The key activities for the SEOM schedule are as follows;

DATE	ACTIVITY
18 th – 21 st September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refresher Training for Observers revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2021)
21 st - 30 th September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consultation Meetings with all relevant stakeholders for Electoral Stakeholders
22 nd September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch of SEOM - Awareness-Raising Activities (Open to public and media)

DATE	ACTIVITY
29 th September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election Day (Field observations for SEOM)
1 st October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release of the SEOM Preliminary Statement (Open to public and media)
30 th September – 5 th October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deployment of Long-Term-Observation (LTO) in Ezulwini and Mbabane

For enquiries: Ms. Barbara Lopi, Head of Communication and Public Relations, email blopi@sadc.int , Mr. Letso Shine Mpho, Email: Impho@sadc.int and Magabolle Mafiri, Email: mmafiri@sadc.int or email prininfo@sadc.int

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SADC is an organisation of 16 Member States established in 1980 as the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) and later, in August,1992 transformed into the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The mission of SADC is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient, productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security; so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy. Member States are Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

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