



WELCOME REMARKS

BY

**PROFESSOR KULA THELETSANE, DIRECTOR OF THE
SADC ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY
AFFAIRS AND REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS EXCELLENCY,
MR. ELIAS MAGOSI, THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF
SADC**

ON THE

**OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE SADC
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (SEOM) TO THE
FIRST ROUND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN THE
REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR**

NOVOTEL HOTEL, ANTANANARIVO

12 NOVEMBER 2023

Excellency Brigadier General Godfrey Miyanda, Former Vice President of the Republic of Zambia and Head of the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM);

Distinguished Members of the SADC Organ Troika;

Distinguished Representatives of the Government of the Republic of Madagascar;

Chairperson, Representatives and Members of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI);

Distinguished Representatives of International Electoral Observation Missions;

Your Excellencies, Heads and Representatives of the Diplomatic Missions Accredited to the Republic of Madagascar;

Members of the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC);

SADC Election Observers;

Representatives of Local Election Observers;

Religious Leaders and Members of the Civil Society;

Members of the Media;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am greatly honoured to deliver these welcome remarks on this occasion of the launch of the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the 16 November 2023 First Round Presidential Elections in the Republic of Madagascar. I further wish to welcome you to the official launch of the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) on behalf of the Executive Secretary of SADC mandated by His Excellency, Mr. Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia, and Chairperson of the SADC Organ

on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. Allow me to take this opportunity to acknowledge your presence and thank you most sincerely for taking time out of your busy schedules to attend this official launch.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In line with the *SADC Principles and Guidelines for Governing Democratic Elections (2021)*, SADC has been invited by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) of the Republic of Madagascar, to observe its First Round Presidential Election.

In accordance with the mandate of the Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation as stipulated in the revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2021), the Organ Chairperson, , Mr. Hakainde Hichilema, constituted the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the Republic of Madagascar. The Chair of the Organ further appointed Brigadier General Godfrey Miyanda, Former Vice President of the Republic of Zambia, to lead the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the Republic of Madagascar.

To this end, SADC will observe this First Round Presidential Elections, based on the adopted practice that supports Member States in ensuring regular and credible elections, namely the three-tier electoral observation approach that involves pre-election assessments, assessments during elections, and post-elections assessments, as enshrined in the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections.

SEOM began to arrive in Antananarivo, Republic of Madagascar, on 02 November 2023. As part of the preparations for this Mission and as is the norm, our observers underwent a refresher training from 06 to 09 November 2023, here in Antananarivo, which equipped them with the requisite skills to effectively observe, assess and report on the electoral process using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). It is therefore encouraging that the Republic of Madagascar has allowed SADC to participate in this important process, which remains a cornerstone for the consolidation of democracy in the country and the SADC region.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

At this juncture allow me to introduce and invite the Head of the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the 2023 First Round Presidential Election in the Republic of Madagascar, Brigadier General Godfrey Miyanda, Former Vice President of the Republic of Zambia, to deliver his remarks and officially launch SEOM Madagascar.

Your Excellency!