



**LAUNCH STATEMENT  
BY**

**HONOURABLE JUSTICE ANDREW K. C. NYIRENDA, SENIOR COUNSEL (SC),  
FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI**

**AND**

**HEAD OF THE SADC ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (SEOM) TO THE  
2025 PRESIDENTIAL AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN THE  
REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES**

**20 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**EDEN BLUE HOTEL, VICTORIA, SEYCHELLES**

**Distinguished Members of the SADC Organ Troika;**

**Distinguished Representatives of the Government of the Republic of Seychelles;**

**Professor Kula Theletsane, Director of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Affairs, and Representative of His Excellency, Mr. Elias Magosi, the SADC Executive Secretary;**

**Commissioners, Representatives and Members of the Electoral Commission of Seychelles;**

**Distinguished Representatives of International Electoral Observation Missions;**

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

**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.**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of His Excellency Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera , President of the Republic of Malawi, and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, to this official launch of the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the Republic of Seychelles.

As per the long-standing tradition among SADC Member States, we are here at the invitation of the Government of Seychelles, through the Electoral Commission of Seychelles, to observe the Presidential and National Assembly Elections scheduled for 25, 26, and 27 September 2025. I wish to express our gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Seychelles for this most noble decision to invite fellow SADC Member States to observe the elections.

You may wish to note that, apart from this Election, the months of September and October 2025 will host general elections in two other SADC Member States, namely the Republic of Malawi, which held elections on 16 September, and the United Republic of Tanzania, which will go to the polls on 29 October 2025. The readiness of Member States to be observed and to deploy Observers to these Elections is a clear testament to the confidence and trust within the SADC region in supporting the enhancement of democracy and good governance.

At this juncture, I would like to express our gratitude to all SADC Member States for facilitating the deployment of our SEOMs through the provision of your resources and observers.

**Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

SADC observes elections in its Member States based on the *Revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2021)*. All SADC Member States have affirmed their commitment to implement these *Principles and Guidelines*. The *Principles and Guidelines* provide an objective and scientific methodology for observing elections, contributing to the consolidation of democracy in the Region. They are also informed by key African Union (AU) instruments such as the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance of 2007, and the relevant United Nations (UN) Conventions.

Our current Mission commenced its work on 9 September 2025. According to SADC norms, election observation is a lengthy and comprehensive process that engages with Member States in the pre-election, Election, and post-election phases. Consistent with the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections*, the deployment of this SEOM was preceded by a Pre-Election Assessment Goodwill Mission of the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC) from 30 June to 8 July 2025. SEAC's responsibilities were primarily to assess the country's political and security environment for the holding of the elections. The Goodwill mission also assessed whether the legal framework governing elections was in place and whether the Electoral Commission of Seychelles was prepared to conduct democratic elections. This process involved interactions with individuals from a cross-section of Seychelles' society, including the political parties, civil society organisations, Government offices, the Electoral Commission of Seychelles, individual experts, faith-based organisations and the diplomatic community. We extend our deepest gratitude to all the stakeholders who took the time to interact with our SEAC Team.

Because of your dedication and commitment, we are once again asking you to share your time with us - the SADC Electoral Observer Mission (SEOM) - so that we can be well-informed about the developments that have taken place in the aftermath of the SEAC Mission and fully appreciate the dynamics of the election phase. These face-to-face interactions are critical components of the methodology that guides the election observation.

Given the prevailing peace in the country, the SEAC Pre-election Assessment Goodwill Mission concluded that the Republic of Seychelles is prepared to hold the scheduled Presidential and National Assembly Elections. The SEOM will issue its Preliminary Statement on 29 September 2025 at 11:00 am at in this very venue; an event to which you are all cordially invited.

### **Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The SEOM notes that the Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles, along with a set of relevant laws, governs these elections. It is in line with these national legal

instruments that the SADC Electoral Observation Mission will assess the conduct of the elections against a set of central principles stipulated in the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections*, which include:

- (i) Full participation of the citizens in the democratic and development processes;
- (ii) Enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms such as freedom of association, assembly and expression;
- (iii) Observance of the provisions of relevant legal frameworks concerning the date or period of elections;
- (iv) Measures to prevent corruption, bribery, favouritism, political violence, intimidation and intolerance;
- (v) Equal opportunity for all political parties to access the State Media as well as access to information by all citizens;
- (vi) Respect for values of electoral justice such as integrity, impartiality and fairness;
- (vii) No undue restraints against the opportunity to exercise the right to vote and be voted for;
- (viii) Independence of the Judiciary and impartiality of the electoral institutions;
- (ix) Capacitation and empowerment of citizens through civic and voter education;
- (x) Acceptance of and respect for the election results by candidates and political parties as proclaimed to have been free, fair, transparent, credible and peaceful by the competent and Independent Electoral Commission following the law of the land; and

- (xi) Provision of electoral justice through expedient settlement of electoral disputes as provided for in the law.

**Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

All stakeholders must understand that the SEOM mandate is to determine the adherence of the Member State holding elections to the relevant provisions of the *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections*. In this regard, I would like to provide some detail for the benefit of all.

To fulfil its mandate, the SEOM assesses and evaluates the following, amongst others:

- (i) whether the legal and constitutional framework guarantees freedom of expression, assembly, association, and human rights;
- (ii) the structure and model of the electoral system, the Electoral Management Body (EMB), the Electoral Act and regulations, and the nature of civil and political rights, as well as economic, social, and cultural rights;
- (iii) the establishment, process of appointment and retention of members of EMBs, in addition to assessing the composition, status, independence, impartiality, professionalism and preparedness of the EMB for the Election;
- (iv) that the delimitation of election boundaries was done in a manner acceptable to stakeholders, and whether the factors that prompted delimitation were in accordance with the laws of the land;
- (v) whether the delimitation process was undertaken in accordance with the national law and without undue exclusion of particular groups or political interests;
- (vi) the procedures for nomination and provision of reasonable time frames to allow political parties and candidates to comply with the requirements of the registration process;

- (vii) whether there is a Code of Conduct governing all political parties and candidates;
- (viii) the neutrality of the security forces in providing election security and the existence of requisite special voting facilities for security forces to enable them to cast their votes;
- (ix) the requirements and practices regarding direct and indirect access to the mass media for political parties, candidates, supporters and the general public;
- (x) the requirements and practices concerning reporting by state-controlled, public and private media about political parties, candidates and supporters;
- (xi) the capacity and quality of civic and voter education programmes to afford all prospective voters accurate, comprehensible and adequate information upon which to make electoral choices;
- (xii) the extent to which the process enjoys the trust of the electorate, including inclusiveness, accuracy, and transparency, and whether the electorate is able to own and identify with the process;
- (xiii) the appropriateness of locations of polling stations, and adequacy and accessibility of their facilities;
- (xiv) the production and distribution to polling stations and storage of ballots and other sensitive election materials;
- (xv) the conduct of voting, including assistance to voters, counting, tabulation and announcement of results; the transparency of procedures and adequacy of safeguards against inaccuracies; and
- (xvi) the conduct of procedures and processes concerning electoral complaints and challenges by citizens, prospective voters, and those seeking Election, including providing effective remedies for violations of electoral-related rights.

To attain objective and impartial bases from which to draw its findings, the SEOM consults a broad, diverse, and unrestricted range of stakeholders in each Member State holding elections.

**Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to inform you that the SADC Electoral Observation Mission to the 2025 Presidential and National Assembly Elections in Seychelles consists of seventy nine (79) Personnel with sixty four (64) deployable observers. They are from seven (7) SADC Member States namely the Republics of Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia, the Kingdom of Eswatini and the United Republic of Tanzania. The Observers underwent a four (4) days' training session from 14 to 17 September 2025, to be informed of the Seychelles context relative to the elections.

Our Observers will be deployed to observe all administrative Districts of Seychelles.

The SEOM observations will focus on the pre-election, Election, and post-election periods, which include the campaigns, voting day, the process of counting ballot papers, the announcement of election results, and the post-election environment. We also initiated stakeholder engagements in earnest since our arrival in Seychelles to gain a deeper understanding of the political, legal, and security situation in the context of the elections.

SADC urges all registered voters to actively exercise their civic and political rights by casting their votes and electing leaders of their choice on 25, 26, and 27 September 2025. We also encourage all stakeholders to ensure that these elections are conducted in a peaceful, free, fair, transparent, and credible atmosphere. We look forward to an electoral process that adheres to democratic values and principles envisioned in the SADC Treaty, the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, as well as the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2021)*.



In closing, I would like to take this opportunity once again to invite you all to the release of our Preliminary Statement regarding our Mission's observations of the Elections scheduled for 29 September 2025, at 11.00 am, in this room.

**Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is now my singular honour, on behalf of the Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, His Excellency Dr. McCarthy Lazarus Chakwera, President of the Republic of Malawi, to declare the SADC Electoral Observation Mission to the 2025 Presidential and National Assembly Elections of the Republic of Seychelles officially launched.

***Thank you very much***

***Merci beaucoup***

***Muito Obrigado***

***Asante Sana***