



WELCOME REMARKS

BY

**PROFESSOR KULA I. THELETSANE
DIRECTOR
SADC ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY
AFFAIRS**

ON THE

**OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE SADC
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (SEOM) TO THE
GENERAL ELECTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

LUSAKA

6 AUGUST 2026

Honourable Samuel B. Tembenu, SC – Former Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs of the Republic of Malawi, and Head of the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the Republic of Zambia;

Distinguished Members of the SADC Organ Troika

Distinguished Representatives of the Government of the Republic of Zambia

Chairperson, Representatives and Members of the Electoral Commission of Zambia

Distinguished Representatives of International Electoral Observation Missions

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

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.

Good Morning,

I thank you for your presence and welcome you to the launch of the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the 13th August 2026 General Election in the Republic of Zambia.

In line with the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2021)*, **His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika**, President of the Republic of Malawi and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, constituted

the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) for deployment to the Republic of Zambia, to observe the upcoming General Election.

Also in accordance with the mandate as stipulated in the *SADC Principles and Guidelines*, **His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika**, President of the Republic of Malawi and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation appointed **Honourable Samuel B. Tembenu, SC – Former Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs** of the Republic of Malawi, to lead the SADC Electoral Observation Mission to the Republic of Zambia.

The Head of Mission is supported by the representatives of the SADC Organ Troika, members of the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC) and observers from SADC Member States. The SADC Secretariat also provides the necessary support to the SEOM through the coordination of its activities, including logistics and managing the Head of Mission's stakeholder consultations programme.

Head of Mission, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In terms of the SEOM methodology, the process of election observation is an information and data intensive exercise, as is the subsequent analysis thereof. This requires prior training of capable personnel from Member States. In this regard, and at the directive of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ, the Secretariat in collaboration with Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA), has to date trained hundreds of election observers in 9 SADC Member States. I urge all beneficiary Member States to ensure that they second only trained and certified election observers so that we make use of this critical resource and investment.

With these very few welcome remarks, it is now my singular honour to invite **Honourable Samuel B. Tembenu**, Head of the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the Zambia's 2026 General Election, to deliver his remarks and officially launch the SADC Election Observation Mission to the Republic of Zambia.

Your honour!