

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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AU hosts the 2023 Convening Committee and Implementation Meetings of the endorsers of the Declaration of Principles (DoP) for International Elections Observation



The Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, African Union Commission (AUC) hosted the 2023 Convening Committee and Implementation Meetings of the endorsers of the Declaration of Principles (DoP) for International Elections Observation and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers, From 14 to 17 November 2023, at the AUC HQ in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The DoP for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers establish the basis for credible international election observation. It was developed through consultation among more than 20 intergovernmental and international nongovernmental organizations involved in the conduct of elections and the promotion of credible and peaceful electoral processes. It was commemorated at the UN on 27 October 2005 and is now endorsed by more than 50 intergovernmental and international organizations (including the African Union), which are engaged in the process of improving international election observation.

This year's meeting started with the Convening Committee meeting of endorsers of the Declaration of Principles for International Elections Observation. The endorsers presented updates on their respective election observation experiences and related activities, discussed election processes, considered requests from other organizations to join the

DoP Family; and agreed on the Agenda of the 2023 implementation meeting that was to be held starting the next day.

On the 15th of November 2023, the DoP Implementation Meeting officially kicked off with 100+ participants attending from all of the world. At the opening of the ceremony, Mrs Nardos Ayalew, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the AU presented her opening remarks followed by three keynote speeches by Ms Cristina Castagnoli, Head of Unit - Democracy and Election Actions, European Parliament (EP); H.E Ambassador Alberto Bertoni, Italian ambassador to the African Union Ambassador of Italy; and H.E Dr. Speciosa Wandira Kazibwe, Former Vice-President of the Republic of Uganda; and Former Member of AU Panel of the Wise.

Ms. Patience Chiradza, the Director of the Governance and Conflict Prevention Directorate of the African Union Commission, presented opening remarks on behalf of Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department. " We have great hope for the results of this implementation meeting which we believe will enrich the improvement of our respective organizations and institutions. This enables us to put our fingers on the true actors, challenges and stakes; but also to reflect on the perspectives in the short, medium and long term in order to better readjust our strategies for action and cooperation in view of better optimizing our missions in conformity with our mandates" – Director Chiradza stated.

The 2023 DoP meeting discussions were focused on six (6) thematic areas:

1. Communication on Observation – are we effectively communicating our findings and does the general public understand what we say?"; 2. "Youth Participation and Representation in Elections"; 3. "Challenges of observers during elections: How to navigate a new electoral landscape"; 4. "Data Protection and Electoral Integrity"; 5. "High-Level Panel - Experiences of Head of EOM" and 6. "GNDEM Panel - Observation Considerations and Observer Security in Conflict Environments". The panel discussions on each thematic area were led by different endorsing organizations and were then followed by plenary questions and answer sessions.

The DoP was attended by participants drawn from the AUC Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Members of the Convening Committee and Implementation of the DoP, selected Heads of International Election Observation Missions, and some Electoral Experts, and supported by European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES). The meeting concluded on the 17th of November 2023 by presenting the key recommendations on the way forward.

For further information please contact:

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