



SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to deploy to the Kingdom of Lesotho

The Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation and President of the United Republic of Tanzania (URT), His Excellency Dr John Pombe Joseph Magufuli has deployed the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the Kingdom of Lesotho to observe the country's National Assembly Election scheduled for 3 June 2017.

The SEOM, which has been deployed at the invitation of the Independent Electoral Commission of the Kingdom of Lesotho, will be led by the Honourable Dr. Augustine P. Mahiga (MP), the Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania. The SEOM will be officially launched at a press conference by the Honourable Mahiga on 25 May 2017 at Avani Lesotho Hotel at 11:00AM and thereafter, its observers will be deployed to all districts.

The SEOM observers are drawn from SADC Member States and among others comprise Members of Parliament, Members of Security Sectors, and Members of national civil society organisations representing domestic electoral observation groups. The practice of election observation in Member States is part of SADC's democratic culture and tradition and is in conformity with the *SADC Treaty*; *the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation* and the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2015)*.

After voting day, the SEOM will release its Preliminary Statement at a press conference on 5 June 2017 at Avani Lesotho Hotel. The final Mission Report on the election will be released three months after the announcement of the results.

In addition to the election observation, the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC), will hold a pre-deployment awareness raising seminar for electoral stakeholders on the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2015)* on 20 May 2017 at Avani Lesotho Hotel. The objective of the seminar is to raise awareness and sensitise electoral stakeholders on the *revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections* which have introduced a Long Term Election Observation methodology, designed to enhance the techniques of election observation.

Part of the SEAC's mandate is to promote the implementation of *the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections* in Member States; facilitate the training and deployment of SEOM; and advise Mission Leadership of SEOM on electoral related matters.

The SEOM Headquarters is located at Avani Lesotho Hotel in Maseru. The Mission can be contacted through Dr Kondwani Chirambo at kchirambo@sadc.int and Dr Mavis Matenge on +266 5913 6580, Email: mnmatenge@sadc.int and Dr Gabriel Malebang on +266 5859 6058, Email: gmalebang@sadc.int