



EUROPEAN UNION
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION - SIERRA LEONE 2012
PRESIDENTIAL, PARLIAMENTARY AND LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

EU EOM CHIEF OBSERVER TO FOLLOW ELECTION PREPARATIONS AND CAMPAIGN IN KONO AND BO

Freetown, 12 November 2012

The Chief Observer of the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) to Sierra Leone, Mr. Richard Howitt, is traveling to Kono tomorrow to get the pulse of the political environment and of the campaign, and to observe the last phase of election preparations in the district before the 17 November polls.

Before travelling to Kono, Mr. Howitt expressed his interest in visiting the districts again: *“After the recent incidents in Kono it is very important for me to speak directly to party representatives and other actors in the district to get their impressions and listen to their concerns”. “Fortunately the process has been generally peaceful so far, with only minor incidents to regret. I hope that in these final days prior to the elections all political parties abide by the code of conduct they have signed and uphold the core principles of democracy and mutual respect, for the good of the process”*. The EU EOM Chief Observer will meet the EU long term observers based in Kono, the representatives of political parties, the regional Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC), the District Monitoring Committee (DMC) and the security forces, among others.

On the following day, the EU Chief Observer will travel to Bo for the second time to meet different interlocutors and to observe campaign activities due to take place in the district on 14 November. Once back in Freetown, Mr. Howitt will again be meeting the main presidential candidates in order to get impressions on the end of campaign period, and the NEC in order to understand the last phase of preparations for the 17 November polls. The Chief Observer will be joined in these meetings by a delegation of four Members of the European Parliament who will arrive in Sierra Leone on 14 November.

After election day, the EU Election Observation Mission will issue a statement of preliminary findings and conclusions. The EU EOM will remain in the country to observe counting and tallying procedures, as well as the resolution of any complaints and appeals that may arise after the 17 November polls.

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