



EUROPEAN UNION

ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION - SIERRA LEONE 2012

PRESIDENTIAL, PARLIAMENTARY AND LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

EU EOM REINFORCES ITS PRESENCE IN SIERRA LEONE WITH 50 NEW OBSERVERS

Freetown, 13 November 2012

A group of 50 European Union short term observers, coming from 25 EU member states and Norway, is being deployed throughout the country today to observe the 17 November Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Council elections.

The observers arrived in Freetown on 11 November. After two days of comprehensive briefing they will join today the 28 EU long term observers deployed throughout Sierra Leone since 14 October. In total the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) has now 86 election observers working throughout the country.

“With the deployment of our short term observers the EU EOM is now in full strength to observe the 17 November polls and the counting and tally procedures across the country”, said Richard Howitt, Chief Observer of the EU EOM. “These 50 short term observers will reinforce our presence in all the districts of Sierra Leone to continue watching closely the electoral process. We hope this will contribute to have a peaceful and democratic process”.

The EU EOM Chief Observer will also be travelling today to Kono to closely follow the preparations of the polls and to meet different interlocutors in the region. *“I sincerely hope that during the next days all political parties will call on all their supporters to refrain from any forms of violence before, during and after 17 November polls. It is crucial that all Sierra Leoneans show their commitment with peace and democracy in such an important moment for the country”, Mr Howitt said.*

A delegation of four Members of the European Parliament will also be joining the EU EOM on Thursday 15 November. After election day, the EU EOM will issue a statement of preliminary findings and conclusions on the electoral process.

*For further information or interview requests with the EU Chief Observer, please contact **Javier Gutierrez, EU EOM’s Press and Public Outreach Officer** Mobile: +232 (0)79 250 959 E-mail: javier.gutierrez@eueomsierraleone.eu*

European Union Election Observation Mission – Sierra Leone 2012

Bintumani Hotel, Bloc A

Freetown

www.eueom.eu/sierraleone2012