



European Union Election Observation Mission Malawi 2004

2004 PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS FELL SHORT OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS IN KEY AREAS SAYS EU EOM FINAL REPORT

The 2004 Presidential and Parliamentary elections were conducted in a peaceful manner, however, they fell short of international standards for democratic elections in a number of key areas, concludes the European Union Election Observation Mission Final Report, issued today in Malawi during a visit by the Chief Observer, Marieke Sanders-ten Holte MEP.

While voting proceeded smoothly, states the report, the overall process failed to provide a level playing field for political contestants, voter registration was unsatisfactory, and the tabulation of results seriously lacked transparency to the extent that it is not possible to have full confidence in the accuracy of the results.

“The 2004 elections provided an opportunity for significant progress towards international standards for democratic elections”, said Marieke Sanders-ten Holte. “It is disappointing therefore that this has not been realised. Serious steps must now be made to improve the framework for elections and the authorities must demonstrate sufficient political will to ensure that the next elections are conducted in line with international standards. The people of Malawi deserve better elections.”

The report highlights many possible improvements to the electoral process and urges the Government of Malawi to take them on board. The European Union stands ready to assist the Malawi Government with this.

The EU EOM was deployed to Malawi between 5 April – 5 June 2004, following an invitation from the Malawi Electoral Commission and after the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Malawi and the European Commission, to observe the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, held on 20 May 2004.

The Chief Observer is visiting Malawi between 3-8 August to present the EOM Final Report to the authorities as well as representatives of political parties, civil society and the international community.

Lilongwe, 4 August 2004

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The Final Report can be found at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/malawi/index.htm