



– PRESS RELEASE –

EU EOM RECOGNISES EFFORTS OF THE MALAWI ELECTION COMMISSION IN PROVIDING TRANSPARENCY

Blantyre, 31 May 2014. – Following the invitation of the Malawi Election Commission, the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) is mandated to provide a comprehensive assessment of all aspects of the electoral process, including the announcement of election results and follow up of any election complaints and appeals that may arise thereafter.

The EU EOM recognises the efforts made by the MEC Chair and Commissioners in providing transparency and accuracy to the tallying of election results in a process that has been marked by various anomalies. These efforts were limited by the 7-day timeframe provided to MEC to announce the election results, and therefore may now be subject to the jurisdiction of the judiciary for further consideration.

After election day, EU observers remained in country to observe the tallying of election results process at the district tally centres and the national tally centre. The EU EOM is bound by a code of conduct to ensure its impartiality and its non-interference in the electoral process. The EU EOM will therefore provide a full assessment of the tallying process and the related handling of legitimate complaints only after the process has been completed.

The EU EOM has been present in Malawi since 12 April. A preliminary statement containing the findings of the mission during the pre-election period and election day covering voting, closing and counting was issued on 22 May. The EU EOM would like to remind stakeholders of the following findings:

- *Notwithstanding considerable organisational shortcomings, calm prevailed on election day. Lack of essential material resulted in delays in the opening of polling stations. However, the commitment of polling station staff facilitated the voting process, along with the implementation of ad hoc solutions, made in agreement with political party representatives. Although these ad hoc solutions facilitated the conduct of the voting process, their impact on the tabulation process and the results transmission system remains to be assessed.*
- *Voting was generally conducted in an orderly, calm and peaceful manner. Voters patiently waited to cast their vote despite long queues. EU observers assessed the overall conduct of voting as being good or very good in 92 per cent of the 404 polling stations visited.*
- *Despite the weaknesses in the election administration's structural capacity and the resulting organisational shortcomings, MEC has acted impartially throughout the election period.*

The EU EOM will remain in Malawi to observe and to follow up on any election complaints and appeals that may arise. The mission will publish a final report with a comprehensive assessment of the electoral process, including recommendations, a few weeks after the conclusion of the electoral process.

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