



EUROPEAN UNION

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European Union launches Election Observation Mission to Mali

Following an invitation from the Malian Government, the European Union is deploying an Election Observation Mission to observe the Presidential Elections of 28 July. This mission is part of the EU's long-standing support to the political transition and the stabilization process in Mali. Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the Commission, has appointed Louis Michel, a Member of the European Parliament, former European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Assistance and former Belgian Foreign Minister, as Chief Observer.

Catherine Ashton said: *“This Election Observation Mission is a further stage in our efforts to assist Mali on the road to stability. The elections mark another crucial step towards the restoration of the constitutional order and the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Mali. It is vital that all those involved engage in the process in a peaceful and democratic manner right across the country. The EU Observation Mission will increase the voters’ confidence in a transparent, inclusive and credible process. With his huge experience in the region, Louis Michel was the perfect choice as Chief Observer.”*

A core team of nine EU election analysts has been deployed in Mali since 21 June and they were joined by 20 long-term observers on 2 July. 30 short-term observers from EU member states will arrive one week before voting.

Shortly after election day, the mission will issue a preliminary statement outlining its initial findings at a press conference in Bamako. The mission will observe the final counting of votes and the complaint procedures and will prepare a full report including recommendations to improve the electoral process.

P R E S S

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