



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY OBSERVER MISSION PRELIMINARY REPORT

BURUNDI PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS HELD ON 28TH JUNE 2010

**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
29TH JUNE, 2010**

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BURUNDI PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS - JUNE 2010

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This EAC Preliminary Report covers Observations made from 24th – 29th June. This EAC Observer mission undertook the task pursuant to:

- The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community;
- Commitment by EAC to observe elections in Partner States;
- In response to the invitation of the Independent Electoral Commission of Burundi (CENI)

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives for the EAC Observer Mission were as follows:

1. To assess whether conditions exist for the conduct of elections that allow the people of Burundi to freely express their will;
2. To assess and determine whether elections are conducted in accordance with the legal framework for elections in Burundi;
3. To determine whether the final results of the electoral process as a whole reflect the wishes of the people of Burundi;
4. To assess whether the elections meet the benchmarks set out in the EAC Elections Guidelines.

3.0 COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

The 23 strong EAC Observer mission was led by Hon. Otieno Karani and comprised of the Members of the East African Legislative Assembly, Members of Parliaments of EAC Partner States, Senior Officials from Partner States and the Private Sector.

4.0 DEPLOYMENT

The Mission deployed in eleven out of seventeen provinces of the country, namely:

- 4.1 Bujumbura Urban; (Hon. Karan Otieno, Hon. Said Bakari Jecha, Joseph Birungi, Charles Kadonya, Godfrey Magadu and Owora Richard Othieno)
- 4.2 Bujumbura Rural; (Hon. Otieno Karan and Hon. Said Bakari Jecha)
- 4.3 Bubanza; (Hon. Otieno Karan and Hon. Said Bakari Jecha)
- 4.4 Ngozi; (Hon. Pierre Habumuremyi and Mr. Joseph Biribonwa)
- 4.5 Makamba; (Hon. Christopher Nakuleu and Mr. Willy Agirembabazi)
- 4.6 Ruyigi; (Hon. Mike Sebalu and Ms. Hope Tumukunde)
- 4.7 Gitega; (Hon. Claire Kayirangwa and Hon. David Guma Gumisiriza)
- 4.8 Cibitoke; (Hon. Abdullah Mwinyi and Mr. Pacifique Nduwimana)
- 4.9 Bururi; (Hon. Kate Kamba and Mr. Ahmed Maamun Ali)
- 4.10 Muramvya; (Hon Dora Byamukama and Mr. David Njoka)
- 4.11 Rutana; (Hon Harriet Sebera Mukamurangwa, Hon. Zahor Juma Khamis).

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The Mission employed various methods in its work, including but not limited to:

- 5.1 Literature Review;
- 5.2 Review of media reports – Radio, Print and Electronic;
- 5.3 Meetings and interactions with various stakeholders;
- 5.4 Attending briefings by the CENI;
- 5.5 Attending political campaign rallies and
- 5.6 Field Observations.

OBSERVATIONS

6.1 Pre-Polling Day Observations

In most areas the following was observed:

- Election Materials were delivered on time;
- Election Materials were secured;
- Polling Station set-up was done on the eve of Election day.
- Peace and Security prevailed
- It was noted that other political parties boycotted the elections:

6.2 Polling Day

Opening of Polling Stations:

- The majority of centres opened between 6.00am to 6.30am;
- Voters were present at the time of opening;
- Election officials were present at the time of opening;
- Voters were briefed on the process of voting;
- Observers were present
- Agents of the Participating Party were present;
- Security was present.

Set-up of Polling Centres:

- Elderly, Sick, pregnant and disabled given priority;
- Secrecy of Ballots was observed;
- Numbers at Polling stations were manageable allowing for smooth flow of voting;
- Places were provided for observers;
- Gender representation was reflected;
- Youth participation was noted;
- Elections officials exhibited teamwork and commitment to their work;
- Voting centres were easily identified;
- Voting centres were in some instances distant;

Voter Processes and Procedure

- No malpractices observed;

Voter turn-up

- In some cases it was noted that voter turn out was low.

Closing

- Closing was done on time in an orderly and peaceful manner;
- Closing witnessed by participating party agents, observers and the media

Counting

- Counting was done in a peaceful and orderly manner;
- In some instances there was lack of clarity on the issue of handling empty envelopes in the ballot boxes.

Recommendations

- Mechanisms should be explored and instituted to allow combined elections in order to avert voter fatigue.
- In areas of where schools which are used as voting centres are far, efforts should be made to utilize alternative facilities in order to ease voter access.

- Encourage all political stakeholders to use dialogue and positive engagement in the electoral processes:

CONCLUSION

To the extent of our observations, the elections were generally peaceful and transparent. We urge that this peace that prevailed during the elections be maintained. The Mission commends the Republic of Burundi, the CENI, the people of Burundi and the media for their efforts towards successful elections.

A final report of the Election Observation will be submitted soon.

Hon. Otieno Karan

Leader of the EAC Observer Mission

29 June, 2010