



EISA WITNESSING MISSION

ARRIVAL STATEMENT

9 January 2014

The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) announces the deployment of its Witnessing Mission to the Constitutional Referendum in the Arab Republic of Egypt. The referendum is scheduled to take place on 14 and 15 January 2014.

EISA's deployment of this mission is in line with its commitment to an African continent where democratic governance, human rights and citizen participation are upheld in a peaceful environment. EISA has closely followed Egypt's transition since 2011 when the parliamentary elections were held. EISA notes that the context within which Egyptians are returning to the polls for the third time in three years to vote on a constitution is a highly polarised one. It also recognises the fact that the current referendum is taking place within a context of an unconstitutional change of government which is clearly prohibited in the African Charter on Democracy Elections and Governance. However, within this context, there is an urgent need for a return to constitutional order in Egypt and, on this basis; EISA has deployed this mission to build on its previous initiatives to support the difficult transition process in Egypt.

The EISA Witnessing Mission is led by His Excellency, Honourable Cassam Uteem, former President of the Republic of Mauritius, assisted by Denis Kadima, EISA Executive Director. The Mission is comprised of seven medium term witnesses and nine short term witnesses drawn from civil society organisations from across the African continent. On polling days, EISA witnesses will visit polling stations to witness polling and counting procedures as well as the aggregation of results in the days after polling. While its short term witnesses will depart the country on 18 January, Its medium term witnesses will remain in the country until 28 January 2014.

The EISA Mission will issue a statement on its assessment of the draft constitution and the referendum at the end of the process and it will issue a detailed final report of its findings, conclusions and recommendations thereafter. The Mission's assessment of the referendum will be based on the Egyptian legal framework governing the referendum, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, the African Union Declaration of the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, the Declaration of Principles on International Election Observation and the Principles for Election Management, Monitoring and Observation (PEMMO).

EISA has been present in Egypt since November 2011 and deployed witnesses during the parliamentary and presidential elections that were held between November 2011 and June 2012 and to the December 2012 constitutional referendum.

For further information about the Mission, please contact:

Olufunto Akinduro +2010 22363370, olufunto@eisa.org.za The Mission Secretariat is located at the Fairmont Nile City, Cairo.