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Pre-Election Day Media Briefing by the AUEOM

22 October 2014 at 12:30

In line with the mandate of the African Union Commission as contained in the Constitutive Act of the Union as well as the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Democracy, the Chairperson of the Commission deployed an African Union Election Observation Mission to observe the 24 October General Elections of the Republic of Botswana. The observers comprises thirty-five (35) trained African Union observers drawn from the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), African Ambassadors to the African Union, Election Management Bodies, Human Right Institutions and Civil Society Organisations from various African countries.

We arrived on the 14 October as a Short Term Mission. The Technical team arrived first to ensure that preparations for effective coordination of the observers are in place before the other observers subsequently arrived between 18th and 19th October.

Since our arrival, we have conducted several activities in line with the African Union election observations approach, methodology and tools. We have consulted with various and relevant stakeholders that are critical for the success of these elections. Amongst them are:

- The SADC Election observation Mission (SADC EOM)
- The Chief Justice
- Commissioner for Police
- Presidential Candidates and leaders of political parties
- Botswana Youth Council
- The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

Members of the media, you will agree with us that all these stakeholders are important for the success of these elections and indeed are the main players apart from the general population. The messages from the African Union to these stakeholders are very simple and straight forward: and that is to conduct the elections in line with the laws of Botswana while recognising the African Union standards and principles as contained in the Constitutive Act, the Charter as well as international frameworks like the Universal Declarations for Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

We have also sent some experts around to understand the electoral environments as well as ascertain the level of readiness of the people of Botswana for the elections.

Members of the media, apart from the regular training the African Union conducts for all observers that are in the African Union observation roster, observers to the Botswana elections also received three days of comprehensive training on the ground, to refresh their minds on the AU methodology, tools and approach as well as ensure that all observers understand and respect the AU code of conduct for observers, which is anchored on impartiality and objective reportage of fact

We will continue to consult with other stakeholders as we go along. On Election Day, African Union Observers will observe the Election Day activities and the voting processes across the country. The observers will report accurately the information they observed to the secretariat.

After the elections the observers will come back to the secretariat where the reports will be aggregated. The African Union Election Observation Mission will therefore present its **Preliminary Findings** to the members of the Media and general public on 26th October 2014 at GICC International Conference Centre at 11:00 hours.

A more detailed final report will be produced two months after the elections and will be shared with Botswana authorities and the general public through the African Union website. The African Union asks all eligible voters to go out and vote on Friday 24 and wishes all the people of Botswana the best during this electoral exercise.

I thank you.