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## **The Carter Center Congratulates Mozambicans on Largely Peaceful Vote; Encourages Calm As Tabulation Process Continues**

The Carter Center and the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) deployed a team of 87 observers representing 40 countries to observe Mozambique's Oct. 15, 2014, presidential, national assembly, and provincial elections at the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. The team visited 543 polling stations in 82 of 151 districts and was led by Raila Odinga, former prime minister of Kenya; and co-led by Denis Kadima, executive director of EISA; and John Stremlau, vice president of peace programs for The Carter Center. The observation mission was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation. The Carter Center is assessing the electoral process against Mozambique's legal framework for elections and its obligations for democratic elections under public international law, including regional and international treaties.

In a 19-page preliminary statement of findings released today, The Carter Center noted that the campaign was conducted in a generally peaceful and tolerant atmosphere, with the exception of clashes among party activists in Gaza, Nampula city, and Angoche on the final day of the campaign, which reportedly took three lives, an unfortunate mark on the process. The president of the National Elections Commission (CNE) was appropriately outspoken at key moments to encourage a peaceful campaign.

On election day, observers witnessed the opening and closing of polling stations, the conduct of voting in a generally orderly and peaceful environment, and the counting of ballots. During polling, CNE staff conducted their responsibilities with professionalism. Observers noted that overall, the presence of party agents and political party members among polling station staff was not comprehensive.

Although the polling process was conducted largely in an atmosphere of calm, EISA and Carter Center observers did note a number of isolated incidents during the counting process, including a

small number of violent incidents in Angoche (Nampula province), Nampula city, and Beira. Although these incidents were serious in nature, they were localized events and did not affect the credibility of the process as a whole or its outcome.

These elections are the most competitive in Mozambique's history and come at an important yet challenging moment in the country's post-war development. The elections are occurring following a recently negotiated agreement that ended fighting between government and opposition forces just before the campaign period began, and disarmament is not yet complete.

The process of tabulating votes is ongoing across the country, and the electoral process has not yet concluded. As the tabulation continues, we encourage citizens and stakeholders to maintain the current atmosphere of calm, respect the process, and allow the CNE and STAE to complete their work.

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