



STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF MR. ANASTACIO MATAVEL

The EISA election observation mission (EOM) deeply regrets and condemns in strong terms the assassination of Mr. Anastácio Matavel, Executive Director of Provincial Forum of NGO in Gaza Province (FONGA) and focal point of Sala da Paz, an important civil society platform for the coordination of civil society organisations' (CSO) engagement in the 2019 electoral process.

EISA recognises the central role of citizen observers in upholding the integrity of electoral process. The presence of professional non-partisan citizen observers is a key indicator of an electoral context that is free of fear and intimidation. It is also an indicator of the transparency and openness of the electoral process.

Since the arrival of EISA long-term observers in Gaza Province in September, there has been a trend of subtle suppression of civil society operations in the Province. citizen observers have experienced challenges in the accreditation process and they have been denied access to some aspects of the electoral process such as observing the distribution of electoral materials. The EISA EOM is further concerned by the recent admission that the perpetrators of Mr. Matavel's assassination were officers of the Special Operations Group of the riot police (Grupo de Operações Especiais - GOE - da Unidade de Intervenção Rápida - UIR). The involvement of a State agency in such acts of violence should not be taken lightly as it has created an atmosphere of fear and intimidation among the community of non-partisan citizen observers in Mozambique.

EISA stands in solidarity with the community of non-partisan citizen observers in Mozambique at this time, to call for the prosecution of the perpetrators of the act of violence. The EISA EOM further calls on the government of Mozambique to recall its obligations in article 22 of the African Charter for Democracy, Elections and Governance, to create a conducive environment for independent and impartial national monitoring or observation mechanisms. Such conducive environment provides freedom of movement and full access to the entire process to all observers.

The EISA EOM takes this opportunity to mention information received about possible restriction of observer access to the aggregation process in some provinces such as Gaza and Zambezia provinces. The EISA EOM therefore calls on the government of Mozambique and the electoral authorities at all levels to ensure free access to the aggregation process from district to national levels.

We condole with Mr. Matavel's family and the community of non-partisan citizen observers in Mozambique. It encourages citizen observers to undertake their responsibilities in compliance with the code of conduct provided by the electoral authorities. We call on the electoral authorities to grant full access to observers especially on election day and during the results aggregation.

For further information on the EISA EOM, contact Ms. Maria Brito mariab@eisa.org.za
+258855325728