African Union Commission deploys election observers in the Kingdom of Lesotho to observe the 7 October 2022 National Assembly Elections

As the Kingdom of Lesotho prepares to hold National Elections on 7 October 2022, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat, will deploy African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) to the Lesotho to observe the Elections from 30 September to 13 October 2022. The AUEOM comprises 35 short-term observers (STOs) and three Core Team of electoral experts.

The AUEOM draws its mandate from various African Union instruments, most importantly: (a) the African Union Guidelines for Elections Observation and Monitoring Missions (2002); (b) the OUA/AU Declaration on Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa (2002); African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (1981) and (c) African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007), among others. It is also in line with Aspiration No. 3 of the AU Agenda 2063, which aims to ensure an Africa of good governance, democracy and respect for human rights, justice and rule of law.

The objectives of the AUEOM are to: (a) provide an accurate and impartial reporting or assessment of the quality of 7 October National Assembly Elections in the Lesotho, including the degree to which the conduct of the elections meets regional, continental and international standards for democratic elections; (b) offer recommendations for improvement of future elections based on the findings; and (c) demonstrate AU’s solidarity and support Lesotho’s election and democratization process to ensure that the conduct of democratic, credible and peaceful elections contributes to the consolidation of democratic governance, peace and stability in the country.

It would be recalled that the African Union deployed has already provided electoral support to Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of Lesotho from 20 to 25 September 2022. The support focused on capacity building of IEC Returning Officers, District Electoral Officers and their deputies. It also entails assistance in the training of trainers on electoral security for the Lesotho Mounted Police Service.

The assistance to the IEC is provided pursuant to Article 18 of Chapter Seven of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. It mandates the AUC to offer electoral assistance to Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of the AU Member States to organise peaceful, democratic and credible elections in line with international and continental standards of democratic elections.

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