

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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Venue: Sharm El Sheikh, Arab Republic of Egypt

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION TO CONVENE 10TH ANNUAL CONTINENTAL FORUM OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES ON AFRICAN DISAPORA ABROAD VOTING

The African Union Commission (AUC), through its Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), in collaboration with the Association of African Electoral Authorities (AAEA), will convene the 10th Annual Continental Forum of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) from 6 – 7 July 2026 in Sharm El Sheikh, Arab Republic of Egypt, under the theme: "Diaspora Voting: Progress, Gaps and Prospects".

The Forum is one of the African Union's flagship platforms dedicated to advancing democratic governance, credible elections and inclusive political participation across the continent. It will bring together representatives of EMBs from AU Member States, the AAEA, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), regional EMB networks, African Union institutions, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, academia, development partners and other democratic governance stakeholders to exchange experiences and identify practical approaches to strengthening electoral processes in Africa.

The Forum comes at a time when migration and mobility continue to reshape African societies, with millions of African citizens residing outside their countries of origin while maintaining strong political, economic and social ties to their homelands. Although many African Union Member States have adopted legal frameworks recognizing the political rights of citizens abroad, implementation of diaspora voting remains uneven across the continent. The Forum will therefore provide a timely opportunity to assess progress made, identify implementation gaps, share good practices and explore practical solutions to strengthen inclusive electoral participation while safeguarding electoral integrity.

Discussions over the two-day Forum will focus on the conceptual and normative frameworks governing diaspora voting, implementation experiences from Member States, operational and logistical considerations, cost and sustainability, political and security dimensions, comparative practices, and policy options to support more effective and inclusive out-of-country voting arrangements.

The Annual Continental Forum will be followed by the General Assembly of the AAEA on 8 July 2026, further strengthening continental cooperation on electoral governance and democratic consolidation.

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