



**2026 FP-ICGLR ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION TO THE
REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

Preliminary Statement of the Mission

By

Rt. Hon. Moses Frank Moyo, MP

Head of Mission / Second Deputy Speaker of the National

Assembly of Zambia

17 January 2026

- **Your Excellencies;**
- **Heads of Missions;**
- **Honourable Members of Parliament;**
- **Ambassadors and Diplomats Present;**
- **Distinguished Delegates;**
- **Members of the Press;**
- **Ladies and Gentleman.**

We are extremely honoured to present the Preliminary Statement of the Forum of Parliaments of Member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR), which is based on the observations made by our Electoral Observation Mission during the General Elections in the Republic of Uganda held on 15th January 2026. Our sincere gratitude goes to the People and Government of the Republic of Uganda for their warm hospitality accorded to us since our arrival.

The deployment of the Short-Term Election Observer Mission underscores our dedication to uphold the principles of Article Six (6) of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, with a particular emphasis on the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. Furthermore, our observation Mission is a response to the generous invitation extended to the ICGLR by the Government of the Republic of Uganda.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In our pursuit to foster a culture of democratic governance in the Great Lakes Region, we deployed **21** observers from the Member States of the FP-ICGLR namely: The Republic of Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic

of Zambia and the General Secretariat. Given that the Republic of Uganda is a Member State of FP-ICGLR, we consider it a significant honour to be included among the international observation groups accredited to observe the 2026 General Elections.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me summarize the Electoral Observation activities that we carried out in the run-up to the January 15 General Elections, in accordance with our mandate as follows:

1. In order to ascertain the state of preparation and preparedness towards the 15th January 2026, the Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, conducted a Pre-election Situation Analysis;
2. Upon their arrival in Kampala, the observers participated in a Comprehensive Briefing and Orientation Program on **9th January 2026**, before being deployed in areas of responsibility;
3. In order to increase public awareness about the presence and mandate of the Mission, upon arrival, we officially issued an Arrival Statement on 9th January 2026 at the ICGLR-Regional Training Facility in Munyonyo;
4. The Mission met various electoral stakeholders such as the Centre for Policy Analysis (CEPA), briefing by the Electoral Commission, Members of the Press, Heads of Missions of International Observer Groups and Members of the Diplomatic Corp accredited to the Republic of Uganda. The Engagement Meetings were aimed at understanding the state of preparations and preparedness towards holding the January 15 General Elections;
5. The observers were subsequently deployed in teams of **Four (4)** to observe the polling proceedings in: **Kampala Central, Kampala East, Kampala West and Kampala North.**

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our Pre-Election Analysis of the 2026 General Elections in the Republic of Uganda revealed the following:

1. The Electoral Commission developed the Roadmap for the 2026 General Elections which was implemented in a phased manner. The Mission noted that, the commission carried out all planned activities under the Roadmap as scheduled;
2. In line with international, regional and national frameworks, the commission conducted civic and voter education in collaboration with key electoral stakeholders such as Civil Society and the Media among others to ensure that all eligible citizens understand the purpose, procedures, and significance of elections;
3. The Mission also noted that the Electoral Commission utilized the digital platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp which are increasingly important in engaging with the youths. This intervention helped in providing real-time interaction and prompt responses to public inquiries;
4. The Mission noted with commendation to the Electoral Commission for the integration of facial identification features on the Biometric Voter Verification Kit in addition to the use of the thumb prints;
5. The Mission commends the Electoral Commission for the intention to place the **notice only** in **polling stations** where a nominated candidate would have lawfully withdrawn from participation while appearing on the ballot paper in order to guide would be voters not to vote for that particular candidate;
6. The interaction with stakeholders revealed that the campaign period was generally calm and peaceful as compared to the **2016** and **2021** General Elections which was attributed to the adherence of Campaign Guidelines stipulated by the Electoral Commission by all political parties. In this

regard, the Mission commends the Electoral Commission, Security Apparatus, the competing political parties, and the citizens for their efforts in maintaining peace;

7. There has been concerns by stakeholders that the lack of Election Finance Law has made over commercialisation of the electoral process which some question about the inclusivity of the process itself for those without financial capabilities;
8. There were also concerns raised about increased misinformation, disinformation and use of hate speech on social media;
9. The temporary suspension of public internet access and selected mobile services during the election period as a measure by the Government to mitigate spread of online misinformation, disinformation, and electoral fraud as well as preventing incitement of electoral violence.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Mission would like to clearly state that its findings on the 2026 General Elections in the Republic of Uganda are based **purely** on the **Pre-Election Analysis**, in-country polling procedures, and vote counting at the polling stations.

Let me now address, the polling day activities. According to the Electoral Commission, there are **50,739** polling stations and **21,681,491** registered voters countrywide.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me highlight that our observers were given the opportunity to observe the opening, voting and closing procedures in all the polling stations. The Mission observed the following:

1. Most of the polling stations visited by the Mission in Kampala Central, Kampala East, Kampala West and Kampala North **did not** open on the official stipulated time of **07:00 hours**. The opening was delayed by **Two to Three hours** due to:
 - a) Malfunctioning of the Biometric Voter Verification Kit and in some instances polling officials did not have received the **PassCode**;
 - b) Though in isolated incidences, there was delivery of **Wrong Ballot Box** as the case in **Wandegeya Post Office Polling Station 13**;
 - c) There were fewer number of registered voters present in some polling stations during opening that is, below 10 as required by law to officially open the polling station for voting. However, as the day progressed, more voters turned out to vote as observed in long queues.
2. Elections were conducted in a peaceful and calm environment that allowed the people of the Republic of Uganda to exercise their democratic right to vote;
3. The polling stations were laid in a manner that allowed smooth flow and guaranteed vote secrecy;
4. There was presence of security personnel in all the polling stations observed and they conducted themselves in a professional manner. However, in some polling stations observed, the security personnel were stationed in positions near the voting tables which was somewhat intimidating to the voters;
5. The presence of political party agents in the polling stations particularly from **Ecological Party of Uganda (EPU), National Resistance Movement (NRM), National Unity Platform (NUP), Democratic Front (DF)** and in some instances independent candidates was commendable;

6. Generally, the opening procedures were followed by the polling staff and demonstrated a good knowledge of the opening procedures;
7. The Mission is glad to note that, there were no incidences of voter inducement in the polling stations observed. Also, there were no form of campaign activities by the political parties observed outside the polling stations. However, the Mission observed the presence of campaign materials in some polling stations visited at the time of opening contrary to the law which require none existence of campaign materials within the radius of Twenty (20) Meters from the polling centre;
8. Our Mission had the opportunity to observe the voting procedures in a significant number of polling stations in Kampala City District. The Mission is gratified to report that, notwithstanding the delayed opening of polling stations, the voting process unfolded in a serene and orderly manner;
9. The polling stations that the Mission visited were staffed, with women generally constituting most of the workforce;
10. As a concern, the Mission noted none participation of women as presidential aspirants in this year's elections, which does not promote the participation, inclusivity and gender equality in the political sphere;
11. The requirement of voters to be 20 meters away from the polling stations after voting was difficult to implement especially in polling stations situated in market places;
12. In some polling stations visited, application of indelible ink to voters was done by police officers. In some other instances, it was done by political party agents and at times voters applied themselves.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Mission observed the closing at the **same** polling stations where it had earlier observed the opening procedures. A significant number of polling stations did not close at the scheduled time of 16:00 hours or 04: 00 pm. This

was due to extensions in voting hours to compensate for delays in the opening of polling stations. Notably, voters who were in queues at the time of closing were permitted to cast their votes. The closing was carried out in the presence of political party agents and observers.

The closing procedures, emptying the ballot boxes, reconciliation of ballot papers and sorting, was done in the presence of the political party agents and observers. The ballot boxes were correctly sealed at the time of closing.

Furthermore, counting was conducted according to the procedures in the polling stations that the Mission observed. The Mission noted that at the end of the counting process, the political party agents verified the results and signed the results sheet. The Mission is happy to report that the polling staff demonstrated the knowledge of closing and counting procedures.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Elections by nature are founded on the articulation of competing interests and therefore come weighted with potential conflict triggers. In this respect, the Republic of Uganda has a legal framework with laid down mechanisms to hear and address electoral related disputes and complaints that may arise. The Mission trusts that aggrieved parties will engage the established structures should disputes arise. In equal measure, the Mission calls upon the relevant authorities to handle formal disputes in a manner that further promotes a culture of peaceful dispute resolution. The Mission will issue a more detailed report that will be shared through its diplomatic channels to all relevant stakeholders.

I thank you!!

**January 17, 2026
Done in Kampala, Republic of Uganda**