



**ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION OF THE FORUM OF
PARLIAMENTS OF ICGLR TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
CONGO GENERAL ELECTIONS**

Pre-Election Arrival Statement by the Head of Delegation

Rt. Hon. Malungo Chisangano

First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Zambia

Kinshasa, December 16, 2023

- **Rt. Hon. Moses Moyo, the Second Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Zambia and Deputy Head of Delegation of the FP-ICGLR Observation Mission;**
- **His Excellency Amb. Onyango Kakoba, Secretary General of the ICGLR Forum of Parliaments,**
- **Hon. Members of ICGLR Forum of Parliaments,**
- **Distinguished Delegates;**
- **Members of the Press.**

Following an invitation by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Forum of Parliaments of the Member-States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR) has deployed the FP-ICGLR Electoral Observation Mission to observe the December 20, 2023 General Elections. I am, therefore, deeply and profoundly honoured to be here today in Kinshasa, to lead the Mission.

As you are aware, the DRC is expected to hold General Elections on December 20th which is perceived by distinguished stakeholders as pivotal for the future of the country. The DRC is organising its Fourth Electoral Cycle, according to the Electoral Calendar released on November 26, 2022 by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI). The 2023 Electoral Cycle is an important step towards keeping the security and stability of the DRC. This year's elections are conducted at the backdrop of a lingering climate of insecurity, armed conflicts and rise of ethnic divisions in the eastern DRC. It should be underscored that

elections without integrity cannot provide the winners with legitimacy, the losers with security and the public with confidence in their leaders and institutions of governance. That is the more reason why the Forum of Parliaments of ICGLR is committed to supporting the efforts made by all stakeholders involved in the ongoing electoral process in the DRC to ensure that they are able to independently and impartially participate. Looking beyond technical requirements, the focus of the Electoral Observation Mission to DRC is to ensure that a conducive environment is created for legitimate elections, making it possible to govern peaceably in a climate of trust.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Forum of Parliaments is organizing this Electoral Observation Mission in the DRC as part of the implementation of the Inter-Parliamentary Accord of the FP-ICGLR. It is aimed at assessing how the electoral process meets the ICGLR Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance and other instruments, inter alia, the African Union Charter on Democracy, Elections and Good Governance, the international standards regarding the organization of elections, and also the Constitution and the electoral laws of the DRC, and how it reflects the true will of its people. In fact, it is the continuation of the implementation of its 2023-2024 Action Plan and, therefore, its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. This Mission is also one of the FP-ICGLR's activities conducted with a view to implement the decision of

the Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Plenary Assembly of the FP-ICGLR held from March 27 to April 1, 2023 in Juba, in the Republic of South Sudan. .

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Forum of Parliaments of ICGLR is an inter-governmental organization comprised of 12 Member States including the Democratic Republic of Congo. The FP-ICGLR Election Observation Mission has the mandate of observing the December 20, 2023 General Elections which will take place within the Framework of a Multi-Party Democracy and a Presidential System. Simultaneous elections will be held to elect the **Republican President**, the **500 Members of the National Assembly (NA)**, the elected Members of the **26 Provincial Assemblies**, and, for the first time under the new constitution, **Members of around 300 Commune (Municipal) Councils**.

Our mandate to observe these elections is derived from Article Six (6) of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region in which the Heads of State and Government of the Great Lakes Region committed themselves to promoting democracy, good governance and human rights. In addition, the ICGLR Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance compels Member States to commit to the promotion of the universal values and principles of democracy, good governance, human rights and the right to development. The provisions in

the Protocol will guide our observation during these elections in accordance with relevant international provisions.

Further, our Mandate is also in line with the provisions of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which entered into force on February 15, 2012, aimed at enhancing electoral processes in Africa, strengthening electoral institutions and conducting of free, fair and transparent elections.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since its inception in January 2012, this is the second time that the Forum of Parliaments is observing elections in DRC. The last being the 2018 General Elections in DRC. The Mission notes that the current election campaigns have been relatively peaceful and it is our prayer that the General Elections will unfold freely, fairly, and peacefully. In this regard, we wish to commend all the electoral stakeholders for making electoral arrangements which we hope will continue to strengthening and deepening democracy in DRC. We urge all the parties to keep the momentum and spirit of peaceful, free and fair elections as we move towards the election day.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Mission comprises 31 high profile personalities and experts drawn from ICGLR Member States. In our quest to achieve an objective assessment of the

electoral process, we conducted a pre-electoral analysis which assessed the state of preparations and preparedness of the country to hold the 2023 general elections.

Further, the Mission will undertake a number of activities starting with a briefing and orientation of its observers. Furthermore, we will consult with key electoral stakeholders such as the Independent National Electoral Commission, Political Parties, Churches, Faith-Based Organisations And Civil Society groups including women and youth groups in the city of Kinshasa.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a Mission, we will endeavour to ensure that the assessment of and recommendations on the credibility, transparency, fairness and the effective organization of the elections will be based on the benchmarks provided in the Pact on security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

The Mission will release its **Preliminary Statement** at a Press Conference to be held in **Kinshasa** on **December 21, 2023**. Thereafter, the Mission will issue a more detailed report of its assessment, including recommendations for future elections, which will be shared with FP-ICGLR Member-Parliaments, other ICGLR organs as well as other stakeholders and appropriate authorities. We would like to thank the people of DRC for their usual warm hospitality and demonstration of peace-loving community.

We wish the Democratic Republic of Congo, peaceful, free and fair elections.

December 16, 2023

Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo