



Accra Summit Communiqué on the Future of Citizen Election Observation in Africa

We the citizen election observer groups from across Africa having convened in Accra, Ghana from May 9th to 11th, 2023, under the auspices of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), Yiaga Africa, and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), to deliberate on the New Realities of Citizen Election Observation in Africa;

Acknowledge that democracy is more than elections, and that meaningful democracy is not possible without credible elections;

Recognize that the development of citizen election observation is one of the most important democratic achievements of the past forty years;

Affirm the [Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations](#) which recognizes the rights of citizens to observe their own elections and standards for citizen observation;

Note the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association's, and on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders' [explicit recognition](#) of election observers as human rights defenders and call upon all member states to take all necessary steps to establish conditions that protect and allow observers to work without inhibition;

Recognize African citizen organizations have significant experience and expertise, and play a critical role in promoting electoral integrity across the continent and defending the rights of citizens to vote;

Underscore that African citizen election observers advance the global practice of election observation through [Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors](#) (GNDEM);

Acknowledge that the African regional networks, [East and Horn of Africa Election Observers Network](#) (E-HORN), Election Support Network of Southern Africa (ESN SA), [West Africa Election Observers Network](#) (WAEON) and [African Election Observers Network](#) (AFeONet) enhance the practice of citizen observation across the continent and promote solidarity among citizen observer organizations;

Appreciate that while the demand among Africans for democratic governance remains high, democracy and credible elections are being undermined across the continent;

Note that the nature of elections in Africa is changing, with, but not limited to: growing threats to electoral integrity during the pre-election period, increasing use of technology (in particular voter registration and voter identification); greater concerns about information manipulation; growing role of the courts; and closing space for citizen election observers;

Recognize inclusivity as an essential precondition for a credible election and highlight the need to eliminate barriers that prevent the full and equal electoral participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities, and other marginalized groups.

Acknowledge that in response African citizen election observers must both develop new and adapt existing methodologies in response to the new realities of elections across the continent;

Hereby resolve and adopt as follows:

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Observation in Africa**
Nouvelles réalités de l'observation
citoyenne des élections en Afrique



To drive advancements in pre-election observation:

Develop rigorous strategies that prioritize pre-election issues and respond to emerging electoral and political realities;

Establish or refine systematic methodologies to better measure pre-election processes and assess their impact on the integrity of the overall electoral process;

Ensure that pre-election methodologies take into account the participation of underrepresented and marginalized groups including women, youth and persons with disabilities to promote inclusive elections;

Implement robust communication and advocacy strategies during the pre-election period to promote credible elections;

Mobilize targeted and sustainable funding for pre-election observation;

To facilitate effective working relationships with Election Management Bodies (EMB):

Advocate for, establish and maintain a relationship based on principles of mutual respect, cooperation, transparency, accountability, independence, and information sharing;

Establish regular briefings on election observation plans, progress, and findings with EMBs in order to build cooperative relationships;

Undertake advocacy for financial and administrative autonomy for EMBs, as well as timely and adequate funding;

Call for increased openness, transparency and access to data such as voter register, list of polling stations, and disaggregated polling station-level results; in line with the [Open Election Data Initiative](#);

Demand access to all aspects of the electoral process;

To communicate innovations in systematic election day observation:

Endorse the name Process and Results Verification for Transparency (PRVT) when referring to systematic election day observation methodology, reflecting that both processes and results data are essential to assessing the conduct of election day;

Commit to continued engagement and sensitization on the PRVT methodology with citizens and stakeholders before, during and after elections;

Underscore the importance of considering pre-election and election day processes in the interpretation of PRVT data;

Consider proactively using PRVT data to mitigate misinformation and post election conflicts.

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To address the increasing role of technology in elections:

Commit to increase technical knowledge and upgrade observation methodology to effectively monitor the entire "technology cycle", from appropriateness of technology; procurement; testing; deployment; to review effectiveness.

Advocate for a legal framework that enables the use of technology, codify the guiding principles, and evaluate adherence thereto.

To acknowledge the role of the judiciary in electoral processes:

Adopt context specific strategies to engage respective judicial systems in relation to the electoral process.

Uphold independence, neutrality and professionalism in the sharing of election observation reports with all stakeholders especially where election litigation is concerned.

Extend election observation to election petitions and other dispute resolution to promote fairness, accountability, inclusivity and transparency.

Leverage partnerships within civil society with legal expertise to build capacity for CSOs on election adjudication processes.

Collaborate with judicial and other relevant training institutions to provide deliberate technical support to the judiciary on electoral matters.

To ensure sustainable citizen election observer organizations:

Strategize to secure long term and diverse funding to cover the entire electoral cycle;

Engage with donors to promote greater coordination, as well as timely and adequate funding;

Encourage local funding and philanthropy for Democracy and Governance initiatives including election observation;

Explore collaborations, networking and partnerships among citizen observers to leverage resource;

Design strategies that would make election observation more cost effective.

We the undersigned,



1) Public Affairs Committee (PAC), Malawi, ~~Roburini~~

South Sudanese Network for Democracy and
Elections (SSUNDE)

South Sudan ~~gtdh~~

Justice et Paix / CENCO

R.D. CONGO ~~Hy~~

Catholic Commission for Justice &
Peace - Malawi

Malawi ~~gtdh~~

Coalition of Ethiopian Civil
Society Organization for Election
(CECOE)

Ethiopia ~~gtdh~~

Coalition pour l'observation
Citoyenne des Elections au Mali MALI
COCEM ~~gtdh~~

Convention des Organisations de la Société
civile pour l'observation Domestique des Elections

BURKINA FASO - CODEL ~~gtdh~~

WAEONL

COCEB - Guinée ~~gtdh~~

Emmbe:

CDD-GHANA / CODEO

Emmbe.



Election Resource Centre
 Bulbin Zimbabwe

Indigo Cote d'Ivoire

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CHRISTIAN CHARLES S

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ELO G

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LEON

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ECC - Liberia

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EWG - The Gambia

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National Elections - Sierra Leone - ~~Best~~
 Klatch (NEW)

ZERN - Zimbabwe

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Election Support Network
 for Southern Africa (ESN-SA)

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Tuga Africa Nigeria

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East & Horn of Africa Election
Observer Network (EHOEN)

British

Center for Constitutional Governance
(CCG) Uganda British

Alliance for Finance
Monitoring (AFM)

UGANDA Africa

African Election Observers
Network (Afenet)
Collectif des organisations de la
société civile pour les élections
Sénégal

Uganda Africa

BH

Association Réseau Nonakibom Tunisia

Sudanese Coalition for Democracy Support (SCDS)
- Sudan

up



Annex: List of Endorsing Organizations

[Alliance for Finance Monitoring](#) (ACFIM) [Uganda];
[Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace](#) (CCJP) [Malawi];
[Center for Constitutional Governance](#) (CCG) [Uganda];
[Christian Churches Monitoring Group](#) (CCMG) [Zambia];
[Coalition citoyenne pour les élections et la gouvernance](#) (CoCEG) [Guinea];
[Coalition of Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations for Elections](#) (CECOE) [Ethiopia];
[Coalition pour l'Observation Citoyenne des Elections au Mali](#) (COCEM) [Mali];
[Collectif des Organisations de la Société Civile](#) (COSCE) [Senegal];
[Convention des organisations de la société civile pour l'observation domestique des élections](#) (CODEL) [Burkina Faso];
[Elections Watch Committee](#) (EWC) [The Gambia];
[Indigo](#) [Côte d'Ivoire];
[Elections Observer Group](#) (ELOG) [Kenya];
[Election Resource Center](#) (ERC) [Zimbabwe];
[Elections Coordinating Committee](#) (ECC) [Liberia];
[Ghana Center for Democratic Development](#) (CDD-Ghana) [Ghana];
[Justice et Paix Congo](#) (JPC)/CENCO [Democratic Republic of the Congo];
[Liberia Elections Observation Network](#) (LEON) [Liberia];
[Mourakiboun](#) [Tunisia];
[National Election Watch](#) (NEW) [Sierra Leone];
[Public Affairs Committee](#) (PAC) [Malawi];
[South Sudanese Network for Democracy and Elections](#) (SSuNDE) [South Sudan];
Sudanese Coalition for Democracy Support (SCDS) [Sudan];
[Yiaga Africa](#) [Nigeria]; and
[Zimbabwe Election Support Network](#) (ZESN) [Zimbabwe].

Annex: List of Supporting Organizations

[National Democratic Institute](#) (NDI) [United States]

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