

More observers deployed for Angola elections

[afrol News](#), 11 August - European Union has deployed 40 long term observers for Angola legislative elections scheduled for 5 September.

The mission which is expected to monitor pre and post elections environment joins eight member election experts who arrived in Angola's capital, Luanda last month to set up and coordinate the mission.

EU Election Observation Mission leader Luisa Morgantini said long-term observers will conduct a comprehensive analysis of electoral process in the country, saying observers would not only be confined to district capitals, but will cover also the rural area.

Mission which resumes its duties on 12 August after an extensive briefing in Luanda will be deployed throughout Angola in teams of two to all Angolan 18 district while two teams would remain in Luanda.

Around 60 more short-term observers are due to join shortly before Election Day, including seven members of European Parliament.

The mission will be deployed in the capital as well as provinces in order to observe voting and counting processes. In total, EU elections observer mission will be made up of more than 100 persons from 20 EU countries, making it the biggest international observation mission in Angola.

All EU observers are bound by an internationally accepted code of conduct as well as the Angolan code of conduct for election observation. This means that they maintain strict neutrality in the course of their work and cannot interfere in any way in the electoral process.

A total of 5,198 candidates will contest 220 parliamentary seats, with more than eight million Angolans registered to vote.

Angola's last legislative elections were held 16 years ago during a lull in the fighting between UNITA and government forces, but second round was called off after the late UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi, alleged there had been widespread vote rigging.

Angolan President, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, who has been in power since 1979, is yet to confirm his candidature in the scheduled 2009 presidential polls of Africa's current leading oil producer.

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