

Brussels, 01 August 2008

European Union deploys Election Observation Mission to Angola

The European Commission will deploy an EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the legislative elections in Angola scheduled to take place on 5 September 2008. The EU EOM, which will deploy over 90 observers, will be led by Mrs. Luisa Morgantini, Member of the European Parliament and is a further contribution by the European Commission to supporting democracy in Angola. The core team arrived in the country on the 29. July.

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, said:

"These elections are the first to be held in Angola after 16 years. The 1992 elections were followed by a new civil war. Meanwhile, the political situation has improved, and these elections are crucial for the strengthening of Angolan democracy. It is fundamental that these legislative elections are conducted in a satisfactory manner and in line with international standards. With its EOM, the EU contributes to the electoral process via independent observation of the elections, throughout the campaign to the proclamation of result and the post election period. We are confident that its comprehensive assessment will boost the confidence of the Angolan people in the process and will provide the electoral authorities with advice to help them further improve the election process."

Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid said:

"Almost five years after the end years of war, Angola has come a long way on the path towards national reconciliation.. The 5th September elections mark a key moment for the consolidation of democracy in Angola., The European Commission stands next to Angola which we is a key partner notably in the Great Lakes and Southern Africa region. "

The EOM Core Team consists of the Chief Observer and seven experts, who are already on the ground since July 29th. Forty-four Long Term Observers (LTOs) will join them on 8 August to assess the campaign period and pre-election preparations around the country. Forty Short Term Observers (STOs), including observers from Switzerland and Norway, will be deployed over the election period to observe voting, counting and the tabulation of results. They will work alongside locally recruited STOs from diplomatic missions of EU Member States resident in the country. The EU EOM will stay in the country for several weeks after the election-day in order to assess the post-election period.

The EU has made available some €2.8 million from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), for this mission.

The European Union and Angola enjoy good bilateral relations, also through constructive cooperation in the fields of trade, economic and institutional reforms, good governance and rural development. Angola is an active partner in the EC/PALOP/Timor Leste programme, which covers Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa and Pacific.

For additional information, see also:

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/index.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/regionscountries/countries/country_profile.cfm?cid=ao&type=short&lng=en

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