

# **Preliminary Statement of the Elections Observation Mission of Church of Christ in Congo (ECC) Presidential, Provincial and Legislative Election.**

**December 30, 2018.  
Kinshasa Democratic Republic of Congo.**

## **BACKGROUND**

In the just organised Presidential and Legislative Elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Church of Christ in Congo (ECC) deployed international and national observers to observe and assess the conduct of the electoral process, in light of its prophetic mission, the ECC observation mission in DRC participated in observing the voting process of December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

ECC is a union of over 95 Church communities in Congo engaged in prophetic mission of Christ which includes participation in electoral processes. The ECC's election observation mission was conducted in accordance with the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the African Union Declaration on the Principles of Democratic Election (2005), African Union Guidelines for Election Observation and Monitoring Missions (2002), the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007), as well as the current legal framework governing presidential and legislative elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The mission congratulates the people of DRC for this achievement which offers an opportunity for a peaceful transfer of power from the outgoing to the new president.

The mission also congratulates the National Electoral and Independent Commission (CENI) and other stakeholders involved in the electoral process

## **FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS**

**Keeping to the Electoral calendar:** CENI is an independent national organization mandated to: organize and manage electoral processes, manage voter registration

processes, publish for public viewing a voter registry and disseminate the provisional election outcome. The Postponement of elections in Beni, Butembo, and Yumbi to March 2019, created more challenges and un certainties among the stakeholders.

## **2. ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION**

**2.1 Opening of polling stations:** In all the polling stations observed, most polling stations opened on time at 6:00 a.m. as required by law. Some opened later because of severe inclement weather in Kinshasa and other parts of the country and other technical challenges such as failure of electoral equipment. Due to heavy rains in the early morning, the turnout was relatively low during the opening in almost all polling stations visited.

**2.2 Election Materials:** The observers noted that all was well except in some polling stations visited that did not have some election materials e.g. voting machine power cables and voters registers.

**2.3 Turnout:** The observers witnessed a low turnout in the polling stations during morning hours. However, in the afternoon, they witnessed long queues in urban and per urban areas.

**2.4 Participation of women:** Following the statistics collected by observers, the participation of women on Election Day was considered as unsatisfactory. The observers also noted that an estimated 35-40% of the electoral personnel in polling stations were female.

**2.5 Election personnel:** The observers noted that in all polling stations visited, the required number of 5 polling personnel was met.

**2.6 Voting:** The vote was generally conducted in a calm, peaceful and transparent atmosphere.

**2.7 Representation of candidates in polling stations:** The observers noted a limited presence of candidate representatives in polling stations visited, especially during the opening.

**2.8 Security:** The presence of Police forces was witnessed on the major highways and near polling stations. The Police **personnel were evident inside polling centers and were professional in handling** the voters, observers and candidate representatives.

**2.9 Closing and Counting:** The observers noted that several polling stations closed at the time prescribed by the law 5:00 p.m. However, significant number of polling stations closed late because of opening late such as in Limete and in some areas because of high turnout of voters. The procedures for closure and counting went on under peaceful environment in the polling stations observed.

## **CONCLUSION**

Observers were satisfied with the conduct of the elections. Minor challenges were noted in some voting stations, whose detail will be included in the final report

The ECC international and National observers call on all candidates to accept the responsibility for the post-election peace and reconciliation necessary for a peaceful DRC.

Our detailed general election observation report including recommendations will be released in coming days.