



EUROPEAN UNION
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

MALAWI, Tripartite Elections
21 MAY 2019



PRESS RELEASE

Well-managed, inclusive, transparent and competitive elections, but the campaign was marked by tensions and an unlevel playing field

However, results process is still to be completed and inclusivity and transparency are vital

Blantyre, 23 May 2019 – “The process was largely well organised by the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) and voting on election day was well-managed. But despite a generally peaceful campaign the pre-election period was marked also by tensions and an unlevel playing field,” said the Chief Observer, Miroslav Poche, of the EU Election Observation Mission (EU EOM).

In terms of the preparations for the elections, Mr Poche stated, “The process was well-managed by MEC, and MEC’s inclusive and transparent approach meant that stakeholders retained a high level of confidence in the election management body. Of particular note was the improved integrity of the voter register, a revised and public election calendar and the creation of constituency tally centres.”

In considering the election campaign, the Chief Observer of the EU EOM said, “The campaign was competitive, with a strong sense of public engagement at rallies and civic education events. However, despite being largely peaceful there were some incidents and heightened tension. This was not helped by the various claims of “rigging” in the midst of the campaign. We also observed misuse of handouts and state resources and overall there was an unlevel playing field in favour of the ruling party”.

The EU EOM has been present in Malawi since 4 April 2019, and had 28 long-term observers covering the districts during the pre-election period. On Election Day, the EU EOM had a total of 83 observers, which reported from 342 polling stations, across 120 constituencies in 27 of the 28 Districts of Malawi. Among the polling stations visited, some 79% were in rural areas.

“On Election Day, EU observers reported very positively on the opening and voting procedures. Poll officials did a good job in often difficult circumstances. The vote count was transparent, but it was less well-managed, partly due to the difficult conditions and partly due to poor adherence to the procedures,” said the Chief Observer.

“Looking ahead, the tallying of results continues and it is clear that problems with results sheets are causing challenges. The EU EOM will continue to follow this critical part of the process prior to making our final assessment. MEC needs to be allowed to complete its job and the country should remain calm as it awaits the final result,” concluded the Chief Observer.”

EU observers remain in the field to follow the results process and the EU EOM will remain in Malawi until 19 June.

For any further information, please contact:

Michela SECHI, Press Officer / michela.sechi@eueommalawi.eu (+265) 0997 226 291 / 0887 080 784



[@eueomMalawi2019](https://www.facebook.com/eueomMalawi2019)



[@eueomMalawi](https://twitter.com/eueomMalawi)