



COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

**ECOWAS OBSERVATION MISSION OF THE
RUN-OFF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
OF 21 AUGUST 2011
IN CAPE VERDE**

PRELIMINARY DECLARATION

1. Following the first round of the presidential election held on 7 August 2011 and in compliance with the provisions of the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, the President of the ECOWAS Commission, **H.E. James Victor GBEHO** deployed a Mission consisting of seventy five (75) observers to cover the run-off Presidential Election of 21 August, 2011 in Cape Verde.
2. Led by **Mr David Adenze Kangah**, Deputy Chair of the Electoral Commission of Ghana, this mission continued the initiatives taken by the ECOWAS Commission in the first round of the election aimed essentially at ensuring the smooth conduct of the election for a free, transparent and credible process in Cape Verde.
3. In order to be better acquainted with preparations for the election, the Head of Mission met with the General Directorate in charge of Support for the Electoral Process (DGAPE), the National Electoral Commission (CNE), and the two candidates in the run-off presidential election in the country, namely, Mr Jorge Carlos Fonseca and Mr. Manuel Inocêncio Sousa.
4. At the end of these consultations, the Head of Mission noted the efforts made by all stakeholders to create better conditions for achieving peaceful election. In particular, he was assured of:
 - Actions initiated by institutions in charge of organizing the presidential election to expedite the deployment of electoral materials to the different islands and abroad, in compliance with the fifteen (15) days deadline prescribed by law;

- Technical and operational measures put in place for the strengthening of teams through training in order to speed up the transmission of results;
- Provisions made to ensure the constant presence of security forces to curb and control any excesses as well as agitation around polling stations.
- The conduct of the electoral campaign in a peaceful and patriotic environment.

5. On the basis of the information gathered by the team of observers deployed throughout the Islands of Cape Verde (except São Vicente, Santo Antão and São Nicolau), the Mission, after a preliminary assessment of the voting process, noted the following:

- a. The order, discipline and peaceful environment that prevailed throughout the process;
- b. The timely availability of adequate electoral materials and punctual presence of the election officials in most of the polling stations;
- c. The effective presence of representatives of the two candidates in almost all the polling stations;
- d. The efficiency and professional conduct of the election officials in running and controlling the voting procedures;
- e. The smooth running of the voting process in accordance with current standards especially as far as the sorting and counting of the vote is concerned;
- f. The effective and discreet presence of security forces in patrolling most of the polling areas.

6. In addition, the Mission noted a very low voter turnout which gradually improved later in the day. There was also a noticeable absence of domestic observers. Although these findings did not affect the overall smooth running of the election, their reoccurrence requires the need for appropriate measures to be taken regarding, among others, the reconsideration of the period for the presidential election in accordance with legal provisions and the involvement of civil society in the electoral process.

7. Generally, the Mission concludes therefore that there were neither major irregularities nor untoward incidents. It estimates that on the whole, the presidential election of 21 August 2011 in Cape Verde met the conditions of freedom and transparency.

8. Consequently, the Mission welcomes the commitment of Cape Verdean authorities and all the stakeholders to ensuring an exemplary electoral process which no doubt carried the hallmark of integrity. It reiterates its commendation of the same authorities for implementing the lessons learned from the first round and for efforts made to improve the electoral system.

9. The Mission is in particular delighted with the efficiency and professionalism exhibited by DGAEP and CNE on planning, managing and running of operations. It also congratulates the political sophistication of Cape Verde, as exemplified by the active involvement of the youth, the discipline and order that voters showed at the poll. The mission can do no less than to urge them to maintain the high standard of integrity and responsibility until the announcement of the final results.

10. In this aspiration towards the consolidation of democracy and values of peace in Cape Verde, the Mission congratulates the candidates of the first round of the presidential election for the responsible attitude displayed in accepting the results. It therefore, calls on the two (2) candidates for the run-off to also respect the final verdict of the poll and resort, if necessary, to legal means for settling any electoral dispute that may arise.

11. The ECOWAS Mission expresses its gratitude to the Cape Verdean Authorities and the various institutions involved in the organization of the election for the excellent facilities placed at its disposal to enable it carry out its mandate in a successful efficient manner. ECOWAS reiterates its commitment to supporting Cape Verde in its process of consolidating democracy and good governance.

Done in Praia on 22 August, 2011

The Head of Mission