



EISA ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION TO THE 2016 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Post-Election Statement

Kampala

29 February 2016

Since the end of the voting and counting period for the presidential and parliamentary elections, medium term observers deployed by the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) continued to assess the post-election environment. The observers followed closely the aggregation process and declaration of results. The observation covers the final tallying and announcement of results, reception of the results and disputes emanating from the process.

The Mission notes that the post-election context remains uncertain as election results were questioned by some voters and opposition candidates. In this context of mistrust, tensions have also arisen due to the detentions and restrictions on the movement of members and leaders of the opposition which regrettably, continue unabated a week after the announcement of results.

The post-election environment has been characterised by continued detention and arrests of the leading opposition candidates, opposition party members and journalists. Specifically, the Mission notes the continued inhibition of the freedom of movement of Dr. Kizza Besigye, the candidate of the FDC. These detentions and arrests have contributed to the increased level of mistrust among voters and various electoral stakeholders. The heightened security surveillance and heavy security deployment observed in the run up to election day continued during the results tallying process and announcement of results. The Mission notes that rather than the security presence to serve the purpose of protection and reassurance, it has served more to intimidate and repress the opposition and the public.

There were challenges observed during the results tallying and transmission process which further contributed to the uncertainty and suspicions that greeted the

announcement of the final results. The Mission noted that the tallying process was not peaceful and orderly in most of the district tally centres it visited. Specifically there were challenges associated with the Electronic Results Transmission and Dissemination Systems (ERTDS) that necessitated physical transportation of the results from the following districts: Iganga, Mayunge, Jinja, Kamuli, Mbale, Bududa, Gulu and Kabale. The fact that most of the returning officers travelled unaccompanied by party agents raises questions about the transparency of the process and the efficacy of the results transmission system. The Mission also noted instances in Arua district where party agents signed blank results forms that were completed after the fact at the district tally centre.

The election results have been rejected and challenged in various electoral areas¹ due to alleged ballot stuffing, alteration of results forms, intimidation and announcement of wrong results amongst others. These accusations unfortunately cast doubt on the integrity of the process which may be allayed in the courts. The EISA EOM urges the national authorities to desist from activities that could impede the process of evidence gathering and filing of complaints and appeal by aggrieved parties.

As election petitions are filed and processed by the Electoral Commission and the Judiciary, EISA urges all Ugandans to conduct themselves in a manner that protects civil and political rights and freedoms; promotes peace and security and respects due process and rule of law

¹ These include Upper Madi constituency, Arua municipality, Jonan Constituency, Koboko East, Omoro Constituency, Ntungamo Municipality, Rukungiri District woman MP, Ndorwa East constituency, Bungokho North, Bungokho south, Budiope West, and Nakakulwe, Bugaluba