



EUROPEAN UNION  
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION  
THE GAMBIA 2017



## Chief Observer Miroslav Poche presented the European Union Election Observation Mission to The Gambia 2017

### Banjul, 22 March

The Chief Observer Miroslav Poche today formally opened the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) for the 6 April Parliamentary elections. The mission's deployment follows an invitation from The Gambia Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). This is the first time that the EU deploys a fully-fledged election observation mission to The Gambia.

The mission is led by the **Chief Observer Miroslav Poche**, a Czech member of the European Parliament and currently consists of six international election experts, based in Banjul, and fourteen long-term observers (LTOs) deployed across the country. Closer to the election day, the mission will broaden its scope of observation by deploying short-term observers, including observers seconded by the diplomatic missions accredited to The Gambia. A delegation of seven members of the European Parliament will also be integrated into the mission on a date close to election day. The EU EOM will comprise some 50 observers from EU member states, as well as Canada, Norway and Switzerland.

*“The 2017 Parliamentary elections are taking place in a new but still challenging political environment. The European Union Election Observation Mission stands ready to offer an impartial and comprehensive assessment of the electoral process for consideration by the authorities, political parties and civil society of The Gambia,”* stated the Chief Observer. Mr. Poche expected the EU EOM to be the only international long-term election observation mission. It will remain in the country in the weeks after the day of elections in order also to observe the complaints and appeals process.

The EU EOM will assess compliance of these elections with domestic legislation as well as with regional commitments and international standards that underpin democratic elections. Observers' assessments will encompass a wide range of election-related issues, including the work of the election administration and relevant state bodies, implementation of the legislative framework, and the resolution of election-related disputes. The mission will also observe campaign activities across the country, and will carry out a comprehensive monitoring of the media.

An integral part of an election observation mission is to meet electoral stakeholders across the board. Consequently, during his first visit to The Gambia, the Chief Observer met the IEC Chairperson, government ministers, representatives of domestic observers and political parties. Over the weeks prior to the elections the core team analysts at the national level and the LTOs at regional level will continue to be in close contact with all electoral stakeholders including the greater public as such.

The EU EOM operates in accordance with the “Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation” adopted at the United Nations in 2005 by a number of international bodies involved in election observation.

*Further media inquiries – Inta Lase, Press Officer, EU EOM The Gambia 2017*

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#### EU EOM THE GAMBIA 2017

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