

COMMUNITY OF SAHEL-SAHARAN STATES (CEN-SAD)

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Peace and Security Department

PRESS RELEASE

ON THE PARLIAMENTARY, LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

IN THE REPUBLIC OF CHAD

29 December 2024

1. As part of its efforts to support electoral processes in its Member States, the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), at the invitation of the Government and the National Electoral Management Agency (ANGE), sent an electoral observation mission of some forty members of various nationalities to observe the parliamentary, local and provincial elections in Chad on 29 November 2004.
2. The main objective of the CEN-SAD observation mission is to provide support for the restoration and consolidation of democracy in Chad in accordance with the instructions of the Conference of Heads of State of the Community.
3. The mission was headed by **H.E. Ambassador USMAN BARAYA, former Nigerian Ambassador to Belgium.**
4. The members of the CEN-SAD Observer Mission were divided into ten (10) groups to cover the ten (10) districts of the city of N'djamena. Each group produced a detailed report based on a standard election observation form. In total, the different groups were able to visit 506 polling stations in the city of N'Djamena and the surrounding area.
5. In addition, the Observation Mission received and analysed information from correspondents in the other provinces of Chad to have a comprehensive and synoptic picture of the electoral process. A detailed general report will be issued at the end of this mission.
6. The findings of the mission were therefore used as the basis for their assessments and preliminary conclusions. A plenary meeting of all the members of the mission was held on 29 December 2024 at 7 p.m. to hear from the rapporteurs of the ten (10) groups, to share and consolidate the various findings.
7. It is worth noting that these elections mark the end of a long electoral cycle, following the constitutional referendum of 17 December 2023 and the presidential elections of 6 May 2024.
8. With these elections, Chad is returning to the normal course of its democratic process after a period of transition following the tragic death of one of the founding fathers of CEN-SAD, the late Marshal of Chad, Idriss DEBY ITNO.
9. Throughout this democratic process, Chad has shown remarkable resilience by holding all the electoral stages in peace and unity, culminating today in the parliamentary, local and provincial elections.
10. These elections are taken place in a difficult regional security context characterised by instability in Chad's neighbouring countries, terrorism in the Lake Chad Basin, the civil war in Sudan and the influx of more than one million refugees who have been welcomed with dignity in Chad.

11. Despite all these challenges, Chad is ready to take up the challenge of gradually and firmly consolidating democracy through free, transparent and fair elections.

12. Based on the principles of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, Chad's Electoral Code, the Observer's Guide for Chad and the Guide for the Observation of Elections in the CEN-SAD region, the CEN-SAD Mission noted with satisfaction that the Government of Chad has firmly adhered to the fundamental rules of democracy.

13. The CEN-SAD Observer Mission noted with satisfaction:

- Sufficient deployment of logistics and voting materials in the polling centres.
- Good access to polling stations.
- The availability of voters' lists at polling stations.
- The start and end of voting hours were respected in most polling stations.
- Polling booths were placed in places that ensured the secrecy of the vote. The voting atmosphere was calm in most of the polling centres visited.
- The participation of women and young people was appreciable.
- The presence of several national, regional and international observation missions (from ECCAS, the Electoral Institute for sustainable democracy in Africa, Chadian organisations such as CASCIDHO, ONET, CNDH, CROIX Rouge, Tchad d'abord, etc).
- People with disabilities and senior citizens were able to perform their civic duty with the kind assistance of operators from the Agence Nationale de la Gestion des Elections (ANGE).
- Law enforcement and security officers ensured the security of the ballot with professionalism and efficiency.
- The active participation of Chadian civil society and the press allowed them to bear witness to the conditions in which the elections were organised.
- Voters had access to polling stations in a calm and simple manner, which is essential if democratic standards are to be respected.
- Voters showed patience and discipline throughout the voting process, even when there were some temporary practical difficulties.
- Ballot boxes were clearly visible in all polling stations, enhancing the transparency of the vote.
- Polling booths were arranged in such a way as to ensure the secrecy of the vote.
- Voters were identified based on valid electoral cards, thus ensuring that the voting process was properly managed.
- Electoral equipment and materials were adequate and allowed for the effective conduct of the electoral process.
- The presence of national and international observers, as well as civil society, was proof of the interest shown in these elections.

- The significant participation of nomads, particularly in certain polling stations such as Goudji and Klémat.
- The satisfactory, calm and disciplined manner in which the defence and security forces voted on 28 December.
- The public count was conducted in a transparent manner, in accordance with the provisions of the Chadian electoral code.

14. In view of the above, the CEN-SAD Observer Mission commends the Chadians' commitment to democracy and peace.

15. It welcomes the calm and serenity that prevailed in all the polling stations visited.

16. The CEN-SAD observer mission commends the maturity of the political class for the efforts it has made to provide political training for its grassroots activists and, above all, for placing the overriding interest of the Chadian nation above all else.

17. It pays particular tribute to the defence and security forces mobilised and deployed throughout the country to ensure the security of the process. It warmly congratulates them on their professionalism and patriotism.

18. The CEN-SAD Observer Mission also wishes to commend, throughout the electoral process, the constructive contribution and patriotic commitment of customary and religious authorities and opinion leaders for their constant involvement in promoting the culture of peace, dialogue and cohesion among Chadians.

19. Considering all these observations, the CEN-SAD Observer Mission makes the following recommendations:

To the President of the Republic of Chad, the Government and other institutions:

- to continue to give priority to dialogue and consultation to find lasting solutions to issues affecting the nation.
- to maintain inclusive political dialogue in the interests of peace and stability in Chad.
- to continue to work to strengthen public and individual freedoms and the exercise of the right to vote in a free and equal manner.
- to encourage and promote gender equality in electoral processes.
- to pursue training and education in citizenship and civic mindedness.
- to strengthen the capacities of the Agence nationale de la gestion des elections (ANGE) by providing it with sufficient resources and means to continue its patriotic and strategic work for peace and social cohesion.

Political actors, opinion leaders and members of civil society in Chad:

- to support and act to promote the values and principles of democracy.
- to continue to respect the Constitution and republican order.
- to continue to promote the values and traditions of ethnic, political and religious tolerance.
- to promote national unity, peace and social cohesion,
- to continue to safeguard democratic political debate and the democratic change of power.
- to continue to raise awareness among their supporters with a view to better performance in the elections.
- to work with ANGE to build the capacity of polling station staff so that they can become even more professional.
- to provide polling centres with additional equipment to facilitate the practical organisation of voting.

To the international community and Chad's technical and financial partners:

- Continue to support Chad in its efforts to strengthen democracy and the rule of law through multifaceted support, technical, material and financial support.
- To consider and support Chad in view of the security, political and social challenges it faces in view of the instability that characterises the region.
- To continue to provide technical and political support to Chad to help deepen democracy and consolidate stability in the region.

20. In any event, the parliamentary, local and provincial elections of 29 December 2024 were held in accordance with the provisions of the Chadian electoral code and in conditions of transparency and fairness satisfactory to all parties.

21. The CEN-SAD Election Observation Mission avails itself of this opportunity to congratulate the Agence Nationale pour la Gestion des Elections (ANGE) and its Chairman, Mr AHMAT BARTCHIRET, for all the measures taken to ensure the smooth running of the parliamentary, local and provincial elections.

22. The Mission reiterates its gratitude to **H.E. the President of the Republic, Marshal MAHAMAT IDRIS DEBY ITNO, current President of CEN-SAD**, who made possible the climate of serenity and confidence in which these elections took place.

23. CEN-SAD salutes the entire political class for having demonstrated exemplary political sense and behaviour to date, political maturity, and the calm climate that prevailed throughout the process.

24. It also invites them to maintain this climate of serenity in the interests of social peace and urges all parties to resort, if necessary, to legal channels for the settlement of any electoral dispute.
25. CEN-SAD expresses the fervent hope that this exercise, which enshrines the free choice of citizens, will be a factor in the definitive and lasting consolidation of the constitutional order in Chad.
26. CEN-SAD reaffirms its willingness to actively support the Government of Chad and the people of Chad in all initiatives aimed at consolidating democracy in Chad.

N'Djamena, 30 December 2024.

The CEN-SAD Observer Mission