

The African Union and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa have jointly expressed their full support to the on-going electoral process in the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC), also stating that the experience will further deepen the levels of democracy in that country. The joint team also believes that the elections will consolidate peace, enhance national reconciliation and lay the foundation for lasting peace, economic and social development.

The Africa Union, COMESA and two other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) issued a joint preliminary declaration on the presidential and parliamentary elections in the DRC on 30th November 2011. The AU, COMESA, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of the Central African States (ECCAS) were joined by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) in throwing their weight behind the DRC.

“We welcome the successful holding of the elections despite the numerous challenges which the country is confronted with and have noted the technical and logistical challenges that over shadowed the holding of these elections,” read the Preliminary Joint Declaration.

The Joint team also welcomed the spirit of cooperation and solidarity among all the Congolese political stakeholders, whom they strongly urged to contribute meaningfully to the democratic process in the DRC.

They appreciated the will, enthusiasm and large turn out by the Congolese people during the 28th November Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

The RECs, who were led by the A.U regretted some isolated acts of violence before and during the elections but they hailed the Congolese people's determination to hold the second democratic elections as planned.

The DRC held its second post conflict and post independence elections on Monday 28th November in which eleven candidates including incumbent President Joseph Kabila contested the Presidency.

Official results are expected on 6th December 2011.

The COMESA Electoral Observer Mission to the DRC elections was led by Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat of Kenya.