

## AU-COMESA-IGAD Commend Uganda for holding Regular Elections



The Joint African Union-COMESA-IGAD Election Observation Mission that deployed to the 15 January 2026 General Elections has commended Uganda for holding regular elections as enshrined in their national constitution. The Mission has also noted that the elections were delivered in a calm environment compared to the 2021 elections.

However, the Mission expressed concern with reports of harassment, intimidation and arrest of opposition leaders, candidates, supporters, media and civil society actors, as well as the suspension of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the internet shut down.

Head of the AU-COMESA-IGAD Observation Mission H.E. Goodluck Jonathan pointed out that in view of these findings, the Mission has offered several recommendations to support Uganda's continued democratic consolidation.

The recommendations are directed to the government, parliament, electoral commission, security agencies and political parties. President Jonathan Goodluck said this in Kampala during the issuing of the Mission's Preliminary Statement. Dr Jonathan, who is the former President of Nigeria was assisted by Ambassador Shemsudin Ahmed Roble, Member of the COMESA Committee of Elders, and Commander Abebe Muluneh Beyene, Director of Peace and Security, representing Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

The preliminary statement among others urged the Government to safeguard the right to information, fundamental freedoms of

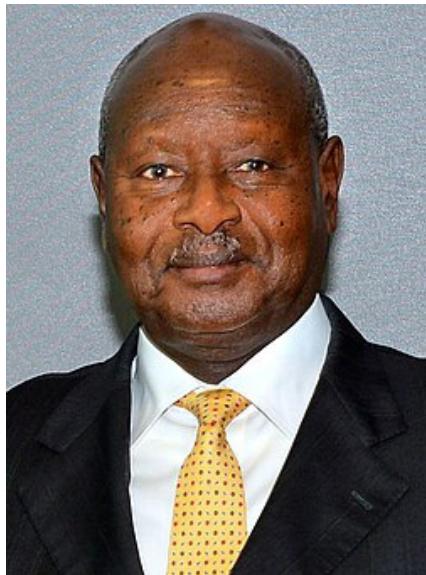
expression, assembly, association, throughout the electoral cycle, in line with constitutional and international obligations. The statement further urged the Government to avoid suspending access to the internet close to the elections and devise alternative mechanisms of handling potential security threats.

"They should provide a conducive and favourable environment for operation of civil society, traditional and new media as well as the opposition parties as key actors in delivering credible and transparent elections," Dr Jonathan said.

Parliament on other hand was urged

page 2

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## COMESA Toasts President Museveni

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa has congratulated President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for being declared winner in the January 15, 2026 General Elections. In her message of Congratulations sent to Kampala, Secretary General Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe offered her support to His Excellency the President, Government and people of Uganda.

"We are confident that you will continue with your efforts aimed at social and economic transformation of the country and your unwavering efforts in promotion of peace and stability in the region."

The message also pointed out that Uganda has been an active Member State that has supported the various regional integration programmes of COMESA. "We, therefore, look forward to the continued participation of Uganda in COMESA programmes as we strive to deepen regional integration."

COMESA in collaboration with the African Union (AU) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) closely followed the preparations leading to the 2026 Presidential and Parliamentary elections and observed voting by deploying a joint Election Observer Mission.



to undertake electoral reforms ahead of future elections through broad-based consultations with political parties, civil society organisations and other stakeholders. This will help address persistent legal, institutional and operational gaps identified across electoral cycles. The proposed legal reforms should include enacting a campaign financing law that provides for clear spending limits and effective enforcement mechanisms to curb the commercialisation of elections.

The Electoral Commission (EC) was urged to ensure the consistent application and respect of the Constitution and electoral laws, without any interference. The EC was urged to consider introducing a waiver or reduction of nomination fees for women, youth and candidates with disabilities to incentivise and enhance their participation in competitive elections.

On the use of new technologies specifically the BVVKs, the EC was urged to conduct robust test-runs before voting day to ensure their effective use on the actual voting day. The EC should invest in desegregation of

election data based on age, gender and disability data.

Security agencies were urged to operate within the law and mandate in a manner that is proportionate, impartial, and respectful of human rights. For political parties, they should promote internal party democracy, introduce quotas in all leadership positions and equitable access to campaign resources, particularly for women, youth and marginalised groups.

The AU-COMESA-IGAD Mission comprised of 84 Short-Term Observers drawn from 27 African countries who included ambassadors, officials of election management bodies, civil society organisations, election experts, academics, human rights practitioners, gender and media specialists and youth representatives.

Among the joint Mission's objectives were to demonstrate AU-COMESA-IGAD's solidarity with the people of Uganda in their democratic and electoral processes, ultimately contributing to peace, stability, good governance and inclusive development.



# AfDB Concludes Appraisal Mission to COMESA



AfDB delegation with COMESA Assistant Secretary General Programmes, Amb. Dr. Mohamed Kadah, during the conclusion of the appraisal mission

The African Development Bank has concluded a three-day appraisal mission to the COMESA Secretariat where they met the Assistant Secretary General – Programmes, Amb. Dr. Mohamed Kadah. The event took place from January 27th to 29th, 2026.

The mission's objective was to evaluate the proposed Regional Capacity Building Project for Trade-Based Money Laundering, facilitated by the Governance, Peace and Security Unit. The discussions covered the progress made, the implementation arrangements and the subsequent steps in the appraisal process.

Dr. Kadah welcomed the initiative noting its timeliness and expressed confidence in COMESA's capacity to deliver the project effectively.

The AfDB-supported project will run for three years, with initial funding of approximately US\$4.5 million and will be implemented in Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Somalia and Sudan.

## COMESA's ASCENT Programme Champions Integrity in Carbon Markets

As the global community intensifies efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions, the need for credible and transparent carbon markets has never been greater. This message was strongly echoed on 29 January 2026, when the Accelerating Sustainable & Clean Energy Access Transformation (ASCENT) programme under COMESA hosted a high level webinar on International Carbon Standards and their Role in Shaping Global Climate Action.

The webinar held in collaboration with the World Bank and the Global Carbon Council brought together over 60 government representatives, technical experts and project implementers from ASCENT wave one countries.

The webinar covered practical insights on elaboration of New Carbon Standards for energy access, highlighted steps on how to help generate high quality carbon credits and demystified new carbon standards on energy access and clarified its components. The session also provided an update on the timeline on the implementation of Carbon standard and its link to Digital MRV tools.

In his remarks, ASCENT Project Coordinator, Dr. Malama Chileshe, underscored the central

role of internationally recognized carbon standards in ensuring environmental integrity and unlocking climate finance for Africa.

"Our strategic outcome is clear," Dr. Chileshe stated. "By mastering international carbon standards, ASCENT countries will be better positioned to leverage carbon markets, accelerate clean energy deployment and contribute meaningfully to global climate objectives."

He emphasized that as the world accelerates its shift toward a low carbon future, internationally recognized carbon standards remain essential for ensuring credibility and building trust in carbon markets.

According to Dr. Chileshe, the transparency and integrity embedded in these standards are essential for attracting sustainable investment and guaranteeing that climate finance delivers genuine impact especially for developing regions such as Eastern and Southern Africa.

Aligning national and regional energy projects with global methodologies, he noted, positions African countries to access global carbon finance with confidence, strengthen

investor trust in renewable energy and clean cooking initiatives as well as ensuring environmental integrity while advancing national climate commitments.

World Bank Energy and Carbon expert Martina Bosi highlighted the development of a new carbon standard for energy access, which aims to enhance transparency and credibility in carbon markets.

She underscored the importance of strong foundational knowledge on carbon standards, noting that clear policies and aligned practices are critical for credible carbon market activities under the ASCENT project.

Ms. Bosi reiterated the importance of developing a solid understanding of carbon standards, particularly the underlying concepts, key terminologies, and relevant policy frameworks during the implementation of the ASCENT project.

The ASCENT programme continues to champion sustainable energy transformation across the COMESA region, with carbon market readiness emerging as a central pillar in the journey toward a climate resilient future.

## PHOTO FOCUS

### AU-COMESA-IGAD Election Observation Mission To Uganda

4





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