



Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring

The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) and SADC Election Support Network join other international non partisan election observation organisations in welcoming the Declaration of *Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring* launched at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on the 3rd of April 2012.

Representatives from 50 organisations from West Africa, Southern Africa, East Africa, the Middle East, North Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean participated in the launch. ZESN notes that this initiative not only builds the capacity of election observation through the adoption of a code of conduct, best international practice and methodologies but also strengthens synergies between observer groups around the world.

The ZESN Director and SADC-ESN Deputy Board Chair Mrs Rindai Chipfunde Vava who attended the Launch in UN Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD) in New York together with the Malawi Election Support Network (MESN) representative and ZESN Monitoring and Observation Manager highlighted that “the declaration will go a long way in enhancing the quality of domestic election observation and increasing the credibility of citizen observation. It will complement already existing regional principle guiding domestic observation in southern Africa.”

The declaration launched in New York sets the tone for more effective and informed domestic election observation guided by international best practice. It would enhance the quality, professionalism and integrity of non partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organisations like ZESN.

We do hope that the Zimbabwean and other SADC governments create a conducive environment to provide for access and the security of non partisan citizen observers and monitors. This would go a long way in enabling them to play an effective watchdog role throughout the whole electoral cycle that is, before, during and after the election period. We call upon SADC and AU to endorse this declaration and recognise the critical and frontline role played by domestic observers in electoral processes.

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