

MONITORING OF PUBLIC EVENTS
GROWING ELECTORAL VIOLENCE POSES A SERIOUS RISK TO ELECTIONS

Kinshasa, November 14th, 2011

At a meeting of the monitoring of public events, Congolese civil society organizations declared that, two weeks before the presidential and legislative elections, the degradation of security conditions posed a serious threat to the organizations of transparent elections.

This assessment has been made during a meeting which analyzed the indicators that provided favorable circumstances for organizing peaceful elections. These indicators are: the security of all political actors in the electoral process and the security of the journalists and human rights activists across the country.

The civil society organizations who attended the meeting debated on the alarming security situation and confirmed elements of the United Nations report on Human Rights, and the concerns of the archbishop of Kinshasa Laurent Cardinal Monsengwo Pasinya

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) insisted on the technical and logistical improvements achieved in order to prepare this election according to the analysis of the Acting for Transparent and Peaceful Elections platform (ATPE).

The signatories of the declarations declared that the elections were not only a technical and logistical issue; it is first and foremost a highly political matter. Furthermore, the signatories declared that, on a security and political level, the situation had seriously deteriorated since the beginning of the campaign.

NGOS have reported frequent clashes between supporters of the majority in the government and opposition member across the country (systematic attacks perpetrated by armed groups against civilians in the North and South Kivu provinces; the implication of armed forces in the election campaign; violent clashes between UNAFEC and UDPS supporters in Katanga; the deadly attack against a vehicle owned by the opposition in Mbuji-Mayi on october 28th 2011 and a UNC procession at the entrance of Kikwit on November 9th 2011.

These acts of violence confirm the concerns of Cardinal Mosengwo on the exploitation of the youth and demonstrate that the conditions for free and peaceful elections are not created yet.

The systematic use of violence in order to hinder the proper conduct of the elections increases the risk of the results being contested by political actors.

The lack of trust in the neutrality of the police and the independence of the judicial power increases the risk of violent contestation of the results.

Therefore it is crucial for the government and the INEC to create a minimum consensus with the Congolese political class which includes all the parties in the election process.

The DRC government should take responsibility and ensure the conditions for peace for all parties before the elections. It must deploy a force that can protect the citizens in their freedom to participate

in political activities and prevent and punish acts of violence against the candidates and their supporters.

As the manager and organizer of the elections, the INEC needs to ensure that logistical and technical conditions are met and that the elections create a consensus among the political class, which is a necessary condition for accepting the election results.

The creation of a mediation committee by the INEC is a step in the right direction. However, the INEC shall not abandon its primary mission and create the conditions for a large political consensus around the steps and rules of transparent elections.

Signatories:

ASADHO

JED

la Nouvelle Société civile

le Réseau Action Femme

les Amis de Nelson Mandela