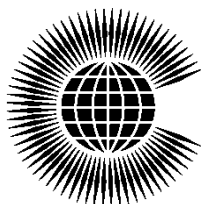


Annex 1

Commonwealth News Release and Biographies of the Team



COMMONWEALTH NEWS RELEASE

11/43

3 October 2011

Commonwealth Team to observe Cameroon Presidential Elections

A Commonwealth Expert Team will observe the Presidential Elections due to take place on 9 October in Cameroon, Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma announced today. The Team has been constituted at the invitation of the Minister of External Relations of Cameroon.

Mr Sharma said that the team of six experts, supported by a four-member staff team from the Commonwealth Secretariat, will be led by Mr Frederick Mitchell MP, former Foreign Affairs Minister for The Bahamas.

The Secretary-General added that the mandate of the team is to observe the preparations for the election; the polling, counting and results process; and the overall electoral environment. The team is to assess the overall conduct of the process and make appropriate recommendations for the future strengthening of the electoral process in Cameroon

The team arrives in Yaoundé today and will remain in Cameroon until 15 October.

The full composition of the Commonwealth Expert Team is as follows:

Mr Fred Mitchell (Chair)

Former Foreign Minister
Bahamas

Ms Gabrielle Giroday

Journalist
Winnipeg Free Press
Canada

Mr Samuel Tembenu

Lawyer & former President, Malawi Law Society
Malawi

Mr Irfan Abdool Rahman

Electoral Commissioner
Mauritius

Ambassador Bariyu Adekunle Adeyemi

Former Diplomat
Nigeria

Dr. Tumelontle Thiba

Provincial Electoral Officer
North West Province
South Africa

The Commonwealth Secretariat support staff team will be led by Linford Andrews, Political Affairs Officer in the Political Affairs Division.

The Commonwealth observed the 1997 Presidential Elections, and the 2002 Municipal and Legislative Elections in Cameroon. The Commonwealth also observed the 2004 Presidential Elections. A Commonwealth Assessment Team was present for the 2007 Parliamentary elections.

Note to Editors:

The Team's report will be submitted to the Commonwealth Secretary-General, who will then in turn send it to the Government of Cameroon, Elections Cameroon (ELECAM), and Commonwealth Governments.

The Expert Team will act impartially and independently and shall conduct itself according to the standards expressed in the International Declaration of Principles for Election Observation to which the Commonwealth is a signatory.

For media inquiries, please contact:

In Cameroon: Mr Linford Andrews, Political Affairs Officer, on Tel: +44 (0)752-5392-496, +237 96001541 or e-mail: l.andrews@commonwealth.int

In London: Mr Julius Mucunguzi, Communications Officer and Assistant Spokesperson for Africa on e-mail: j.mucunguzi@commonwealth.int or Tel: +44-7894-593-517.

Biographies

Mr Frederick A. Mitchell MP (The Bahamas)

Frederick A. Mitchell is the Opposition's Spokesman on Foreign Affairs, the Public Service and Foreign Trade in The Bahamas. He served in the Senate of The Bahamas from 1992 to 2002 and is now a Member of the House of Assembly in The Bahamas (2002 to the present). He was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Public Service in 2002 and served until 2007. He has worked as a journalist and practises today as a lawyer

Ambassador Kunle Adeyemi (Nigeria)

Ambassador Kunle Adeyemi is a former Nigerian Ambassador to the United Nations (UN) in Geneva, and has also worked for the UN and as a consultant and election observer. He joined the Nigerian Foreign Service in 1963, and was Head of the International Affairs Directorate when he retired from the service in 1998. He was a Senior Political Affairs Officer at the UN, and was also the Nigerian facilitator on the peace negotiations on Darfur held in Abuja from 2005 to 2006. He now acts as a consultant on peace building, good governance and conflict resolution, as well as working in election observation.

Mr M. Irfan Abdool-Rahman (Mauritius)

Mr Irfan Abdool-Rahman has been the Electoral Commissioner of Mauritius since January 1998 and before that was a Returning Officer for 12 years. He worked previously as Crown Counsel in the Attorney-General's Office, a Senior District Magistrate and an Intermediate Court Magistrate. Mr Abdool Rahman has been a member of several observer missions and has acted as an Election Consultant for various international and regional organisations. He is a Council Member of International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

Dr Tumelontle Thiba (South Africa)

Dr Tumelontle Thiba currently holds the position of Provincial Electoral Officer of the South African Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in the North West Province. She has taught at Ganyesa, Vryburg, Kimberley and Mafikeng. She was also a lecturer at Augustineum College in Windhoek, Namibia, as well as at the University of Zululand and at North West University, as head of unit, department chair and executive dean. Dr Thiba has a number of educational qualifications and has taught extensively with a focus on linguistics.

Mr Samuel Tembenu (Malawi)

Samuel Tembenu is a Senior lawyer in private practice in Malawi and is the former President of the Malawi Law Society. He is the co-founder of the general practice law firm, Tembenu, Masumbu & Company. He has also worked as a Human Rights Commissioner for the Malawi Human Rights Commission between 2002 and 2008. In 2008, Mr Tembenu observed the Presidential Elections in Rwanda, and at the local level has performed election observation in Malawi both as a member of the local bar as well as a Human Rights Commissioner.

Ms Gabrielle Giroday (Canada)

Gabrielle Giroday is a journalist with the Winnipeg Free Press, the largest newspaper in the Province of Manitoba. She was awarded the joint Canadian Association of Journalists and Canadian International Development Association fellowship in 2006 and used this in 2007 to report on women targeted by sexual violence as part of border disputes in the Democratic Republic of Congo, having reported on an election observation mission to the country in 2006 for the Free Press.