



CODEO DEPLOYS 420 OBSERVERS FOR THE DISTRICT LEVEL ELECTIONS

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Introduction

The Electoral Commission of Ghana (EC) will conduct the District Level Elections (DLE) and the Unit Committee Elections on Tuesday, December 19, 2023. Therefore, the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), as part of its mandate to mobilize citizens of Ghana to participate in electoral processes and to complement the efforts of Ghana's Electoral Commission in ensuring transparent, free, fair and peaceful elections, will deploy 420 election day observers to observe the elections.

Recruitment and Training of Observers

CODEO has mobilized some of its member organizations, previous CODEO election observers and selected civil society organizations to voluntarily observe the 2023 DLE. On Friday, 15 December 2023, CODEO trained selected observers on the legal framework for elections, the code of conduct for observers, and key procedures to observe at the polling stations. In addition, a simulation exercise was conducted for the observers to familiarize themselves with CODEO's observers' checklist and critical incident report forms which are used for observing election day processes.

Deployment

CODEO appreciates the Electoral Commission's assistance and collaboration in granting accreditation for the exercise. On Tuesday, December 19, 2023, CODEO will deploy the observers in 55 purposefully selected districts to observe the elections. They will observe the polling station set-up, voting and counting procedures, and report on any incidents they observe throughout the day. All CODEO observers will wear CODEO-branded jackets and have their accreditation tags. They will report at the polling stations at 6:00 am and stay until the end of the official declaration of the ballot count at the polling stations.

Reporting

CODEO has developed a reporting system to facilitate the expeditious transmission of observation reports by observers at specified intervals to the CODEO Secretariat at the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) in Accra. This reporting system will enable CODEO to quickly and thoroughly analyze issues pertaining to the setup, the voting, and the counting of results at the polling stations.

Again, CODEO will set up a critical incident desk at its Secretariat to take reports on anomalies, disruptions, and other incidents in the voting process. CODEO will verify and process all critical incidents and forward them to the appropriate state institutions including the Ghana Police Service, and the Electoral Commission for quick resolution.

Based on observation findings and incidents filed by our observers, CODEO will issue a statement on the conduct of the elections on December 20, 2023.

Appeal

The EC and Ghanaians indeed have a good record of conducting credible and peaceful elections. However, the DLEs over the years have suffered low voter turnout. CODEO therefore appeals to the electorate to turn out in their numbers to vote for their preferred candidates.

We call on all election stakeholders, particularly candidates and their supporters, to utilize legal and peaceful processes to seek redress to all grievances related to the DLE. Again, we entreat all stakeholders to be mindful of the dangers that electoral violence poses to national cohesion, peace and security and the country's development and progress.

CODEO appeals to the EC, polling officials, returning and presiding officers to be firm and apply the electoral rules impartially and objectively. We ask all the polling agents to respect the EC code of conduct and act responsibly on the polling day by assisting the EC officials to execute their duties effectively and efficiently. We also urge the electorate to conduct themselves properly on Election Day.

To our security officers, we implore you to approach your duties with maximum professionalism and utmost respect for Ghana's constitution.

CODEO appeals to the media to be objective and professional in its coverage and reportage on the elections. The media platforms, particularly the radio and social media, must be used to provide accurate information, educate Ghanaians and help increase voter turnout in the DLE.

Acknowledgement

CODEO's district-level elections observation program is made possible with the generous support of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) which serves as the Coalition's secretariat. On behalf of the Advisory Board of CODEO, I wish to express gratitude and appreciation for the enthusiasm and dedication of the people who volunteered for the CODEO observation of the elections.

About CODEO

CODEO is an independent and non-partisan network of civil society groups, faith-based organizations and professional bodies which observe Ghanaian elections. It was established in 2000 under the auspices of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) to mobilize citizens of Ghana to participate in the electoral process actively and to complement the efforts of Ghana's Electoral Commission in ensuring transparent, free, fair and peaceful elections. The Coalition of 42-member organizations has grown to become the largest and most credible domestic election observer body in Ghana which mobilizes citizens and groups to participate in Ghana's electoral processes.

Signed:

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