

Statement on the Fatal Shooting of Mozambique Local Election Observation Mission Head

October 2019-The African Elections Observers Network (AfEONet) which is comprised of citizen observer groups in the East and Horn of Africa (E-HORN), West Africa Election Observation Network (WAEON) and the Electoral Support Network of Southern Africa (ESN-SA) has learnt with sadness the death of the head of Mozambique's local election observer mission, Anastacio Matavele, who was shot on Monday, 7 October 2019. Matavele was shot in Xai-Xai, the capital of the South Eastern Gaza Province. AfEONet condemns such an act, especially as Sala da Paz, a group that monitors election-related violence, has alleged that the three assailants are known members of the riot police unit.

The incident discourages the critical role of non-partisan groups in observing elections. The preamble to the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors' (GNDEM) Declaration of Global Principles for Non-partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations provides that, *“Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations has emerged as one of the most tangible and significant dimensions of democratic development around the globe.”*

As further elaborated in the preamble, *“Non-partisan observation and monitoring of elections by citizen organizations is part of participating in public affairs, which “relates to legislative, executive and administrative powers” and “covers all aspects of public administration, and the formulation and implementation of policy...”* (UNHRC General Comment 25, paragraph 5.) *Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations exercises the right of association that is central to the functioning of non-governmental organizations, as well as the right to seek, receive and impart information that is vital to transparency and is included in the freedom of expression protected by articles 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ICCPR.”*

AfEONet strongly condemns this act as election observers play a vital role in electoral processes. Chapter 5 of the African Charter on Democracy Elections, and Governance, on the culture of democracy and peace, particularly Article 4, 3 obliges States to *“Create conducive conditions for civil society organizations to exist and operate within the law.”*

We stand in solidarity with the Civil Society Learning Center (CESC) and the NGO League in Mozambique (JOINT) in this very difficult time. Further, we call upon the government of Mozambique to ensure that the electoral environment is peaceful and that election observers are safe to carry out their mandate. We implore the State to investigate and ensure and the perpetrators are brought to book and justice served// Ends

Members of AfEONET include;

Electoral Support Network of Southern Africa (ESN-SA)

IASED Angola, Emang Basadi, RENOSEC, Lesotho Council of NGOs, CNOE, MESN, MACOSS, Electoral Observatory, AMODE, FECIV, Citizens Democracy Watch, LUNGOS, NANGOF Trust/ CATS, Gauteng Council of Churches, KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council (KZNCC), Anglican church (Diocese of Natal), SACC Western Cape, Democracy Development Program and head of KZN civil society Network, CANGO, TEDG, FODEP, Zambian Women's Lobby, ZESN

West African Election Observation Network (WAEON)

Mouvement Burkinabé des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples (MBDHP), Burkina Faso; Convention de la Société Civile Ivoirienne (CSCI), Cote d'Ivoire; Coalition of Domestic Elections Observers (CODEO), Ghana; Observatory Citizen of Elections and Governance (OCEG); Institute for Research & Democratic Development (IREDD), Liberia; Appui au Processus Electoral au Mali (APEM), Mali; Association Nigérienne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (ANDDH), Niger; Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), Nigeria; Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (RADDHO), Sénégal; National Election Watch (NEW), Sierra Leone; Concertation Nationale de la Société Civile (CNSC), Togo; The Association of NGOs in the Gambia (TANGO), Gambia; Cadre d'Appui aux Processus Electoraux (CAPE), Benin; CDD-Ghana; Yiaga Africa

East and Horn of Africa Election Observers Network (E-HORN)

Elections Observation Group (ELOG), Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), Citizens Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU), Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee (TEMCO), Sudanese Group for Democratic Elections (SuGDE), South Sudan Network for Democratic Elections (SSUNDE), Alliance for Campaign Finance Monitoring (ACFIM)

