



**EUROPEAN UNION ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA
General Elections 2007**

European Union Mission Begins Observation of General Elections

Nairobi, 27 November 2007 – Following an invitation from the Government of the Republic of Kenya and the Electoral Commission of Kenya, the European Union has established a mission to observe the general elections scheduled for 27 December. The head of the EU Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) is Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, a German Member of the European Parliament.

The mission is made up of a core team of 11 election experts, who are based in Nairobi. On 24 November they were joined by 38 long-term observers who will shortly be deployed in teams of two to Kenya's eight provinces in order to assess the campaign period and pre-election preparations. Around 100 short-term observers will arrive a few days before the elections to observe voting, counting and the tabulation of results throughout the country. Core team members and observers come from 19 different EU countries, as well as Norway.

The mandate of the EU EOM is to observe all aspects of the electoral process and to assess the extent to which the elections comply with international and regional standards for elections, as well as with domestic law. Election observation is an important part of the EU's policy of promoting human rights and democracy throughout the world. The EU EOM will work independently to offer an impartial, balanced and informed analysis of the elections. All observers will remain neutral and will work under an internationally accepted code of conduct and in accordance with the Kenyan code of conduct for election observation.

As Chief Observer, Graf Lambsdorff is meeting government and electoral officials, candidates and representatives of political parties, heads of diplomatic delegations and representatives of international and non-governmental organizations. On his arrival he said,

"We are here in the spirit of cooperation with Kenya and see these elections as an opportunity to further strengthen the country's democratic process. Kenya set a high standard for the region with its elections in 2002. Now it is the responsibility of the leadership in all political parties and the ECK to maintain this standard, and ideally raise it higher. It is important that people can exercise their right to vote freely and that candidates are able to campaign in a peaceful, secure environment in which there is a level playing field."

The EU EOM operates in accordance with the "Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation" adopted by a number of international bodies involved in election observation in 2005 at the United Nations in New York. Shortly after election day, the mission will issue a preliminary statement of its initial findings at a press conference in Nairobi. It will remain in the country to observe the period after the elections. A more comprehensive final report, including recommendations for future elections, will be published within two months of the end of the electoral process.

*For more information please contact: Anna Owen, Press officer
Mobile: + 254 (0) 738 542263; Office: +254 (0) 20 2042228/29/30/31
Email: anna.owen@eueomkenya.org*