



PRESS RELEASE

Intimidation-free and non-violent environment critical in ensuring peaceful and credible elections in Senegal

Considered as one of the most stable democracies in Africa, Senegal will be heading to the polls on Sunday, February 24, 2019. This will be the 11th consecutive Presidential elections since the country gained independence from France in 1960. The successful conduct of this election is critical to democratic consolidation in the country.

The West Africa Election Observers Network (WAEON) is worried about the February 11 clashes in Tambacounda between supporters of incumbent President Macky Sall and opposition candidate El hadj Issa Sall, which led to the deaths of two persons. Such violent incidents are unfortunate and the security agencies must bring perpetrators to book. Given that the elections are few days away, WAEON calls on all electoral stakeholders, particularly political party leaders, to act responsibly, exercise restraint, desist from inciting their supporters to violence and conduct themselves peacefully during and after the elections.

Senegal's Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) is strongly urged to ensure transparency and impartiality, which are crucial elements in building trust and promoting peaceful and credible elections. WAEON also recognizes the important role the media plays in the electoral process and, thus, urges them to dispel the spread of fake news, that have the potential of undermining the elections. In line with the Declaration of Global Principles for Non-Partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations, domestic and international election observer groups are reminded to observe the conduct of the elections along these principles embodied in – independence, non-partisanship, fairness and objectivity – to inject credibility in the process.

Signed

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'James Lahai'.

James Lahai

Acting Chairman of WAEON

(For and on behalf of WAEON)

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Dated: February 22, 2019



For follow up information on the statement, please contact James Lahai on +232-76-962-233 and/or Dr. Franklin Oduro of the WAEON Secretariat on (+233 – 0302) 784293/4; 777214.

About WAEON

WAEON is an independent, non-partisan and non-religious organization of citizen observer groups from 13 West African Countries that aims at strengthening and supporting Citizens' Election Observation Groups (CEOGs) in the sub-region. It was formed in 2010, and has its secretariat based at the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) in Accra, Ghana.

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