

❖ COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO ❖ COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
NIGER 2021 – RUN-OFF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



PRELIMINARY DECLARATION

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The first round of the presidential election in Niger was held on Sunday, December 27, 2020. On Saturday, January 30, 2021, the Constitutional Court of Niger validated the results of the election of December 27, 2020. Based on the validation by the Constitutional Court, the candidates of the ruling party, PNDS, TARAYYA Bazoum Mohamed came first with 39.30% and was followed by the candidate of RDR, TCHANJI Mahamane Ousmane with 16.98%.
2. Given these results, the Constitutional Court confirmed Bazoum Mohamed and Mahamane Ousmane were eligible for the run-off scheduled for 21 February 2021.
3. In conformity with the relevant provisions of the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001), the 2008 ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework, and the legal texts governing the electoral process in the Republic of Niger, His Excellency Jean-Claude Kassi BROU, President of the ECOWAS Commission, deployed an Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) for the 21 February 2021 run-off elections.
4. The Mission is led by H.E. Mohamed Namadi Sambo, former Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and supported by an ECOWAS technical team led by General Francis BEHANZIN, Commissioner in charge of Political Affairs, Peace and Security and Mrs Liliane ALAPINI, ECOWAS Permanent Representative to the Republic of Niger.

5. The 92-member Observer Mission is composed of Ambassadors of ECOWAS Member States accredited to the ECOWAS Commission, Members of the ECOWAS Parliament and the Court of Justice. It also includes experts drawn from the relevant Ministries and Electoral Management Bodies of Member States, Civil Society Organisations, including security and media experts.

II. SUPPORT TO THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

6. The ECOWAS Commission through the Office of its Permanent Representation in Niger and its Early Warning and Early Response Mechanism closely monitored the political trends and security situation in the country following the first round of the election p to the deployment of the Election Observation Mission for the run-off elections.

III. ARRIVAL OF THE HEAD OF MISSION, CONSULTATIONS AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE OBSERVERS

7. Upon arrival in Niamey, the Head of Mission, **H.E. Mohamed Namadi SAMBO**, paid a courtesy visit to the President of the Republic, **H.E. Mahamadou ISSOUFOU**. The President thanked the ECOWAS Commission for its support to the ongoing electoral process in Niger and reiterated his commitment to the conduct of a credible and inclusive election. The Mission held consultations with various stakeholders, including the Prime Minister of the Republic, the President and Commissioners of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), members of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Republic of Niger, as well as Mr. Bazoum Mohamed of the PND and the members of the campaign teams of Mr. Mahamane Ousmane of RDR.

8. The Mission particularly notes the commitment of the stakeholders to conduct free, fair, credible and transparent election and solicited the cooperation of all political actors to ensure a smooth and peaceful run-off election that would produce the country's first civilian to civilian democratic transition.

9. After a briefing and orientation session conducted on 19 February 2021, the ECOWAS observers were deployed in five (5) regions of the country, with the



exception of Zinder, Agadez and Diffa regions due to logistical and operational challenges.

10. On election day, the observers visited 385 polling stations in the regions and maintained regular contact with the mission's situation room based in Niamey.

IV. OBSERVATION

OPENING, VOTING PROCESS AND VOTE COUNTING

11. Having analysed the information provided to the Situation Room by the observers deployed in the field, and following a debriefing session with the observers upon their return from the field, the Mission noted the following:

- a. Most polling stations visited opened between 8:00 AM and 8:45 AM, with the exception of the polling centres of Medersa Sabon Gari Primary School and CES Sabon Gari in the Birnin N'Konni district, where voting started after 9:30 AM. This delay was due to the late arrival of the candidates' representatives in these polling stations.
- b. In most of the polling stations visited, voting began in the presence of the representatives of the candidates of PNDS and RDR.
- c. The security arrangements for the second round were reinforced in most polling stations. The Election Observation Mission encourages and commends the Security Authorities.
- d. The mission observed considerable mobilisation youth and women voters. However, the Mission observed a lower voter turnout compared to the first round of the election.
- e. The AU, CENSAD, and UJ-CEMAC observers were also met in the field, as well as National observers who are members of networks such as WANEP - NHRC - NHRO Niger - COCEN - HALCIA - Transparency Justice - OFCHR - LUDOCRO - FAD - and AL OUMMAR Niger.
- f. The lack of the mastery of the voting procedures was observed in a few polling stations as in the first round. However significant improvement in the voting procedures was generally observed in most polling stations visited.



- g. The sorting, counting and tallying of the ballots, as well as the publication of results at the polling stations, were carried out professionally and transparently in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Code and related texts, in the presence of the agents of candidates Bazoum Mohamed of PNDS TARAYYA and Mahamane Ousmane, candidate of RDR TCHANJI.

V. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

12. Based on the analysis of the reports submitted by the observers deployed in the field, the ECOWAS Electoral Observation Mission makes the following preliminary conclusions:

- ❖ Preparations for the 21 February 2021 run-off presidential election, the election campaign, the voting process on Election Day, and the sorting, counting and tallying of the ballots were generally conducted under a peaceful atmosphere.
- ❖ The electoral officers and security agents displayed professionalism in their conduct.
- ❖ The Mission notes the considerable participation of youths and women in the electoral process.
- ❖ Voters exercised their constitutional right by voting for their preferred candidate under free, fair, credible and transparent conditions.
- ❖ Meanwhile, the Mission deeply regretted the unfortunate incident that occurred on Election Day, in Dargol, in the Tillabéri region, in which seven (07) electoral officials lost their lives and three (03) were injured and are still in critical condition. The Mission presents its deepest condolences to the bereaved families and the entire people of Niger, and wishes the injured a speedy recovery.

13. The ECOWAS Electoral Observation Mission commends the efforts made by the Nigerien authorities, the electoral management bodies, the development partners and the other observation missions which contributed to the successful holding of the elections on 21 February 2021.

14. The ECOWAS Observer Mission will submit a comprehensive report of the entire process in due course.



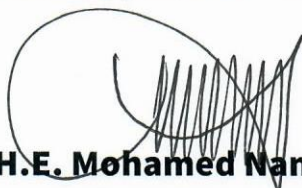
15. The Mission congratulates the candidates for their exemplary conduct so far and urges them to maintain this attitude until the completion of the electoral process, including the validation of the results by the Constitutional Court.

16. The Mission urges the candidates to accept the will of the People and, in the event of disagreement with the results published by the relevant institutions, to resort exclusively to legal channels for redress, through the competent courts, in accordance with the Constitution and the laws in force in the Republic of Niger.

17. The Mission expresses its gratitude to the Government and People of Niger as well as the security forces for creating an enabling environment for the smooth conduct of the overall electoral process.

18. The ECOWAS EOM thanks all development partners for their support to Niger and calls on them to continue to provide more support to enable the country makes further progress towards the consolidation of democracy and economic development.

Done at Niamey, this 23rd day of February 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, loopy initial 'M' followed by a series of vertical, parallel strokes that form the rest of the name.

**H.E. Mohamed Namadi Sambo
Head of the Observation Mission**