P R E S S  R E L E A S E

Mali: The EU takes stock of the observation of the presidential elections and launches an observation mission for the legislative elections

At the request of the Malian authorities, the European Union will be sending an election observation mission for the legislative elections scheduled for November and December 2013 in Mali.

Mr Louis Michel, head of the observation mission and Member of the European Parliament, will launch the new election observation mission at a news conference in Bamako on 17 October. He will also take the opportunity to present the final report of the observation mission for the presidential elections. The report, which will include recommendations for the short term in particular, will be shared with the Malian authorities and civil society.

Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, said:

‘For the second time this year, the European Union is deploying an election observation mission to Mali at the request of the Malian authorities. The mission’s deployment is an expression of our support for completion of the political transition, a complete return to constitutional order and long-term stability in Mali. These objectives will be achieved only if all Malians engage in the electoral process calmly and with respect for democracy. The objective of our observation mission is to contribute to the transparency, inclusiveness and credibility of the electoral process. Without a doubt, Louis Michel is the political figure most qualified to ensure the success of this mission.’

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:
Michael Mann +32 498 999 780 - +32 2 584 9780 - Michael.Mann@eeas.europa.eu @EUHighRepSpox
Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu @AshtonSpox Maja
Sebastien Brabant +32 460 75 09 98 - Sebastien.Brabant@ec.europa.eu
Iulia Costea +32 460 75 07 17 – Iulia.Costea@ec.europa.eu
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A core team of nine experts and analysts has been deployed to Mali as of today. 20 long-term observers will join them on 25 October, followed by almost 40 short-term observers one week before the elections.

Shortly after election day, the mission will present its initial findings in a preliminary statement and at a press conference in Bamako. The mission will then continue to observe the count, the centralisation of the results and appeals if any.

A final report and recommendations will follow subsequently.