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**GLOBAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS INDEPENDENT
ACCREDITED GROUP OF OBSERVERS READY FOR THE DOKOLO
DISTRICT BY-ELECTION MEMBER OF PARLIAMNET ON THE
21st MARCH 2024.**



GEOM Global Election Observation Missions

Ambassadors of Peace



MISSION

“Empowering democracy on a global scale. Our mission at the Global Election Observation Missions is to champion the integrity of electoral processes through vigilant observation. Committed to fostering transparency, fairness, and inclusivity, we work collaboratively with nations to ensure free and credible elections.

Upholding the principles of accountability and respect for human rights, we strive to be a catalyst for positive change, promoting democratic values and strengthening the foundation of representative governance worldwide”



VISION



**Aiming to foster
global democracy,
transparency,
and fairness**





VALUES

The core values of global election observation missions typically include:

01 Impartiality:

Observers must remain neutral and unbiased, ensuring they do not favor any particular political party or candidate.

02 Independence:

Observers operate independently from any external influence, allowing them to provide objective assessments of the electoral process.

03 Transparency:

Observers promote transparency by conducting their activities openly and sharing their findings with relevant stakeholders and the public.

04 Professionalism:

Observers adhere to professional standards in their methodologies, analysis, and reporting, ensuring the credibility of their assessments.

05 Respect for Human Rights:

Observers uphold human rights principles, including the right to free and fair elections, freedom of expression, and the right to participate in the political process without discrimination.

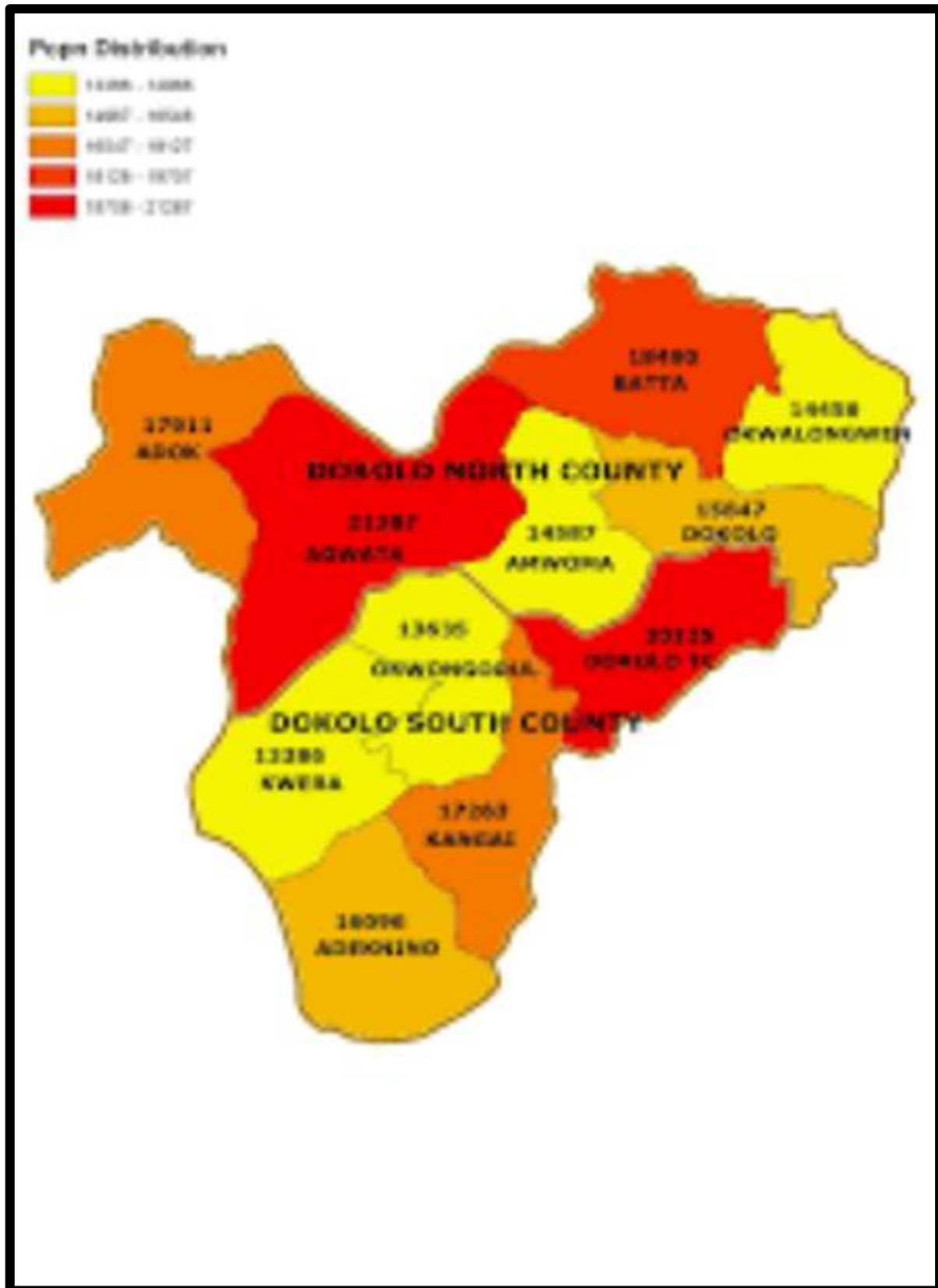
06 Non-interference:

Observers refrain from interfering in the electoral process but focus on monitoring and reporting on the adherence to democratic principles and procedures.

07 Cooperation:

Observers collaborate with local authorities, election management bodies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to enhance the credibility and integrity of the electoral process.

DOKOLO DISTRICT-NOTHERN UGANDA



INDIVIDUALLY ACCREDITED GROUP REPORT

Facilitated by

GLOBAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION – GOEM.

**ON THE 21ST MARCH, 2024 DOKOLO DISTRICT WOMAN MEMBER OF
PARLIAMENT BY-ELECTION IN THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT GROUP OF ACCREDITED OBSERVERS.

Dear Lord Chair Justice Simon Byabakama, the secretary electoral commission, the head of accreditation committee, all commissioners electoral commission, heads of departments electoral commission, the regional election officer, the district returning officer Mr. Erikwaine Ngobi, head of security A.Chemonges, the DPC, the DISO, the RDC plus all the district security organs, the party plus independent candidates, the voters all of Dokolo District. Greetings from a group of individually accredited observers.

Upon accreditation by the Electoral Commission –Uganda, we assumed the role of Independent Observers within the observer group for the Dokolo District woman member of parliament, facilitated by the Global Election Observation Missions –GOEM under the management of Mr.Mboni Abel Lubega.

The group's objectives were to observe the final days of campaigning and participating in the pre-election stakeholders meeting presided over by the Electoral Commission chairperson Lord Chair Justice Byabakama, conducting the observations on the polling day and witnessing the announcing of the results at the tally Centre.

This group was led by Mr. Walusimbi Baker. On 19th of March 2024 the group started by introducing all the group observers to the respective authorities of which included; the District Police Commander, the Officer in Charge of Dokolo Central Police Station, the Resident District Commissioner, the District Returning Election Officer in all, to declare our intentions and to obtain clearance from the above authorities. Of all these offices, we were warmly welcomed

With the Deputy DISO Dokolo District



At the RDC's Office



With OC CID



**WITH THE DOKOLO DISTRICT ELECTION RETURNING OFFICER
MR.NGOBI ERIKWAINE**





The District Returning Officer Mr,Ngobi Erikwaine warmly welcomed us and gave us a brief of how the whole process ran. He informed us that the exercise began on 11th February with a stake holders meeting and a press briefing. He also told us that on that very day, the update and displaying of the voters register started.

The nomination of candidates was closed off on 12th March and the nominated candidates started their campaigns on 13th up to 19th March. The candidates were given a period of one week to campaign and move in the Dokolo North and Dokolo South,14 sub-counties 73 Parishes and 484 villages.

Seven (7) Women were nominated as candidates for the position of which 4 of them were party candidates of whom included; Alwoc Austin Ogwal Rosemary for FDC, Ageno Harriet for NUP, Adong Jane Rose Elau Okello for NRM and Agut Sarah for UPC as party candidates plus the 2 independents of Arao Rebecca and Akullo Esther Obot ,however on the last day of the campaigns one candidate pulled out of

the race in favor of NRM candidate after reconciliation with in their party.

He further informed us that despite the short period of time of only 7 days of campaigns given to candidates, the entire process has been entirely peaceful, He hailed the candidates and their teams, for displaying maturity in their campaigns.

ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE CANDIDATES AND PARTY CHAIRPERSONS;

President of FDC Eng. Patrick Amuriat at FDC offices



As president of the party, his concern was that all parties should be given equal opportunities for campaigning and that the coming in of the President of Uganda President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and who doubles as the NRM party chairman disorganized their final day of

campaigning because some of the roads were blocked by the security of the president. He therefore suggested that next time the president should come in as chairman of the party and not president of Uganda.

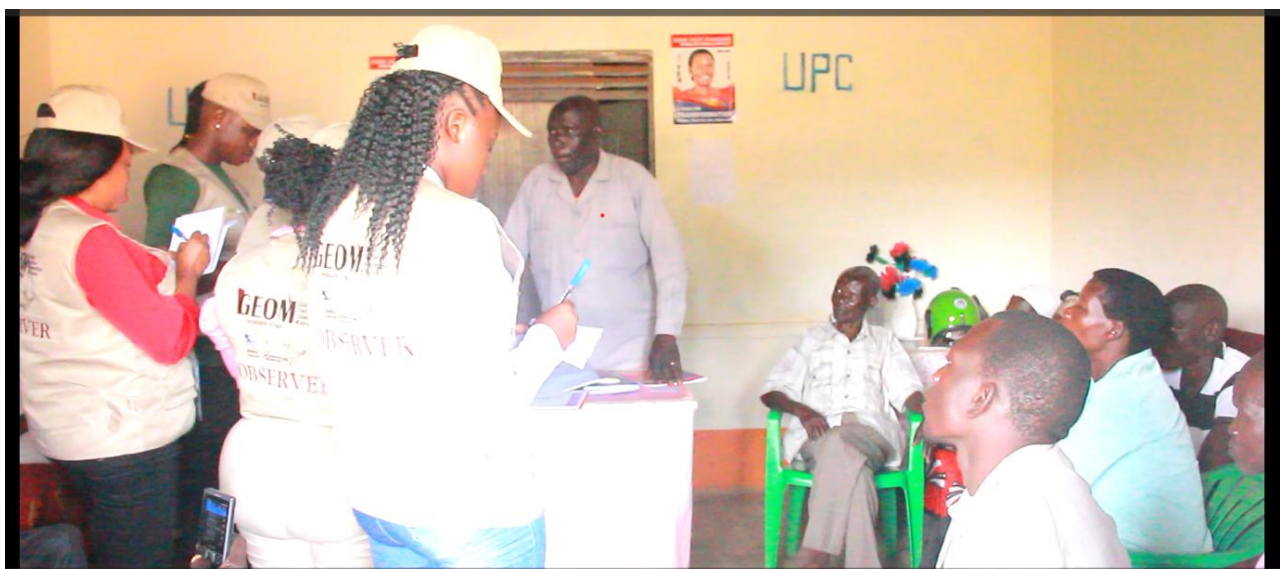
Candidate Alwoc Austin Ogwal Rosemary at the FDC's Rally at the town center



Ms. Alwoc appealed to the people of Dokolo District to vote for her because she is going to do exactly what her mother was doing in the Parliament by lifting the image of a woman of Dokolo and she knows all their problems which she wants to represent them in parliament. She was accompanied by MP Nandala Mafabi Secretary General Forum for Democratic Change plus others.

We then proceeded to the UPC Office.

With Mr. Adim David UPC Dokolo District chairperson. He told us that his candidate Agut Sarah was to win with 90%.



We also went to the UPC candidate's home where we met MPs in support of their candidate.



AT THE NUP OFFICE

From here we managed to meet the NUP representative ,the deputy secretary for Northern Uganda Mr.Asega Abed Jogo who also gave us his brief about the elections as per their candidate Ms. Ageno Harriet. He said that they were intimidated by the security people and that security people kept around their office there by threatening their movements to canvass support for their candidate. He also said that they were barred from having a talk show on radio Q FM and the presenter was ordered by security to stop continuing with the program.. That with the public system the owners were paid much higher than the usual pay and this led to abandoning them by the public system owners. We actually found their truck empty without music playing on the final day of campaigning 19th March. They said that this affected their performance in the race. And they didn't know how they were going to perform.



NRM rally at Amatburu Primary School grounds.

From here we proceeded to the place where the NRM candidate had her final day of campaigning and where the chairman of the NRM party His Excellence the President of the Republic of Uganda Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni came in to support his candidate Ms. Adong Jane Rosemary Elau Okello. Here the independent candidate Ms. Lalam Grace Hanna stepped down in favor of the NRM candidate .

Chairman of the party and president of Uganda arriving at Amatburu Primary School grounds to campaign for his candidate.





We had a word with the NRM candidate Ms. Adong Jane Rose Elau Okello. She was handed in the Flag by the NRM chairperson as the candidate to stand on the flag of NRM party Dokolo District by-election woman member of parliament.



We managed to have an interview with Ms. Adong the NRM candidate and she told us that the only problem she faced was to move in the 14 sub counties in just 7 days . This was a big task for her. So she asked the Electoral commission to at least next time make it three weeks or 21 days for effective campaigning. However she promised a win to all her supporters.





AT THE BRIEFING

On 20th we had a briefing to all the stake holders in the Dokolo District Woman Member of parliament delivered by the Electctoral Commission cahirperson, Lord Chair Justice Simon Byabakama at the Dokolo District Local Council Hall and which was also used as the Tally centre. This was attended by The electoral Commission team of Commissioners plus heads of departmetns,all the security organs ,the party candidates plus their agents ,the Observers of which included the Global Election Observation Missions accredited individuals plus others.





Lord Chair Justice Simon Byabakama arriving at the briefing.



The District returning officer of Dokolo Election Commission Mr. Erikwaine Ngobi welcomed all the stake holders and passed us through how the excise was conducted right from the updating of the register 12th to 15th February to displaying of the voters register from February 21st to March 1st, nomination of the candidates from 11th to 12th of March and how they managed to campaign for one week. He thanked the candidates for their discipline when campaigning because they were sharing the same areas at the same time. He on behalf of the electoral commission apologised for the time given to candidates and said that it was because of the processes involved in, from displaying the registers to the time of voting. In all he said that the campaigns were very

peaceful with no violence at all he prayed even the voting goes on well as were the campaigns.



The Regional Election Officer Mr.Higenyi Jackson also adressed the stake holders .He thanked the Lord Chair , the Electoral commssion staff plus all the stake holders who were there for the work done in making sure that the election is organised smoothly and to the best of all the stake holders.



The Electoral Commission Operations Officer, Mr. Kamugisha Richard addressed the stakeholders and also thanked the District returning officer, the security plus the candidates for the discipline displayed in their campaigning. He appealed to all the stake holders to keep peace and end the By-elections in Dokolo District peacefully.



Another electoral commissioner Mr. Stephen Tashobya addressed the stakeholders and like others thanked the people of Dokolo for being calm in their campaigns and also prayed that the elections on 21st should be just like the way the campaigns were.



The Chairman Electoral Commission Lord Chair Justice Simon Byabakama the addressed the stake holders.



The Lord Chair first of all thanked all the stake holders especially the District Returning Officer ,the Regional Election Officer ,the security plus the candidates for keeping peace and having a peaceful campaign. He said that the campaigns in Dokolo District should be used as a template for other elections to come. He also said that all the voters found in line after 4:00pm should be allowed to vote but those who come after that should not be allowed to vote. The Lord Chair said that by law, the presiding officer is responsible to preside over a polling station. He appealed to all candidates to appoint their agents at the polling stations.

The chairman electoral commission said that by seven am all materials are to be delivered at the polling stations and that the boxes plus other voting materials must be open at the presence of ten registered voters. A copy of registered voters should be shared to all the party agents. On their side as electoral commission they dispatched all the voting materials to the district ready for the election excise.

He asked all the stake holders especially the observers to come to the tally Centre and witness the dispatching of the materials to the polling stations at 4am and all political party observers should not roam all over the district . He said that they should not exceed five in number and that

for the media people, they are allowed to move all over the district. He cautioned all stake holders never to impersonate because they will cause problems to themselves. Toll Free numbers were given in case of any emergency or violence in the process of elections. He thanked the inspector general of police for giving him Mr. Chemonges as chief of security in the Dokolo by election.

He stressed the importance of peace and stability of a country resulting from peaceful elections. He ended by saying that all the campaigns stopped on the 19th March 2024 in Dokolo district by-elections and no more campaigns should be allowed, No party colors are allowed at the polling stations and also that no candidate should deploy experts at the station to help at the polling stations because it is the work of the presiding officer. He wished all the stake holders a peaceful, free and fair by election.



DISPATCHING OF THE VOTING MATERIALS

The dispatching of the voting materials started at 4;am and we as a group of Global Election Observation Missions individual accredited observers witnessed it. It was manned by the Dokolo District Returning Officer Mr.Erikwaine Ngobi with the help of security plus other Electoral Commission Returning Officers.

DISPATCHING OF THE VOTING MATERIALS TO THE POLLING STATIONS



NRM candidate voting



FDC candidate voting



The purpose of this report is to provide an analysis of the recent Dokolo District by-election of woman member of parliament as was observed by a group of individually accredited observers facilitated by **Global Election Observation missions**. The individual accredited observers assessed the fairness, transparency and integrity of the electoral process in accordance with international standards and above all local laws.

Back ground.

The Dokolo woman representative by-election was conducted under the frame work of electoral commission laws and regulations. Normally whenever there is a gap caused by either death or other wise ,the electoral commission has to organize a by-election to fill in that within 60 days. So it is upon this that the Dokolo woman by-election was organised to get a woman representative of the district.

Methodology

A group of individual accredited observers was deployed Global Election Observation Missions to the entire Dokolo District and each observer was tasked to be responsible, collect data and also to adhere to the observers code of conduct of which include ; impartiality and noninterference with election processes. So the data was collected through observation and interviewing the stake holders and also analysis of the official documents.

Pre election period .

According to the group and from what they gathered from the District returning officer Mr. Erikwaine Ngobi the screening and displaying of the voters register went on smoothly because most of the registered voters participated in the excise. The campaigns went on smoothly only that all the candidates complained of the short time given to them to canvass for their support in the 14 sub-counties just within seven days. However the campaigns were good with no violence save the NUP camp which complained of some intimidations by the security people.

Election day

On the polling day, most of the polling stations were opened and accessible to all the voters like the disabled plus elderly people. As observers ours was to display transparency and accountability in our work.

Post election period

Vote counting started as soon as the voting was closed by 4:pm according to the electoral commission instructions to the presiding officers. Vote counting was generally transparent with all candidate's agents plus observers present. The announcement of results was also timely.

Commendations;

1. We as individual accredited observers and facilitated by the Global Election Observation Mission, we highly commend the work done by the Electoral Commission of making sure that all the stakeholders are brought together on one platform to iron out the would be elements of doubt and which can lead to election violence.
2. Much as the election Campaign was given only seven days, equal time was given to all candidates with no discrimination to use the seven days and reach to their voters.
3. All the voting materials were delivered in time and available before the voting started and were open to all the candidates agents or observers.
4. Security at all the polling stations was ensured to avoid interference in the election processes.
5. The overall results was announced immediately after getting all the District sub county results and the winner was announced so this means that there was efficiency in tallying the results.

Recommendations;

We as a group of individually accredited observers recommend that

1. Much as it is in constitution of giving 60 days to organize a by-election, there is need to increase on the period given to candidates to reach to their voters. So the electoral commission should push for the law to be passed in parliament to increase on that period of Campaigning as was the call by all the candidates who stood in the Dokolo District by-elections.
2. It was only good that the people of Dokolo behaved in a mature way but the system of bring together different candidates crisscrossing campaigning in the same area is a bit risky to the people and it can even lead some violence in case there is a rift amongst the voters with their candidates. So a road map for the candidates campaign should be drawn to avoid such.
3. The coming in of the president of the republic of Uganda and who doubles as the chairman of one party led to the blockage of some roads used by some candidates. Candidates should be equal opportunities to access all avenues and venues during campaigns.
4. There was some loop hole in the dispatching of voting materials where some vehicles were loaded but could not leave the place because they didn't have police or security to escort them. In Hoima a big team of police men came in and sat under the tent ready to escort the dispatching vehicles and the voting materials were opened from the big truck at the presence of the stake holders to the delivering vehicles. This helps to reduce chances of saying that a box is lost or missing to a given destination. Some lighting should be increased at the point of dispatching the voting materials to the respective destinations.
5. At Amatburu primary school the indelible ink was not working because the marker used to highlight on the finger was dry or out of ink. Voting stopped for some one hour before another marker was brought in . Fortunately people on line were not many. There is need to verify the voting materials before delivering them for use at the polling stations.
6. Some voters didn't know how and where to mark their chosen candidates and hence the need for civic education.
7. The electoral commission has to improve on the method of accrediting the observers by using the online accreditation form

on their website. This helps to reduce on the observers frequenting the electoral commission offices for accreditation and also saves time. Because of the delay to accredit observers some us missed accommodations in Dokolo and for three days we were commuting daily to and from Lira where we managed to get accommodations.

8. A system should be put in place to accredit recognized individual and organization observers for either one, two, three, four or even five years just like the way it is done by some countries.

In conclusion we appreciate all the stake holders who participated in the Dokolo district by-election woman member of parliament. We wish Ms. Agut Sarah the best in representing the people of Dokolo District.

For God and our country.