

Press Release



SAYSN STATEMENT ON ZIMBABWE ELECTIONS

South Africa, 13 September 2023

The Southern African Youth Solidarity Network (SAYSN) has observed and noted the recently ended Zimbabwe National Elections. While the elections have been heralded as largely 'peaceful and calm' by all the EOMs, they have also highlighted how they fell short of Zimbabwe's national and regional statutes.

SAYSN has noted that multiple observation missions have expressed deep concerns and stated that the country's electoral process did not meet regional and international standards for credibility. For example, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other international electoral observation missions cited problems with transparency, independence, fairness, and credibility at all stages of the electoral process.

The SADC EOM, COMESA EOM; the Electoral Commissions Forum of Southern Africa, The Carter Center EOM, the Commonwealth EOM, and the European Union EOM have released their preliminary findings and reports that indicated that the elections as conducted by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) fell far short of norms and best practice on elections management and were in breach of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections as well the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

SAYSN, therefore, rejects the recently ended Zimbabwe National elections as neither democratic, free, fair, nor credible. SAYSN, therefore, calls for the following to resolve the political problem of Zimbabwe:

- SADC to convene an Extraordinary SADC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security Troika meeting to deliberate on the SADC EOM report and take appropriate action to allow Zimbabwe to have democratic, free, fair, and credible elections.
- SAYSN supports the call for a national inclusive dialogue process for Zimbabweans, supported by the region and the international community. Only dialogue anchored on a shared vision, defined by all of Zimbabwe, can be the foundation of sustainable, inclusive, and progressive development. The national dialogue must help return Zimbabwe to norm compliance with democratic governance and norms, which we believe is critical to supporting a credible election.

In conclusion, SAYSN would like to commend Zimbabweans for turning out in their numbers to peacefully participate in choosing a Government of their choice, albeit under conditions that were far from free, fair, or credible. SAYSN will write and engage with the SADC Secretariat, SADC Chairperson, and SADC Organ on Politics, Defense, and Security to raise the abovementioned issues.

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