



I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 7 December 2024, Ghanaians went to the polls to elect the President of the Republic and 276 Members of Parliament in 40,647 polling stations across the 16 regions of the country. Prior to this, on 2 December and 5 December 2024, Special Voting was conducted for security agents, media and other on-duty personnel across 328 polling stations.
2. In keeping with the provisions of Articles 14 to 16 of the ECOWAS Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance, supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace Keeping and Security, the President of the ECOWAS Commission, **His Excellency Dr. Omar Alieu Touray**, deployed an Election Observation Mission (EOM) to the 7 December elections. The 141-member Mission is led by **His Excellency Mohammed Namadi Sambo, GCON**, former Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and assisted by **Ambassador Baboucarr Blaise Jagne**, former Foreign Minister of the Republic of The Gambia. The ECOWAS EOM is facilitated by a Technical Team from the ECOWAS Commission, led by the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, **Ambassador Abdel-Fatau Musah**.
3. The ECOWAS EOM was deployed with a mandate to observe compliance with the extant National and Regional normative frameworks guiding the conduct of elections and to engage in preventive diplomacy where needed. Its membership is drawn from the ECOWAS Parliament, the Permanent Representatives'



Committee (PRC), the Community Court of Justice, the Foreign Affairs Ministries and Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) of ECOWAS Member States, as well as representatives of civil society, the media, and independent experts from across West Africa.

4. In line with the ECOWAS Commission's continuous support and engagement with Member States holding elections, the ECOWAS EOM was preceded in July 2024 by a Pre-election Fact-finding Mission, which assessed the level of preparedness of the country for the conduct of the 2024 general elections. Subsequently, in September 2024, the Commission carried out a series of engagements with the Ghanaian media, civil society organisations (CSOs), peace actors, security agencies, and political parties to address issues of misinformation and disinformation during the campaigns and to build stakeholders' trust in the electoral process while securing their commitment to peaceful polls.
5. Finally, the ECOWAS Commission provided financial support to strengthen the work of key stakeholders engaged in advocacy for a credible and peaceful electoral process, including the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE), the National Peace Council (NPC), the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), and the Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA).



II. CONTEXT OF THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTIONS

6. Since the inception of its Fourth Republic, Ghana has consistently held elections at regular intervals on eight occasions and yielded three peaceful transitions of power among the two major political parties wielding effective monopoly over the political space - the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC). This enviable track record, which has positioned Ghana as a beacon of democracy in the West African sub-region, was at stake as the country prepared for its ninth unbroken general elections.
7. It is also worth noting that since the restoration of constitutional order in 1992, no governing party has managed to secure three consecutive four-year mandates. While the NPP made “Breaking the Eight” a cornerstone of its campaign, the NDC was equally determined to prevent this from happening.
8. The 2024 electoral process is taking place in a context dominated by the cumulative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused severe economic disruptions across the globe, the global economic downturn and the Russia-Ukraine war on food security, youth unemployment and inflationary pressures on the economies of Ghana and many other African countries. This situation and other governance challenges are largely blamed for the rapid proliferation of illegal artisanal gold mining, locally referred to as “galamsey”, which has had negative consequences on the environment (including the pollution of water bodies and destruction of forest reserves). Thus, for most of the electorate, the frustrations experienced in daily life and candidates’ plans for addressing these



challenges were the topmost concerns, ultimately making the campaigns relatively issue based.

9. Furthermore, during the electoral campaigns, candidates and political parties relied heavily on social media and door-to-door canvassing to sell their manifestos and canvass for votes. Unfortunately, there were incidences of the use of vile propaganda, misinformation and disinformation, fake news, hate speech and inciteful language with ethno-religious undertones on the various social media platforms. This situation initially led to some tensions, which later subsided following influential personalities and institutions exhorting the major political parties to revert to issues-based campaigning and appeals for tolerance.
10. To cap it all, on 28 November 2024, under the auspices of the National Peace Council, all presidential candidates signed a Peace Pact that committed them to ensuring a peaceful electoral process.

III. ENGAGEMENTS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

11. Upon arrival in Accra on 2 December 2024, the Head of Mission and his delegation paid a courtesy call on the President of the Republic, **His Excellency Nana Addo-Dankwa Akufu Addo**, and held meetings with critical stakeholders in the process, including the Electoral Commission of Ghana; the Ghana Police Service; civil society organisations (CSOs); and some Presidential candidates. During these meetings, the Head of Mission underscored the necessity to uphold



and consolidate Ghana’s exemplary democratic track record by ensuring peaceful and credible elections.

IV. OBSERVATION OF THE SPECIAL VOTING

12. The ECOWAS EOM observed the conduct of the Special Voting exercise in 17 Districts across 8 Regions of Ghana.

13. On Monday, 2 December 2024, ECOWAS Long-Term Observers (LTOs) visited polling stations in Nkwanta, Dambai, Subin, Asokwa, Wa, Sefwi Wiawso, Bodi, Akontombra, Juaboso, Tamale, and Damongo Districts.

14. Similarly, on 5 December 2024, the ECOWAS LTOs observed the exercise in New Juaben South, Suhum, Essikado, Sekondi, Takoradi Shama, and Wassi East Districts of the Eastern and Western regions, respectively.

15. The Mission noted that the polling stations for Special Voting were generally set up in a way that guaranteed the secrecy of the vote; election materials were available in sufficient quantities; the biometric verification devices (BVDs) functioned properly; polling officials were professional in their conduct; party agents were present at the polling stations; and there was a discrete but professional presence of security agents.

V. ELECTION DAY OBSERVATIONS

16. The mission deployed 70 observer teams to 54 urban and rural districts across the 16 regions of Ghana. These observer teams visited a total of 871 polling stations. On the basis of their reports, the Mission notes the following:





Opening of the Polls

17. In all polling stations visited, polling commenced within the first hour of the stipulated time, with voting starting between 7:00 am and 7:30 am. Voting materials and polling agents were reported to have arrived at the polling stations between 6:00 am and 7:00 am.
18. Polling centres were generally easy to locate and accessible. 93.2% of the polling stations were accessible to Persons living with Disabilities (PWDs).
19. The atmosphere at polling centres was generally peaceful and orderly, with security agents present in 97% of the centres visited.
20. In general, party agents from the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) were present at the polling stations visited, with uneven representation by some of the minor parties and candidates.
21. The ECOWAS observers noted the presence of domestic observers, particularly the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), at all the polling centres visited. They also registered the presence of other international election observers and local monitoring teams in many of the centres; including the African Union, European Union, the Commonwealth, the British High Commission, the Australian Embassy, the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), the National Peace Council (NPC), the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), and the National Christian Association (NCA).



The Voting Process

22.99.04% of the polling stations visited were set up in a way that guaranteed the secrecy of the ballot. In few cases, however, such as at Polling Station n^o. 24 at Volta Regional Museum in Ho Municipal District, the voting cubicle was placed in such a manner that it did not provide adequate covering for voters to secretly express their choice.

23. Voters generally presented a form of identification before voting. However, in 13% of the polling stations visited, observers witnessed voters voting without presenting physical voter identification cards. Such voters had their names confirmed in the voters' register and their identity verified using the Biometric Verification Devices (BVDs).

24. In all polling stations visited, voters were systematically marked with indelible ink after casting their vote.

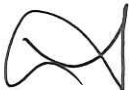
25. Tactile ballot guides were available to enable visually impaired voters to independently cast their vote in 7.22% of polling stations visited. Similarly, in 12.1% of cases, special tents were set up for PWDs' voting. Aged voters were observed receiving assistance to cast their votes in 21% of polling stations.

26. Party agents were present in all the polling stations visited. However, the party agents were mainly from the NPP and the NDC, with the former present in 92.3% of polling stations visited and the latter present in 89.12% at the start of the voting process.



27. There were instances of political canvassing around the vicinity of polling stations in approximately 4% of the places visited.
28. A steady flow of voters in orderly queues, particularly women and youth, was observed at all the polling centres.
29. The increase in the number of polling centres to 40647, compared to 33,000 in the 2020 electoral cycle, greatly reduced overcrowding and allowed voters to pace their arrival.

Closing and Counting

30. At the official closing time of 5:00 pm, there were still voters in queues waiting to vote in 7.7% of polling stations visited. In line with the provisions of the electoral laws, these voters were allowed to cast their ballots.
31. In most polling stations, polling station staff commenced sorting, tabulating and counting the votes immediately after the close of polls. This was done in the presence of both party agents and observers.
32. In most polling stations visited, there were arrangements made for adequate lighting during vote counting. However, 3.77% of the polling stations visited were dimly lit, which led to challenges during the vote-counting process. 
33. After the vote counting, the polling agents recorded the candidates' scores on the official results sheets (Pink Sheets) and provided copies to the party agents present.



VI. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

34. On the basis of the foregoing, the ECOWAS Election Observation Mission (EOM) notes that despite a few minor challenges, the conduct of the 2024 General elections was largely peaceful and, to a significant extent, complied with national and regional normative frameworks.
35. The professionalism of the polling staff and the effective presence of security agents at polling venues ensured that Ghanaian voters were able to freely and secretly express their choice in an atmosphere that guaranteed their safety. However, the Mission was made aware and regretted the isolated security incident at Nyankpala, in the Northern Region, which led to the death of one person and injury to another.
36. The arrangements made by the Electoral Management Body (EMB) for People with disabilities (PWDs) and the visually impaired to enable their independent voting contributed to the inclusivity of the process.
37. The Mission commends the high sense of professionalism and patriotism exhibited by polling staff, the security agents, and the electorate, who collectively played their part in ensuring the transparent and peaceful conduct of the 2024 General elections.
38. The Mission also commends the high sense of sportsmanship displayed by the Presidential candidates in living up to their commitments under the Peace Pact. The Mission particularly recognises the magnanimity of the presidential



candidate of the ruling New Patriotic Party, **His Excellency Mahamudu Bawumia**, for conceding defeat even before the official declaration of results of the Presidential election, which contributed to dousing tensions in the country. The Mission also congratulates the President-elect, H.E. John Dramani Mahama, for his victory at the polls.

39. The ECOWAS EOM congratulates the good people of Ghana and wishes them continued peace, progress and development.

40. Finally, the ECOWAS Observation Mission salutes the outgoing President, His Excellency Nana Addo-Dankwa Akufo Addo, for his able stewardship of this important ECOWAS Member State, Ghana over the last eight years and commends him for his leadership, mediation efforts and regional integration initiatives on behalf of the Community, including during his selfless service as a two-term Chairman of the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government.

Done in Accra, this 9 December 2024

His Excellency Mohammed Namadi SAMBO, GCON
Head, ECOWAS Election Observation Mission