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The Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, fielded an Election Observer Mission to Ghana to monitor elections in that country. Dr. Amos Sawyer headed the one hundred (100) member Team drawn from across West Africa and consisting of members of all of ECOWAS Parliament, the ECOWAS Council of the Wise, and ECOWAS Community Court of Justice. Others represented on the team included West African countries' Ambassadors accredited to ECOWAS, members of Election Commissions of West African Countries, and civil society actors. The Mission's mandate ended on December 9, 2016. The Ghana December 7, 2016 Presidential and Parliamentary elections was the seventh consecutive elections since the Fourth Republic in 1992, and represented another opportunity for Ghana to further consolidate its democratic gains.

The ECOWAS Election Observation Mission head, Dr. Amos Sawyer, prior to the elections said despite Ghana's enviable elections track record, there was a number of electoral violence concerns in the build up to 2016 general elections. Dr. Sawyer urged Ghanaians not to take their tradition of peaceful elections for granted but rather remain united in efforts geared toward ensuring that Ghana continues to enjoy peaceful elections.

Dr. Sawyer, addressing the Elections Commission and the people of Ghana Sunday December 4, 2016 in Accra, also highlighted the role and expectations of ECOWAS, noting that the election observers were expected to witness the conduct of the dual presidential and legislative polls, while displaying a deep sense of responsibility and integrity. Dr. Sawyer urged members of his Team to **be professional in their reporting of events relating to the conduct of the voters, electoral authorities and security agents on Elections Day**".

Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives to ECOWAS, ECOWAS Commissioner of Political Affairs, Peace and Security; Experts from Electoral Management Bodies and Ministries of Foreign Affairs, and other trained Election Observers all attended the December 4 program.

The deployment of the ECOWAS Election Observation Mission to Ghana was in keeping with Article 12 of the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. Provisions of said Article are geared toward assuring the holding of free, fair and credible elections within member countries. Ghana had already put in place the necessary mechanisms to assure that the December 7, 2016 elections were free, fair, credible and democratic.

ECOWAS has enshrined the conduct of democratic elections as the only legitimate means of acceding political power/authority. Prior to this mission, ECOWAS deployed a Pre-election Fact-finding Mission to Ghana, from 3 – 7 August 2016, closely followed by a Joint ECOWAS-AU-UNOWAS High Level Solidarity Mission, from 9 – 12 August. A Long Term Election Observation Mission was also deployed in Ghana, and stayed on until December 14, 2016 in order to observe the activities in all the critical phases of the electoral process.

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who also chairs ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, was in Accra for the signing of the "Declaration against Electoral Violence, Impunity, and Injustice" by the presidential candidates on December 1, 2016.

The New Patriotic Party's candidate Akufo-Addo won the presidential bid defeating the incumbent John Mahama of the National Democratic Congress 53.8% to 44.4%.

There were no noticeable alliances or coalitions amongst the contesting political parties. The election was tight between the two leading political parties - the NDC and the NPP. The Ghana elections featured seven presidential candidates including an independent candidate Jacob Osei Yeboah, and Former First Lady Nana Konadu Rawlings. More than eleven hundred persons contested the 275 parliamentary seats in the 2016 elections.

Ghana's electoral laws are in compliance with international, regional and sub-regional treaties and the country's Constitution of 1992. In addition, the laws assure of and for the protection of citizen's right to vote, the right to participate in public affairs based on the principle of non-discrimination and equality, and the right to a fair trial. Ghana has been described by many as a shiny example of vibrant and mature democracy in West Africa, having successfully organized six general elections since the introduction of multiparty democracy since 1992.