



## Press Release

for immediate release

### **Chief Observer Neuser presents EU EOM The Gambia Final Report, with key recommendations for changes to the electoral, legal and constitutional framework**

**Banjul, 22 February 2022** – Announcing the release of the EU EOM's Final Report, Chief Observer Norbert Neuser, former Member of the European Parliament from Germany, noted: *"The EU Election Observation Mission positively assessed the voting and counting process on election day. But structural deficiencies and critical procedural and legal gaps require fundamental reform."*

The EU EOM Final Report, which offers 20 recommendations for the Gambian authorities' consideration, proposes essential changes to the electoral legal framework. The Mission recommends bringing the Elections Act in line with international and regional standards and in addition, to streamline provisions of the Draft Constitution, the Draft Elections Act, and other Acts relevant to the conduct of elections.

Mr. Neuser underlined that *"it is fundamental to increase the Independent Electoral Commission's capacity and transparency in critical areas, including the establishment of specialised divisions (legal, gender). The EU EOM proposes publishing the complete presidential election results, disaggregated by polling station, on its website. In addition, for all future elections, the Mission suggests releasing disaggregated results during the tabulation process. Our Mission also recommends that legal provisions are made for continuous registration and updating of the voter register"*.

The EU EOM encourages bringing the legal framework, including the Constitution, the Criminal Code and the Information and Communications Act, in line with the country's international and regional commitments on freedom of expression.

*"Of the 20 recommendations contained in our Final Report, seven are offered as priority recommendations,"* underlined the Chief Observer. *"The Mission recommends introducing a detailed and comprehensive complaints procedure throughout the electoral process with reasonable time limits for adjudication, regulating matters such as format and venue, including for the implementation of the Code on Election Campaign Ethics. Furthermore, to formalise clear and coherent procedures for polling, counting, result transfer, and collation, in conjunction with the introduction of improved security measures of result and collation forms."*

Discussions with the IEC, political parties, civil society groups and other stakeholders will be conducted in the following days. The Chief Observer noted *"The EU EOM came to The Gambia after being invited by the Gambian authorities. We have looked at how electoral rights of the Gambian people under national law and Gambia's international commitments have been upheld. Our report and accompanying recommendations are the result of a comprehensive observation of the electoral process."*

All of the mission's statements and its final report can be found here:

[www.eomgambia2021.eu](http://www.eomgambia2021.eu) | [fb: @EUEOMGambia2021](https://www.facebook.com/EUEOMGambia2021) | [tw: @EUEOMGambia2021](https://twitter.com/EUEOMGambia2021) | <http://database.eueom.eu>

**For media enquiries, please contact:**

René SCHULTHOFF (English) Mobile +220 255 7120 | email: [rene.schulthoff@eomgambia2021.eu](mailto:rene.schulthoff@eomgambia2021.eu)