



**EU Election Observation Mission
Republic of Rwanda 2008**



The Chief Editor
The New Times
Kigali

Kigali 15 August 2008

Ref.: Article in New Times “NEC warns on indirect observation”, 15 August 2008

Dear Sir,

On 15 August 2008 your newspaper published an article which reported on a meeting attended by the NEC President, Prof. Chrysologue Karangwa, NEC Executive Secretary Charles Munyaneza and EU election observers at the NEC head quarters.

We would be grateful if your newspaper could publish this statement under our “Right to Respond”:

In the article, “NEC warns on indirect observation” dated 15 August 2008, your reporter claims that the EU observers admitted to some of the allegations made by the NEC concerning activities which went beyond parliamentary election observation. The EU EOM would like to clarify that at **no time** have its Observers engaged in any activities or asked any questions which are not strictly within the remit of the mandate of the EU Election Observation Mission to Rwanda and internationally recognised election observation methodology.

During the meeting with Prof. Karangwa, the EU observers explained to the NEC President, Prof. Chrysologue Karangwa, that the EU EOM is in Rwanda on invitation of the Rwandan government and that there is a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the European Commission and the NEC which inter alia states:

“In the framework of their observation mandate, the members of the EU EOM will enjoy freedom of movement throughout the country, without the need for prior permission or notification. They will have freedom of access to all political parties, candidates and election officials, as well as representatives from civil society and voters.”

“The Election Commission will guarantee to the EU EOM and its members freedom of access to all bodies and meetings of the electoral administration as well as to all relevant information on the electoral process during the whole period of its presence in Rwanda”



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The EU Election Observers currently in the country are experienced experts who all abide by the International Code of Conduct for International Election Observation.

The EU EOM welcomes the NEC President's invitation for the EU Election Observers to inform themselves of the political structure, culture and history of this country, as part of its mandate of election observation.

The EU EOM looks forward to a constructive working relationship with the NEC in mutual recognition of each others' tasks and responsibilities.

END

The EU EOM would be grateful if you could print this statement in tomorrow's edition of The New Times.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Mathias Eick

Press and Public Outreach Officer