



Commonwealth Observer Group
Rwanda Presidential Elections
9 August 2010

16 August 2010

Dear Secretary-General,

Following your invitation to observe the 9 August Presidential Elections in Rwanda, we have now completed our Final Report and we are pleased to forward it to you with this letter. We have been aware throughout our work here that Rwanda is still undergoing a process of national reconstruction and national reconciliation and the country has taken great strides, just 16 years since the 1994 genocide. As part of this process the country has, to its credit, embarked on establishing electoral democracy. We understand the terrible legacy of the past and the consequent caution as the country moves forward.

We are also cognisant as to what is required for Rwanda to forge ahead as a pluralistic democracy, enjoying the associated freedoms and rights in accordance with Commonwealth values. Our hope is to contribute to the further strengthening of the democratic process in Rwanda and it is in this spirit that we have offered our conclusions and recommendations.

The Group has found that while some of the key benchmarks for democratic elections have been met, others have not. We observed a well organised and peaceful poll. Campaign freedoms were provided for and the National Electoral Commission conducted the technical aspects well. People turned out in large numbers and were free to express their will. However, there were some concerns regarding the lack of transparency of the results consolidation at the District level in many areas.

We have noted a lack of critical opposition voices during the election. In addition, some media outlets have faced problems. As Rwanda strives to deepen its democratic process, it needs to particularly address these issues of broader political participation and greater media freedoms so that the key benchmarks for democratic elections, to which Rwanda has committed itself, can be fully met for future elections. We are sure that the Commonwealth stands ready to assist Rwanda as required.

This Group will now depart from Rwanda. We would very much like to thank you for this opportunity. It has been a fascinating and rewarding experience for us all. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for all its support to the Observer Group. We hope we have made a contribution to Rwanda and the Commonwealth's continuing engagement here.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AS Salim', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim
Chairperson



Mr Sabihuddin Ahmed



Mr Art Wright



Brig Gen (Retd) Francis A. Agyemfra



Dr Leith Dunn



Mr Caesar Handa



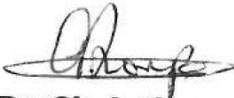
Mr Samuel B. Tembenu



Mr Mokshanand Dowarkasing



Mrs Simea Avei Meafou



Dr Christiana Thorpe



Mr J C Weliamuna



Ms Adelle Zaira Roopchand



Miss Kaye Oliver