

## Introduction:

This framework is offered with a view to ensuring that the way domestic election observers go about their work is consistent with internationally acceptable standards of election observation. The Electoral Commission of Ghana (EC) believes that this is important for a number of reasons.

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- It costs so much money to cater for one international observer that, almost invariably, there are not enough international observers to adequately cover the polling stations
- International election observation tends to wane as a country gains experience in organizing democratic elections; and yet our elections will require continued observation for some quite to come.

For the reasons, the EC believes that domestic election observation needs to be put on a very firm footing. Not only has domestic observation of Ghana's elections been going on for some time now, but it is becoming so popular that it could supplant international observation altogether in the foreseeable future. In any case, if done well, domestic and international election observation ably complements each other.

Furthermore, in general, well-executed election observation has been found to be use full in strengthening the democratisation process in several ways. It helped to:

- Calm nerves and boost confidence in the electoral process, particularly among opposition politicians distrustful of the **EMB** or the government, or both.
- Allay the fears and suspicious of voters and thereby engender a high voter turnout
- Foster openness, fair play, and respect for human rights
- Make election officials do their work properly
- Deter violence, fraud and rigging
- Enhance the transparency and credibility of elections, and there by the acceptance of results
- Legitimize the electoral process and thereby legitimize the elected government and contribute to its international respectability.

Also, competent observer reports have helped to disseminate and reinforce good electoral practices and have proven to be a source of improvement in further elections.