



## **For an independent, non politicized CENI in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

EurAc welcomes the final report of the European Union's electoral observation mission which calls, among other things, for a restructuring of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) which would guarantee strong representation of civil society and for support to civil society organisations to work in the field of civic education and local observation.

As we wait for the current political crisis to be resolved and in preparation for the holding of provincial and local elections which are vital for the democratisation process in the DRC, it is important for the current electoral cycle to be completed. The provincial and local elections should then be organised in a context of peace and in a transparent manner with full consultation and a respect for the legal texts. Given the disgracefully poor organisation of the November 2011 elections, it is even more important that these local and provincial elections are run by truly independent people, technically competent of managing such a complex process. Without these conditions, if these elections are badly organised there is a danger that the current crisis would intensify and the DRC return to its former tragic experience of years of conflict and instability.

Noting the recommendation in the European Union's final report of its electoral observation mission that the restructuring of the CENI should include «taking into account the new political realities», EurAc considers that the members of the CENI should not be appointed through political organisations as this would only lead to its total politicisation.

EurAc recognises that the CENI remains the body responsible for organising elections as laid down in article 211 of the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo. This network also recognises that, to be certain of a necessary level of efficiency and competence, the CENI should receive technical, material and financial support from the European Union and its member states. However, EurAc asks the European Union and its member states to provide support to the CENI only on condition that:

RUE DES TANNEURS 165 • B-1000 BRUXELLES (BELGIQUE)

TEL.: +32-496-074905

E-MAIL: DONATELLA.ROSTAGNO@EURAC-NETWORK.ORG

- Efforts are made for **the CENI to regain credibility**. To do this, EurAc calls on the European Union to press for the reorganisation **of the board of the CENI**, in particular through the resignation or dismissal of its current board which has blatantly failed in its responsibility to run credible elections. This would give the DRC the opportunity of choosing a competent board made up of truly independent, forceful personalities who would enjoy the confidence of the Congolese people and of the entire political class. The members of the new CENI should be chosen in an independent manner on the basis of their competence, their technical capacity and their professionalism;
  
- A **clear and realistic timetable for the organisation of provincial and local elections** is published and followed. In fact, despite the legal texts which govern it, the recent electoral process was completed without any local elections being held, thus delaying the consolidation of democracy.

EurAc reiterates its acceptance of the CENI as the institution recognised by the Constitution of the DRC for the organisation of elections draws the attention of the European Union and its member states to the above recommendations. They would strengthen this institution in its efforts to organise the electoral process in a transparent and competent manner and thus promote a peaceful political climate in the DRC.