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## New watchdog to monitor coming parliamentary election

**The newly-set up Citizens Democracy Watch (Seychelles), a non-partisan organization has been set up by a group of citizens to promote the principles of democracy, good governance and fair elections through research, advocacy, civic education, community projects and meaningful dialogue.**

The organization has come into being, following strong demand locally for such an orientation and according to Article 24 of the Constitution, which states that citizens can take part in public affairs.

Citizens Democracy Watch (Seychelles) will also act as and when needed as a watchdog of different human rights institutions, and moreover, conduct election monitoring and voter education.

The organization aims to bridge the gap between the electorate and their representatives, functioning as a channel which can create a central forum for the exchange of ideas and methods from a broad range of policy experts, practitioners and activists involved with work in advancing human rights, good governance and the rule of law.

It plans to organize workshops, exhibitions, debates, discussions and practical policy assessments, where NGOs, schools and other organizations in the community can take part.

To accomplish its objectives, Citizens Democracy Watch (Seychelles) will partner with diverse alliances constituted of individuals and organizations with similar objectives, locally and across the world to train its members in the promotion of human rights and democratic issues as well as in taking part in observation of the forthcoming parliamentary election.

The organization will also prepare a poll of trained people to observe elections in SADC countries upon request. The committee, presently made up of Steve Lalande as chairperson; Monica Servina as vice- chair; Jean-Claude Matombe as treasurer and Ms Eline Moses as secretary.

Citizens Democracy Watch has been busy setting up a strong foundation for expanding its membership base and equipping itself for better communications and mobilization.

The association has its own website:[www.citizensdemocracy-watch.org](http://www.citizensdemocracy-watch.org) up and running.

The NGO will be conducting an orientation workshop for new members and prospective election observers on Saturday September 17, 2011 from 9am to 12 noon at the LUNGOS Conference Room, Room 209, Orion Mall.

The main objectives of the orientation workshop are to introduce members to the NGO and familiarize prospective observers with the Electoral cycle, electoral laws and international standards in election observational standards in election observation methodology.

Election observation means monitoring the entire process of an election from a completely non-partisan and neutral position, to see what is happening and whether the election is being conducted from beginning to end, in accordance with laws and regulations.

Once trained, local observers can be considered for election observation with the SADC region.

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