

# Press Releases: United States Welcomes Announcement of Electoral Calendar in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Press Statement  
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The United States welcomes the announcement by the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that long overdue elections will take place. With the announcement of the December 2018 date, the DRC has taken a significant step toward realizing its first peaceful, democratic transfer of power. It is now incumbent on the CENI, the government, opposition party leaders, civil society organizations, and the people of the DRC to work together to ensure that the electoral deadlines published by the CENI are respected, and that all actions and statements remain within the framework of the DRC constitution and the December 2016 St. Sylvestre Agreement.

The United States notes the importance of President Kabila abiding by the DRC's constitution, reaffirmed in the St. Sylvestre accord, that he will not seek a third term and will step down following elections. The United States also notes the urgent need for the DRC government to implement the confidence building measures included in the December Agreement. This includes an end to politically motivated prosecutions, the release of political prisoners, and respect for the right of peaceful assembly and association, so that opposition parties and civil society organizations may hold peaceful public meetings without government interference or intimidation.

The United States is committed to working with the people and institutions of the DRC, the African Union, regional and international partners, and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) to ensure that the estimated 45 million Congolese voters are able to cast their ballots on time and as scheduled in December 2018.

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