

Kinshasa, DR Congo, December 29 (Infosplusgabon) - A key civil society group has urged Congolese voters to maintain a climate of peace and prioritise national cohesion as they head to the polls on Sunday.

In a communiqué released on Saturday in Kinshasa, the Civil Society Observatory for the Monitoring of Dialogue and Democratic Transition (OSSD) said it hoped for peace, after about two years of waiting for the elections.

It called on voters to avoid falling into the traps of political manipulation and blind violence, adding that they should remain in solidarity with the areas excluded from the vote and avoid unofficial proclamation of results.

At the same time, OSSD invited the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) to take into consideration the population's expectations, as well as legitimate fears and frustrations, strengthen communication to avoid any misunderstanding, and develop a discourse that would console the populations of Beni, Butembo and Yumbi, which are excluded from the elections.

Presidential and parliamentary candidates were called upon to demonstrate fair electoral play, develop a discourse of calming and safeguarding peace by their activists and use of legal remedies in the event of proven evidence of irregularities.

OSSD also urged the Government to strengthen security measures in the electoral process, and avoid voter intimidation and frustration.

It urged civil society organizations and movements to remain vigilant and alert to any attempt to cheat or manipulate in the electoral process, adding that they should remain objective and avoid taking sides.

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