

《非盟希望肯尼亚选举和平进行》

By CGTN Africa

Presidential candidates in the upcoming poll in Kenya have been urged to ensure peace before and after the general elections set for next month.

The African Union Commission chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat stressed the need for a free and fair election when he met with opposition candidate Raila Odinga on Thursday ahead of his meeting with the country's President Uhuru Kenyatta, who is seeking another term in office.

"The upcoming polls are a key step towards a stronger democracy and resilient institutions in Kenya and of vital importance for Africa. I trust Kenya's leaders will demonstrate wisdom, sense of responsibility that the current circumstances so compellingly call for," he said after the meeting.

"Kenyans deserve free, fair, credible elections. Failure is not an option. Let justice remain your shield and defender," the AUC chairperson advised.

Mahamat earlier called on the body mandated to carry out elections in the country, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), to ensure that there is clarity in the electoral process to remove any suspicion of rigging.

He expressed satisfaction with the IEBC's preparedness for delivering credible and peaceful elections.

He, however, noted the differences between President Kenyatta and Odinga in regards to the Commission's preparedness but downplayed the differences saying they were normal.

Mahamat is confident that Kenya's August 8 General Election will be peaceful.

The Chadian diplomat together with the AU election observers led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki concluded a two-day visit to the country on Thursday.

This year's election has been described as the most hotly contested election of eight candidates seeking votes even though only two are the favorites – President Uhuru Kenyatta of the Jubilee Party and Raila Odinga of the National Super Alliance (NASA).