


KEY HIGHLIGHTS

#KnowACDEG

AFRICAN CHARTER ON DEMOCRACY, ELECTIONS AND GOVERNANCE PROVISIONS



Co-funded by
the European Union



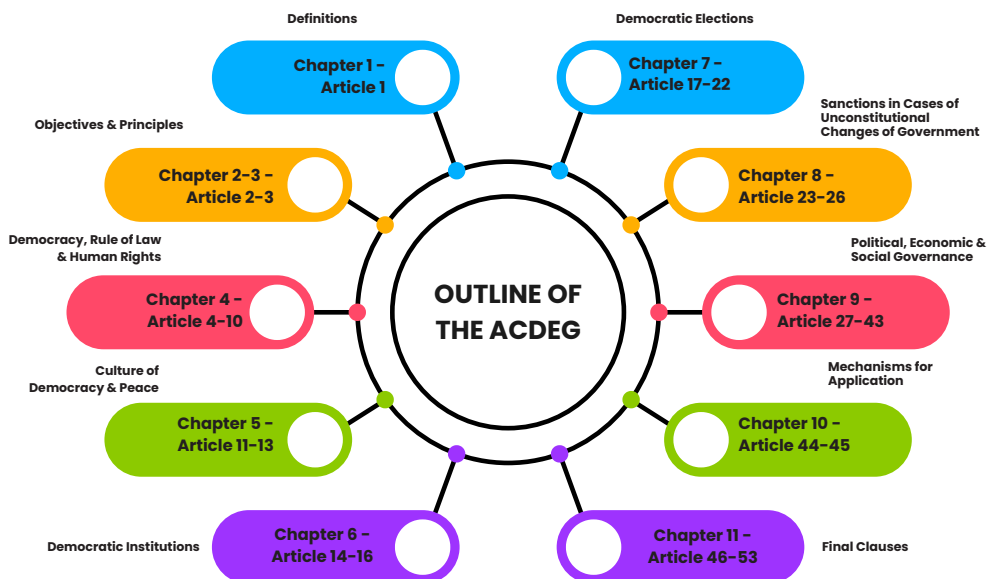
**THE ACDEG
WAS ADOPTED
ON JANUARY
30, 2007, AND
ENTERED INTO
FORCE ON
FEBRUARY 15,
2012.**

INTRODUCTION

The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) is a roadmap that outlines international standards for good governance and democracy on the African continent^[1]. Adopted on January 30, 2007, and entering into force on February 15, 2012, the Charter has been signed by 46 countries, with 39 having ratified and deposited the instrument. Within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), 11 countries have successfully signed, ratified, and deposited the ACDEG. However, three countries, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mauritius, and Eswatini, have signed but not yet ratified the instrument, while Botswana and Tanzania have neither signed nor ratified it. The Charter aims at consolidating the commitment of AU member states to promote and deepen democratic governance and human rights across the continent.

The Charter consists of a Preamble, 11 Chapters and 53 Articles. While the ACDEG has demonstrated its capacity to influence the behaviour of governments and political leaders in some member states, in others, it has arguably had limited impact on the actual state of governance within these states. The level of acceptance, societal ownership and implementation of the ACDEG remains highly uneven, which is one of the key challenges in making the charter's objectives a reality across Africa.

[1] 36384-si-AFRICAN_CHARTER_ON_DEMOCRACY_ELECTIONS_AND_GOVERNANCE.pdf

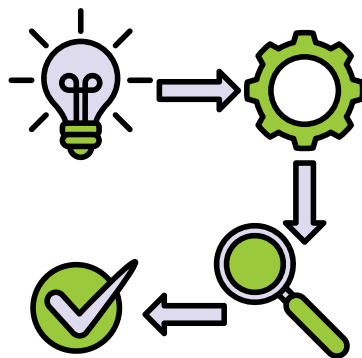


The objectives and principles of the Charter include promoting the following;

- Universal values and principles of democracy and respect for human rights,
- Rule of law and respect for constitutions and constitutional order
- Regular free and fair elections and democratic change of governments
- Separation of powers between the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government
- Good governance, multiparty politics and tolerance
- Coordination of governance policies that promote regional and continental integration

- Sustainable development and human security
- AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption
- Citizen participation, transparency, access to information, freedom of the press and accountability
- Gender balance and equality in governance and development processes
- Cooperation between national institutions, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and international organisations
- Best practices for managing elections, political stability and good governance

Decoding the ACDEG Framework for Democratic Integrity



In adopting the ACDEG, AU member states sought to strengthen democratic governance by, among other measures, holding regular, free, fair and transparent elections; promoting respect for human rights; rejecting unconstitutional changes of government; and establishing strong institutions that support democracy.

The ACDEG is a pivotal framework designed to promote democratic governance across African nations. One of its primary objectives is to enhance the legitimacy of governments through the conduct of free and fair elections. By emphasising the importance of public participation in the electoral process, ACDEG seeks to establish a culture of accountability and transparency within political systems. Another significant aspect of ACDEG is its emphasis on protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Charter emphasises the importance of member states upholding civil liberties and ensuring the rights of citizens, including the freedoms of expression and assembly. This commitment to human rights is integral to fostering an environment where democracy can thrive.

Additionally, ACDEG addresses the need for good governance, which encompasses principles such as the rule of law, respect for the constitution, and effective public administration. By promoting these values, the Charter aims to combat corruption and enhance institutional integrity, thereby improving the overall quality of governance in African countries.

Finally, ACDEG recognises the importance of **regional cooperation and solidarity** in achieving its goals. It encourages member states to collaborate in sharing best practices and experiences related to democratic governance. This collective approach not only strengthens individual nations but also contributes to regional stability and development, reinforcing the idea that democracy is a shared responsibility among African nations.

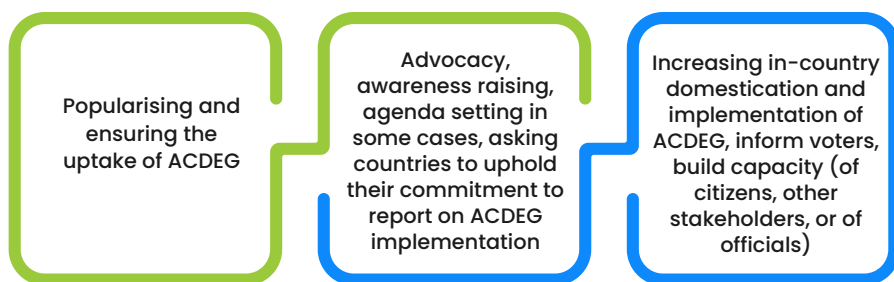
SADC Countries' Status on Signing, Ratification/Acceding to ACDEG

Country	Date of Signature	Date of Ratification Accession	Date Deposited
Angola	27 January 2012	8 June 2021	29 July 2021
Botswana	–	–	–
Comoros	2 February 2010	30 November 2016	6 January 2017
DRC	29 June 2008	–	–
Lesotho	17 March 2010	30 June 2010	9 July 2010
Madagascar	31 January 2014	23 February 2017	13 April 2017
Malawi	–	11 October 2012	24 October 2012
Mauritius	14 December 2007	–	–
Mozambique	27 May 2010	24 April 2018	9 June 2018
Namibia	10 May 2007	23 August 2016	30 August 2016
South Africa	1 February 2010	24 December 2010	24 January 2011
Seychelles	–	12 August 2016	28 September 2016
Eswatini	29 January 2008	–	–
Tanzania	–	–	–
Zambia	31 January 2010	31 May 2011	8 July 2011
Zimbabwe	21 March 2018	6 April 2022	6 July 2022

National, Regional and Continental Accord with ACDEG

ACDEG obliges states to align their laws with its objectives, translate relevant clauses into domestic law, disseminate its content nationally and incorporate its principles into policies. At the regional level, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are encouraged to promote member state participation and designate focal points for monitoring and evaluation, involving civil society organisations in the process. At the continental level, the African Union Commission (AUC) is responsible for ensuring the implementation of ACDEG and developing benchmarks for compliance. States that ratify the Charter are required to report every two years on their compliance measures. Overall, ACDEG implementation occurs across national, regional, and continental levels, guided by the norms and policies outlined in Article 44.

How CSOs can Support the ACDEG Agenda



Conclusion

- ACDEG signifies a commitment by African Union member states to promote democratic governance and human rights.
- It provides a framework for enhancing electoral integrity, upholding the rule of law, and encouraging citizen participation.
- Effective implementation at various levels is essential for member states to fulfil their commitments.
- CSOs play a crucial role in supporting the ACDEG agenda through advocacy and compliance monitoring. Their efforts help raise awareness and integrate the Charter's principles into national laws.
- The collaboration between governments, civil society, and regional bodies aims to foster a stable and democratic Africa, making ACDEG a vital commitment to ensuring democracy and human rights for all.



VISION

A Zimbabwe Where a Democratic Electoral Environment and Processes are Upheld



VISION

Democratic and Peaceful Elections in Southern Africa

ZESN

ESN-SA

MISSION

To Promote Democratic Elections in Zimbabwe



MISSION

Promoting Democratic Elections in Southern Africa Through Networking of Domestic Observer Groups



✉ info@zesn.net

🌐 www.zesn.org.zw

SMS & WhatsApp:

+263 733 703181

✂ @ZESN1

f Zimbabwe Election Support Network

in Zimbabwe Election Support Network

✉ sadcesn@gmail.com

🌐 www.esn-sa.org

Tel: +263242250736, 791443, 798193, 791803

Cell: +263 712 415 902

✂ @esn_sa

f @ESN-SA

in Electoral Support Network of South Africa



Sweden
Sverige



Co-funded by
the European Union