



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM

16 April 2017

OSCE/ODIHR NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION REPORT

22 – 24 February 2017



Warsaw
8 March 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
III.	FINDINGS.....	3
	A. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT	3
	B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK	4
	C. REFERENDUM ADMINISTRATION	5
	D. VOTER REGISTRATION	5
	E. REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN AND CAMPAIGN FINANCING	6
	F. MEDIA.....	7
	G. CITIZEN AND INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS	8
IV.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION.....	9
	ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS	10

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
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OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report

I. INTRODUCTION

Following an invitation from the authorities of the Republic of Turkey to observe the 16 April 2017 constitutional referendum and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) undertook a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) from 22 to 24 February. The NAM included Alexander Shlyk, Head of OSCE/ODIHR Election Department, Vladimir Misev, OSCE/ODIHR Election Adviser, and Robert Podgorelec, OSCE/ODIHR Logistics and Security Officer.

The purpose of the mission was to assess the pre-referendum environment and preparations for the constitutional referendum. Based on this assessment, the NAM should recommend whether to deploy an OSCE/ODIHR observation-related activity for the forthcoming referendum, and if so, what type of activity best meets the identified needs. Meetings were held with officials from state institutions and the election administration, as well as with representatives of political parties, media, civil society and the resident international community. A list of meetings is annexed to this report.

The OSCE/ODIHR would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its assistance and cooperation in organizing the NAM. The OSCE/ODIHR would also like to thank all of its interlocutors for taking the time to meet with the NAM and to share their views.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The constitutional referendum will take place on 16 April. It will be conducted under a state of emergency following an attempted military coup on 15 July 2016 that resulted in a number of arrests, detentions, and dismissals. Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors raised concerns about holding a referendum during a state of emergency, while those from the state institutions, including the election administration, noted that the restrictions arising from the emergency decrees will not affect the referendum campaign.

The referendum package contains 18 amendments to the Constitution. The amendments include the introduction of an executive presidency to replace the existing parliamentary system of government; the abolition of the prime-ministerial office; and most of the oversight responsibilities of the parliament; a number of judiciary reforms, and; an increase in the number of seats in parliament.

The overall legal framework for the conduct of a referendum is the same as for the parliamentary elections. A number of previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations pertaining to the legal framework remain unaddressed, such as with regard to certain restrictions on active and passive suffrage rights, limited regulations for campaign finance, a lack of a possibility to challenge Supreme Board of Elections (SBE) decisions and an absence of provisions for international and citizen election observation. Most of the OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stated that the legislation is generally conducive to ensuring the right to vote, but some also noted concerns with regard to the protection of freedoms of expression, assembly and association.

The judiciary has primary responsibility for the administration and supervision of referenda. The upcoming referendum will be organized by four levels of election administration. While most OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the work of the SBE, some raised concerns regarding the transparency and impartiality in the work of the election administration and potential pressure on election officials by local authorities in some provinces.

Citizens over 18 years of age have the right to vote. However, restrictions exist for active conscripts, students in military schools and prisoners convicted of committing ‘deliberate crimes’. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed general confidence in the registration process; however, concerns were noted with respect to the accuracy of the voter lists used by some lower-level commissions. Given the challenging security situation, due to terrorist acts, counter-measures and hostilities in the southeast of the country, some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed trepidations with the registration process and possibility to vote for persons who had to flee their place of residence.

The campaign started on 16 February and will finish on 15 April. In general, the “Yes” campaign is led by the AKP and MHP and is supported by the president and other public officials, while most of the opposition parties, including the CHP and HDP, are part of the “No” campaign. Opposition parties and some civil society representatives expressed concerns to the OSCE/ODIHR NAM regarding the equality of campaign opportunities linked to a potential misuse of administrative resources and the active role of public officials in the campaign. Some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors described the campaign as taking place in an atmosphere of fear and expressed broader concerns regarding security issues that may impact the freedom of assembly and the possibility to campaign freely, and potentially the intimidation of voters.

The legal framework does not sufficiently guarantee the freedom of expression. Moreover, some provisions of decrees enacted under the state of emergency further restrict the freedom of expression, as recently noted by several international bodies such as the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Council of Europe. Reportedly, over 150 media outlets have been closed and a similar number of journalists placed under arrest. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stated that the media environment is characterized by polarization, an increase of self-censorship among journalists, and that a majority of the media outlets are perceived to be associated with the governing party.

The legislation allows for observation by representatives of political parties and stipulates that the vote count is public. However, it does not contain provisions permitting effective observation by international and citizen observers, despite a previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendation that the legislation be amended to provide for access of international and citizen observers to all stages of the electoral process. Representatives from some civil society organizations that observed past elections informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that they will either refrain from observation or significantly limit their efforts due to the overall political and security situation in the country.

Most interlocutors of the OSCE/ODIHR NAM highlighted the country’s long-standing tradition of holding democratic elections and expressed confidence in the referendum day procedures. However, the value added by an OSCE/ODIHR observation for the forthcoming referendum was stressed by a majority of OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors. Many of them stressed the need to deploy a referendum observation mission with a long-term presence to also cover regional aspects of the process, in particular the campaign and the work of the media.

On this basis, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of a Limited Referendum Observation Mission (LROM) to observe the 16 April constitutional referendum. In addition to a

core team of experts, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the secondment of 26 long-term observers from OSCE participating States to follow the referendum process throughout the country. In line with OSCE/ODIHR's standard methodology, the LROM would include a media monitoring element. While the mission would visit a limited number of polling stations, systematic observation of the referendum day proceedings is not envisaged.

III. FINDINGS

A. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

According to the current Constitution, Turkey is a parliamentary republic with executive power exercised by the Council of Ministers (government), headed by the prime minister. Legislative power is vested in the 550-member Turkish Grand National Assembly (parliament). The president serves as the head of state and holds certain functions and authority related to the legislative, executive and judicial fields. The current parliament comprises the Justice and Development Party (AKP) with 317 seats, the Republican People's Party (CHP) with 134 seats, the People's Democratic Party (HDP) with 59 seats, and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) with 40 seats.¹

The forthcoming constitutional referendum will take place on 16 April, during an ongoing state of emergency.² The state of emergency was declared on 21 July 2016, following an attempted military coup that left 249 casualties and 2,194 persons injured.³ After the failed coup attempt, many arrests, detentions, and dismissals followed. Some 150,000 civil servants were dismissed, 100,000 individuals prosecuted and 40,000 of them detained.⁴ Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors raised concerns about the conditions of holding a referendum during a state of emergency coupled with a general climate of increase distress following the attempted coup.⁵ However, OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors from state institutions, including the election administration, noted that the restrictions arising from the emergency decrees will not affect the referendum campaign.

The referendum package contains 18 amendments to the Constitution. Following a heated debate and some scuffles, on 20 January the Parliament voted to put forward the proposed amendments to a referendum with 339 votes in favour, surpassing the required three-fifths parliamentary majority. Amendments were supported by the AKP and MHP, and opposed by the CHP and HDP. The CHP initially announced that it would challenge the regularity of the voting procedure in the parliament

¹ Following the stripping of the immunity of 154 members of parliament in May 2016, 13 HDP members of parliament went to prison, including the party's two co-chairpersons, and their seats in the parliament are vacant.

² The Constitution states that fundamental rights and freedoms may be restricted or suspended in a state of emergency, and numerous emergency decrees have been adopted. Paragraph II.1 of the [Council of Europe's European Commission for Democracy through Law \(Venice Commission\) Code of Good Practice on Referendums](#) states that "democratic referendums are not possible without respect for human rights, in particular freedom of expression and of the press, freedom of movement inside the country, freedom of assembly and freedom of association for political purposes, including freedom to set up political parties."

³ [European Commission Turkey 2016 Report published on 9 November 2016.](#)

⁴ [The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe \(PACE\) Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States \(Monitoring Committee\) in its statement noted that](#) the measures affected the judiciary, police, military, civil service, local authorities, academia, the media and the business community, shutting down over 1,000 institutions and private companies and their assets were seized or transferred to public institutions. [According to the government](#), over 300 institutions have since been reopened and more than 31,000 public employees reinstated.

⁵ [The PACE Monitoring Committee in its statement](#) on the proposed constitutional reform among others "expresses serious doubts about the desirability of holding a referendum under the state of emergency and ongoing security operations in southeast Turkey."

to the Constitutional Court on the basis of violations of secrecy of vote, but later withdrew from the initiative.

The amendments include the introduction of an executive presidency to replace the existing parliamentary system of government, abolition of the prime-ministerial office and most of the oversight responsibilities of the parliament, increase in the number of seats in parliament, and a number of judiciary reforms. While the supporters of the reform see it contributing to the stability and the consolidation of power in the country, those against consider giving extensive powers to the president might damage the separation of powers and jeopardize the independence of the judiciary.⁶

The upcoming referendum is viewed by most as a part of a longer-term constitutional reform to transform the political system, shifting executive powers from parliamentary towards presidential control. In October 2007, a constitutional referendum reduced the parliamentary term from five to four years and introduced the direct election of the president. Another referendum in September 2010 paved the way for the adoption of a number of important constitutional changes, such as improving respect for individual and human rights, increasing access of the public to courts, limiting the power of military courts, and reform of the judiciary.

The OSCE/ODIHR has previously deployed election assessment and observation missions to five elections in Turkey, most recently for the 1 November 2015 parliamentary elections. In its final report, the OSCE/ODIHR concluded that “voters were offered a variety of choices. The challenging security environment, in particular in the southeast of the country, coupled with a high number of violent incidents, including attacks against party members and on party premises, hindered contestants’ ability to campaign freely in all parts of the country. Media freedom remained an area of serious concern and the number of criminal investigations of journalists and the closure of some media outlets reduced voters’ access to a plurality of views and information. The 10 per cent parliamentary threshold continued to limit political pluralism. The election administration organized the elections professionally.”⁷

B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The overall legal framework for the conduct of referendum is the same as for parliamentary elections. In addition to the the 1987 Law on Referendum on Constitutional Amendments (Referendum Law), it includes the 1982 Constitution, the 1983 Law on Parliamentary Elections, and the 1961 Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Voter Registers (Law on Basic Provisions).⁸ The most recent changes to the Law on Basic Provisions were made based on the Council of Ministers’ emergency decree from 9 February 2017, which effectively removed sanctioning powers of the Supreme Board of Elections (SBE) for private media outlets that fail to provide impartial coverage.⁹

⁶ [PACE Monitoring Committee expressed concerns](#) that the revised constitution will deprive the parliament of its fundamental role in making laws and supervising the executive and has requested the Venice Commission to prepare an opinion on this matter to be adopted on at the 117th Session of the Venice Commission on 10-11 March. According to [the government information note to the Venice Commission](#), the motives for proposing the amendments, among others, are to keep the president accountable and to avoid “dual authority” of the president and the prime minister.

⁷ See [all previous OSCE/ODIHR reports on Turkey](#).

⁸ Regulations and decisions of the SBE supplement the legal framework, and some provisions of the Law on Peaceful Assembly and Demonstrations and the Criminal Code apply as well.

⁹ Article 67 of the Constitution states that amendments to the electoral laws shall not apply to the elections within one year from the entry into force date of the amendments.

A number of previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations pertaining to the legal framework remain unaddressed, such as with regard to certain restrictions on active and passive suffrage rights, limited regulations for campaign finance, a lack of a possibility to challenge SBE decisions and an absence of provisions for international and citizen election observation. However, most of the OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stated that the legislation is generally conducive to ensuring the right to vote. Voting is compulsory, according to legislation, and for the referendum to be successful more than a half of the valid votes cast is required.

Fundamental rights and freedoms are guaranteed by the Constitution, although it entrenches and permits legislation to establish undue limitations on the freedoms of association, assembly, expression, and on electoral rights. Some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted concerns with regard to the protection of these fundamental freedoms.

In general, decisions of each level of the election administration can be appealed to the next higher level. However, decisions related to the formation of lower-level commissions, and decisions on voter registration cannot be appealed. The SBE is the final instance for appeals, and its own decisions, including on the final results cannot be appealed. A 2010 constitutional amendment established the right to file individual petitions to the Constitutional Court for violations of fundamental rights and freedoms within the scope of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) and guaranteed by the Constitution.¹⁰

C. REFERENDUM ADMINISTRATION

The judiciary has primary responsibility for administration and supervision of referenda. The upcoming referendum will be organized by four levels of administration: the SBE, 81 Provincial Electoral Boards (PEBs), some 1,500 District Electoral Boards (DEBs), and over 167,000 Ballot Box Committees (BBCs).

The SBE is a permanent 11-member administrative body composed of judges elected by and from the Supreme Court and Council of State for 6-year terms and tasked with overall authority and responsibility for the conduct of the referendum. PEBs and DEBs are permanent bodies with two-year terms. PEBs consist of three members appointed from judges in the respective provinces. DEBs have seven members, four nominated by political parties and two local civil servants, and chaired by the most senior judge in the district. BBCs are constituted ahead of each electoral event and are composed of seven members, out of which five are nominated by political parties and one by the local council; the chairperson is chosen by lot from among nominees of political parties.

The SBE published its referendum calendar and, according to OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors from the SBE, all preparations are underway. While most OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the work of the SBE, some raised concerns regarding the transparency and impartiality in the work of the election administration and potential pressure on election officials by local authorities in some provinces.

D. VOTER REGISTRATION

Citizens over 18 years of age have the right to vote. However, restrictions exist for active conscripts, students in military schools and prisoners convicted of committing ‘deliberate crimes’.

¹⁰ During the 2015 parliamentary elections, the Constitutional Court published its first decisions that addressed whether petitions against SBE decisions in parliamentary elections are within its jurisdiction. While the court acknowledged that the right to free elections is guaranteed by the Constitution and the ECHR, it ruled that SBE decisions are not subject to review.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has previously ruled that Turkey's ban on prisoners' voting rights contravened the ECHR related to the right to free elections.¹¹

The central voter list is maintained by the SBE and linked to a civil and address registry, managed by the Ministry of Interior. Citizens are included in the registry based on a unique personal identification number, which is linked to their place of permanent residence and only permits registration at one location. The SBE compiles voter lists and forwards them to DEBs for posting and public review for eight days.¹² Some 58,260,000 voters are registered on voter lists, including 3 million registered abroad. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed general confidence in the registration process; however, concerns were noted with respect to the accuracy of the voter lists in some lower-level commissions.

Voting abroad will take place from 27 March to 9 April in 120 polling stations in 57 countries.¹³ One DEB in Ankara is designated to co-ordinate out-of-country voting and to facilitate the counting of these ballots. Recent change to the election legislation, introduced one voter list for out-of-country voting and voters abroad can vote at any diplomatic representations irrespectively of their residence.

Given the challenging security situation, due to terrorist acts, counter-measures and hostilities, in the southeast of the country, a number of people had to flee their place of residence recently. According to some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, around 300,000 people had to flee their place of residence, and some of them expressed concerns with their registration and possibility to vote.¹⁴

E. REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN AND CAMPAIGN FINANCING

The referendum campaign started on 16 February and will finish on 15 April at 18:00. Stricter campaign rules apply during a shorter period commencing 10 days before the referendum day aimed at ensuring equitable opportunities. These include provisions on the allocation of free airtime for the four parliamentary parties and the president, a ban on the use of state resources for campaign purposes and the prohibition for contestants to organize and contribute to events related to publicly funded services.

In general, the "Yes" campaign is led by the AKP and MHP and is supported by the president and other public officials. Most of the opposition parties, including the CHP and HDP, are part of the "No" campaign and stated that they will have limited campaign activities. Opposition parties and some civil society representatives described the campaign as taking place in the atmosphere of increased distress following the attempted coup and expressed concerns to the OSCE/ODIHR NAM regarding the equality of campaign opportunities, the potential misuse of administrative resources

¹¹ See judgements [Söyler v. Turkey](#), January 2013 and [Murat Vural v. Turkey](#), 21 October 2014, where the ECtHR found that the ban on convicted prisoners' voting rights was not proportionate to the gravity of the offence. During the previous elections, the SBE issued decisions that partially addressed the ECtHR judgment and allowed convicts outside of prison to vote.

¹² During the review period, voters could request changes to their information. After this period, modifications are not permitted and voters changing address are required to vote at their previous place of residence. Voters could also review their information on the SBE website.

¹³ The number of days for voting will vary in each country, depending on the number of out-of-country voters. Voting will be also available at border crossings and customs gates.

¹⁴ Principle 1 of the [2004 United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement](#) states that "internally displaced persons shall enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under international and domestic law as do other persons in their country. They shall not be discriminated against in the enjoyment of any rights and freedoms on the ground that they are internally displaced."

and voiced concerns over the active role of public officials in the campaign. Moreover, the President, the Prime Minister and the Antaliya General Prosecutor have made separate public statements alluding that those who will vote “No” on the referendum are supporting terrorist organizations.¹⁵

OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors anticipate the campaign to involve different campaign activities such as rallies, door-to-door canvassing, posting printed material and campaigning via social media. Some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed broader concerns regarding security issues that may impact the freedom of assembly, the possibility to campaign freely and potentially create an atmosphere of intimidation of voters.

The legislation does not contain comprehensive regulations of campaign financing. It imposes some restrictions on the amount and nature of donations, including prohibiting foreign funding and loans. However, there are no limitations on general party and campaign-related spending. Political parties are required to declare funds allocated to the referendum campaign through their annual financial reports to the Constitutional Court. These reports are not publicly available, and only summarized audit reports of the Constitutional Court, published up to several years later, are posted online.

F. MEDIA

The Constitution and the legal framework do not sufficiently guarantee the freedom of expression. In particular, unduly broad provisions in the Anti-Terrorism Law and the Criminal Code, including on insult of the president, allow prosecution and imprisonment of journalists. Moreover, some provisions of the decrees enacted under the state of emergency further restrict the freedom of expression.¹⁶ The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM) in a recent statement “condemned continued arrests of journalists and called on authorities to restore media pluralism in Turkey.”¹⁷ Similarly, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe noted that “the deterioration of media freedoms and freedom of expression in Turkey, had already reached seriously alarming levels, and has intensified even further under the state of emergency.”¹⁸ The OSCE RFoM, the CoE Commissioner, the PACE have also expressed concerns over the freedom of expression on Internet.¹⁹

The media environment is characterized by numerous broadcast and print outlets, and an ever-increasing significance is attributed to online and social media. A number of criminal investigations that resulted in closures of media outlets were initiated in the last several years.²⁰ Additionally, as a

¹⁵ The statements by [the Prime Minister](#), [the President](#), and [the Antaliya General Prosecutor](#) were made on 5, 12 and 17 February, respectively.

¹⁶ In total, 21 emergency decrees, out of which 9 relate to the media and freedom of expression, were adopted during the state of emergency. The most recent decree was adopted on 9 February. According to [the government](#) “the purpose of the declaration of state of emergency is not to intervene to the freedoms but to enable the Government to make prompt decisions.”

¹⁷ [Press Release of the OSCE RFoM, 31 October 2016.](#)

¹⁸ In the [memorandum on freedom of expression and media freedom from 15 February 2017](#), the Commissioner “regrets to observe a significant decrease in the commitment of the Turkish authorities to improve freedom of expression and compliance with the ECHR over the last few years and urges the Turkish political leaders in the strongest possible terms to change course and start separating what is a terrorist action from criticism and dissent, and to display the responsibility and tolerance expected in a democratic society.” The Commissioner concludes that “it is clearly impossible to do so under the current state of emergency, and once more calls on the authorities to stop it and reverse the numerous unacceptable infringements of freedom of expression, and in particular media freedom and academic freedom, that it engendered.”

¹⁹ [Press Release of the OSCE RFoM from 15 April 2016](#), [PACE Resolution 2121 \(2016\) from 22 June 2016.](#)

²⁰ Cases included terrorism charges against the Koza-Ipek Media Group, the Doğan Media Group and the television stations *Samanyolu Haber* and *Mehtap TV*.

result of the state of emergency, more than 150 media outlets have been closed and their assets liquidated by governmental decrees, without judicial decisions, and some 150 journalists are reported to be under arrest.²¹ OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stated that the media environment is characterized by polarization and an increase of self-censorship among journalists.

The coverage of the referendum campaign in the broadcast media is regulated by the Law on Referendum, Law on Broadcasting, the Law on Basic Provisions, and SBE decisions and regulations. By the general legal principles for broadcasting, media are obliged to ensure accuracy, impartiality and objectivity of reporting. In addition to the option of paid political advertisements, parliamentary political parties are granted free airtime on the public broadcaster, Turkish Radio and Television (TRT), during the last seven days of the campaign.²² Several OSCE/ODIHR interlocutors informed NAM that they do not have sufficient funds for paid advertisements and did not expect the media to cover the campaign impartially and objectively. According to OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, during the referendum campaign, the TRT will organize weekly debates among the political parties that are eligible to run for elections.²³

Compliance with media regulations is overseen by the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTSC), which has the authority to review complaints related to coverage by local and regional broadcasters.²⁴ During the campaign period, the RTSC submits weekly reports to the SBE.²⁵ Following recent changes to the legislation, the SBE powers for sanctioning private media for violations during the campaign were repealed.

G. CITIZEN AND INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

The legislation allows for observation by representatives of political parties and stipulates that the vote count is public. However, it does not contain provisions permitting effective observation by international and citizen observers, despite a previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendation that the legislation be amended to provide for access of international and citizen observers to all stages of the electoral process, in line with the commitments from the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.²⁶ Representatives from some civil society organizations that observed past elections informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that they will either refrain from observation or significantly limit their efforts due to the overall political and security situation.²⁷

²¹ [Statement of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe . According to the Turkish government](#), 17 newspapers, 1 television channel and 2 radio stations were reopened.

²² Parliamentary parties are entitled to two 10-minute slots on radio and television each. Additional airtime is granted to the party in power or a senior partner in a coalition government (10 minutes) and the president (10 minutes). In the context of the referendum, this provision effectively gives more time to the supporting campaign.

²³ [The SBE adopted a decision on 12 February that 10 political parties are eligible to run for elections](#). To form a political party and to contest elections, parties must have an organizational structure in at least half of the provinces and one third of the districts in each of those provinces, and convened a party congress six months prior to the elections.

²⁴ The nine members of the RTSC are nominated by political parties and elected by parliament.

²⁵ According to the RTSC, some 130 broadcast media will be monitored.

²⁶ Paragraph 8 of [the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen document](#) states that “the presence of observers, both foreign and domestic, can enhance the electoral process for States in which elections are taking place. They therefore invite observers from any other CSCE participating States and any appropriate private institutions and organizations who may wish to do so to observe the course of their national election proceedings, to the extent permitted by law. They will also endeavour to facilitate similar access for election proceedings held below the national level. Such observers will undertake not to interfere in the electoral proceedings.”

²⁷ Paragraph II.3.2 of the [Code of Good Practice on Referendums](#) states that “both national and international observers should be given the widest possible opportunity to participate in a referendum observation exercise.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Most interlocutors of the OSCE/ODIHR NAM highlighted the country's long-standing tradition of holding democratic elections and expressed confidence in the referendum day procedures. However, the value added by an OSCE/ODIHR observation for the forthcoming referendum was stressed by a majority of OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors. Many of them stressed the need to deploy a referendum observation mission with a long-term presence to also cover regional aspects of the process, in particular the campaign and the work of the media.

On this basis, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of a Limited Referendum Observation Mission (LROM) to observe the 16 April constitutional referendum. In addition to a core team of experts, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the secondment of 26 long-term observers from OSCE participating States to follow the referendum process throughout the country. In line with OSCE/ODIHR's standard methodology, the LEOM would include a media monitoring element. While the mission would visit a limited number of polling stations, systematic observation of the voting proceedings is not envisaged.

ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Kaan Esener, Ambassador and Deputy Undersecretary
Behiç Hatipoğlu, Head of Department for Human Rights
Esin Çakıl, Head of Department for Consular Principles
Berin Okur, Head of Division at the Human Rights Department
Nazım Mert Çabukoğlu, Third Secretary at the Human Right Department

Ministry of Interior

Mehmet Tekinarslan, Deputy Undersecretary, Governor
Metin Maltayman, Deputy Director General, General Directorate of Provincial Administrations
İbrahim Süha Karaboran, Head of Address Department, General Directorate of Population and
Citizenship Affairs
Özkan Demirel, Acting Head of Department for EU Affairs and Foreign Relations
Taner Çiftçi, Deputy Head of Department for Security, General Directorate of Security
Emrah Öztürk, Major, Head of Division for Civil Disorder, Gendarmerie General Command
Levent Yazıcı, Deputy Expert, Department for EU Affairs and Foreign Relations

Supreme Board of Elections

Sadi Güven, Chairperson
Mehmet Murat Özeren, Deputy Director General for Electoral Register

Constitutional Court

Burhan Üstün, Acting President
Yücel Arslan, Judge Rapporteur in charge of Foreign Relations

Radio and Television Supreme Council

İlker İlgin, Vice-Chair of the Radio and Television Council
Ziya Çalışkan, First Legal Counsel
Miracettin Ulucak, Head of Department for International Relations
Dr. Mehmet Çakırtaş, Head of Department for Monitoring and Evaluation
Murat Ellialtı, Deputy Head of Department for Monitoring and Evaluation
Mehmet Bora Sönmez, Expert, Department for International Relations

Turkish Radio and Television Corporation

Fatih Şahingöz, Vice Broadcast Coordinator
Ömer Selvi, TRT Haber Broadcast Executive
Nevin Yıldırım, International Relations Department
Behiye Şimşekçi, International Relations Department

The Justice and Development Party

Mustafa Elitaş, Deputy Chairperson of the Parliamentary Group

The Republican People's Party

Engin Altay, Deputy Chairperson of the Parliamentary Group

The Nationalist Movement Party

Erhan Usta, Deputy Chairperson of the Parliamentary Group

The Peoples' Democratic Party

Ahmet Yıldırım, Deputy Chairperson of the Parliamentary Group
Bedia Özgökçe Ertan, Member of the Parliament

Vote and Beyond

Mehmet Pancaroglu, Ankara Co-ordinator

Hurriyet Daily News

Serkan Demitraş, Journalist

Joint meeting with the Diplomatic Missions of the following OSCE participating States:

Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom, United States of America and Delegation of the European Union to Turkey.