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The Netherlands Presidency of the European Union

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EU Statement on US elections

The European Union welcomes the preliminary finding of the Election Observation Mission to the United States that the 2 November Presidential and Congressional elections mostly met OSCE commitments for democratic elections. Overall, the elections reflected a longstanding tradition, including institutions governed by law, open competition and public debate, free, professional and vigorous media coverage throughout the campaign, a civil society involved in all aspects of the electoral process, and a record turnout on election day.

Mr. Chairman, the European Union welcomes the finding of the EOM that implementation of the 2002 Help America Vote Act has had a positive impact on the electoral process in the United States. We recognize that implementation of this Act is work in progress in the context of a comprehensive electoral reform process to ensure consistency with the international commitments of the United States.

Mr Chairman, the EOM recorded that allegations of electoral fraud and voter suppression, primarily among minorities in the pre-election period were widely reported and presented in the pre-election period. The system provides for ample remedies for these complaints. Therefore, we encourage the United States authorities to investigate these allegations with a view to ensuring maximum confidence in the electoral process.

Mr Chairman, the European Union regrets that international observers met with problems of access to polling stations in some States. We urge the United States to ensure that relevant election legislation allows access for both international and domestic observers to all aspects of the election process.

The decentralised nature of electoral systems should not result in situations in which participating States are unable to comply fully with international commitments.

The European Union looks forward to receiving the final report from the EOM.

The Candidate Countries Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Croatia¹ align themselves with this statement.

¹ Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process