



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No 1068 Vienna, 17 September 2015

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#### **EU Statement on ODIHR's implementation of its mandate related to the upcoming elections in Azerbaijan**

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In connection with the comments made by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan on ODIHR's implementation of its mandate related to the upcoming parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan, we would like to state the following:

The European Union underlines its full support for the mandate and autonomy of ODIHR. Many participating States, including of the European Union, have benefited from ODIHR's recommendations and support in implementing OSCE commitments. The European Union also recalls the concept of comprehensive security, which encompasses commitments and mechanisms in all dimensions of the OSCE.

We reiterate our strong support for ODIHR's observation methodology which is globally recognised and applied equally in all participating States. It is based on the principles of independence, impartiality and professionalism as spelled out in the Ministerial Council Decision 19/06.

The European Union fully supports the preparation as well the conduct of ODIHR's election observation without restrictions and limitations imposed by participating States. We deeply regret that Azerbaijan placed restrictions on ODIHR's planned election observation for the forthcoming parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan. We share the view expressed by ODIHR that the insistence on a restricted number of observers is directly counter to OSCE commitments and in contradiction to ODIHR's election observation mandate. This insistence has compelled ODIHR to cancel its election observation mission.

We call on Azerbaijan to engage in discussions with ODIHR on how ODIHR can provide assistance to Azerbaijan in the implementation of its election-related and other OSCE commitments.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA align themselves with this statement.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.