



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council Nr 967 Vienna, 17 October 2013

---

#### **EU Statement on the Presidential Election in Azerbaijan**

---

The European Union (EU) takes note of the preliminary findings and conclusions of the OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's International Election Observation Mission (EOM) to the Azerbaijan Presidential Election of 9 October 2013. In this regard, we welcome the close co-operation between ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

The International Election Observation Mission's preliminary findings and conclusions state that significant problems were observed throughout all stages of the election process. It identifies serious shortcomings including limitations on the freedom of expression, assembly and association that did not guarantee a level playing field for candidates. These shortcomings need to be addressed in order for Azerbaijan to fully meet its international commitments. Equally, all citizens should have the opportunity to file election appeals and be provided with sufficient guarantees of an effective redress.

At the same time, we note that according to the International Election Observation Mission, the Central Election Commission (CEC) efficiently administered the technical preparations for the election respecting legal deadlines.

We take this opportunity to reiterate our full support for and confidence in ODIHR's observation methodology. It is based on the principles of independence, impartiality and professionalism, endorsed by participating States in Ministerial Council Decision 19/06 and has been emulated by numerous international actors, including the EU, in their own election observation activities. ODIHR's approach is also based on the premise that an election is more than just a one-day event and covers all the elements necessary for a democratic electoral process. The size,

---

scope and duration of ODIHR's observation presence in Azerbaijan meant that it was able to produce a uniquely comprehensive assessment.

ODIHR's objective and systematic approach has benefited many participating States over the years. We look forward to receiving OSCE/ODIHR's final report in due course. We encourage the authorities of Azerbaijan to work with the OSCE/ODIHR to address its recommendations with a view to continuing to develop the path towards democracy and the rule of law in Azerbaijan in line with OSCE principles and commitments.

Finally, the EU looks forward to continuing its close co-operation with Azerbaijan as we together pursue our important bilateral agenda under the Eastern Partnership and European Neighbourhood Policy.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* and SERBIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate ALBANIA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

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

---