



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council No. 1259
Vienna, 13 February 2020**

EU statement on the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan

Early parliamentary elections took place in the Republic of Azerbaijan on 9 February 2020.

As noted by the International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) composed of observers from OSCE/ODIHR, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, the Central Electoral Commission made concerted efforts to act transparently and was welcoming towards international observers.

According to the IEOM's preliminary assessment, despite a high number of candidates, the restrictive legislation and political environment prevented genuine competition in the elections. Some opposition parties boycotted the elections due to the restrictive environment, while some candidates were prevented from running. In this context, we remind that the European Court of Human Rights has so far ruled on several violations of the right to stand in elections. In December 2019, the Committee of Ministers, in its decision on the Ilgar Mammadov group of cases, called for full restoration of civil and political rights of the persons concerned in time for the next parliamentary elections.

The European Union encourages the authorities to address the long standing recommendations by OSCE/ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission. The EU stands ready to assist in this process.

The EU looks forward to continuing dialogue and working closely with Azerbaijan, also in the framework of the OSCE, including with a view to addressing issues related to democracy and human rights, for the benefit of the people of Azerbaijan and EU-Azerbaijan relations.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.