



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1049 Vienna, 30 April 2015

EU Statement on the Presidential Elections in Kazakhstan

The European Union has closely followed the presidential elections of 26 April in the Republic of Kazakhstan, including the pre-electoral phase. The EU welcomes that the election was observed by an OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission that comprised more than 250 long-term and short-term observers from 11 countries, seconded by participating States.

The EU acknowledges that according to the preliminary conclusions of the Election Observation Mission, the election preparations were efficiently administered, all electoral deadlines were met and commissions at all levels were open to observers and media.

The EU notes, however, that according to the same report, voters were not offered a genuine choice between political alternatives. There were restrictions to the freedom of expression, as well as to the media environment. The Election Observation Mission also highlighted that serious procedural deficiencies and irregularities were noted throughout the voting, counting and tabulation processes.

The European Union encourages Kazakhstan to respond to recommendations made in the OSCE/ODIHR final report, as well as some previous recommendations that remain unaddressed. This should be done before the legislative elections in 2016, in order to ensure that they are in line with international standards. Kazakhstan is a key partner for the EU, and we stand ready to continue our support to the implementation of further reforms to strengthen democracy in Kazakhstan.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country LIECHTENSTEIN, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

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

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.