

Delegation of Uzbekistan

**WRITTEN CONTRIBUTION BY THE DELEGATION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN TO THE SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN
DIMENSION MEETING ON THE OSCE CONTRIBUTION TO THE
PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

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Session I: 25 years after the adoption of the Copenhagen Document

**Implementation of the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the
Human Dimension of the CSCE in Uzbekistan: democratic elections**

The adoption of the Copenhagen Document in 1990, which became a key milestone in the protection of minorities in the OSCE area, confirmed the importance of political institutions and democratic principles for the formation of States governed by the rule of law and also established international commitments by countries in the human dimension.

As an OSCE participating State, the Republic of Uzbekistan respects the right of its citizens to participate in the government of the country directly or through representatives freely elected by them in a fair electoral process.

The structure of the electoral system and the principles on which it is based can be found in the Constitution, one chapter of which is devoted to the electoral system, and in the laws on guaranteeing the electoral rights of citizens, on a referendum in the Republic of Uzbekistan, on the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on the election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on the election of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and on the election of people's deputies to local, regional and municipal councils.

All citizens, irrespective of their social origins, racial and ethnic background, gender, language, education or personal, social or material status, enjoy equal electoral rights. At least 30 per cent of the total candidates nominated for election must be women. A citizen cannot be a deputy in more than two representative bodies of the State authorities at the same time.

The electoral system of Uzbekistan is subject to systematic democratic reforms. The latest amendments in 2014 to Article 117 of the Constitution defined the democratic composition of the Central Election Commission and the basic principles for its operation and strengthened guarantees of the independence of all electoral bodies responsible for the organization of elections to representative bodies.

These and a number of other amendments and additions to electoral legislation aimed at safeguarding the principle enshrined in the Constitution of free elections and free expression of will made it possible to hold the elections for deputies to the Oliy Majlis and to local councils on 21 December 2014 and for the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 29 March 2015 in full accord with the provisions of the Constitution and electoral legislation and also with international democratic legal norms, including the Copenhagen Document.

The election legislation gives political parties and the candidates nominated by them equal rights and opportunities for conducting an election campaign, meeting with the electorate, making known the provisions of their election manifestos and using the mass media for their election campaign.

For example, 127 electoral districts had 4 candidates and 8 electoral districts had 3. As a result of the strong competition between the political parties, in 22 electoral districts no single candidate achieved the necessary number of votes for election to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan. A second round of voting took place in these electoral districts on 4 January 2015.

Among the important factors that make parliamentary elections so special are the civil responsibility of the electors and an enhanced awareness by them of their involvement in the democratic reforms taking place in the country. Over 18,400,000 electors, or 89 per cent of the total number on the electoral roll, took part in the election of people's representatives to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan and to the local, regional and municipal councils. Some 8,311 electors availed themselves of the right to early voting.

As a result of the elections to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2014, 150 deputies were elected: 52 from the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan, 36 from the Milliy Tiklanish Uzbekistan National Revival Democratic Party, 27 from the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan, 20 from the Adolat Justice Social Democratic Party, and 15 from the Ecological Movement of Uzbekistan.

In terms of ethnic groups, 133 Uzbek, 7 Karakalpak, 4 Russian, 3 Kazakh, 2 Tajik and 1 Korean representative were elected to the Legislative Chamber. The Senate saw the election of 93 Uzbek, 4 Karakalpak, 2 Korean and 1 Kazakh representative.

In accordance with the law on elections to the Oliy Majlis requiring the political parties to ensure that at least 30 per cent of the nominated candidates were women, the 2014 parliamentary elections resulted in the election of 24 female deputies (16 per cent) to the Lower House and 17 (17 per cent) to the Upper House.

The parliamentary and presidential elections were monitored by over 340 observers from five international organizations – the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Association of World Election Bodies and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation – and also from 52 States and over 70,000 observers and authorized representatives of political parties nominating candidates for election.

In the opinion of the vast majority of the more than 70,000 domestic and 340 foreign observers representing authoritative international organizations observing the parliamentary and presidential elections, the elections were open, transparent and competitive and in full compliance with the norms and standards of the Copenhagen Document.

The elections for the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 29 March 2015 were open and transparent and in full compliance with national electoral legislation and the generally accepted democratic principles of international law. The participation of more than 90 per cent of the voters on the electoral roll is evidence of the country's advanced political culture, the active endeavours by the population to have a say in the government of the State and the interest in the election of a suitable candidate to lead the country. During the election campaign, the presidential candidates were given equal opportunities, which they made use of in full measure in strict compliance with the legislation in force.

The Central Election Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan accredited more than 300 international observers, and on election day the political parties deployed more than 35,000 representatives as observers.

According to the results of the elections for the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 29 March 2015, some 18,942,000 of the 20,798,000 persons with the right to vote in the country exercised this right.

The electoral law of the Republic of Uzbekistan guarantees the rights of the voters and candidates and of all other participants – political parties, citizens' self-governance bodies, authorized representatives, and national and international observers. All of the above-mentioned subjects are not only able to assert their rights but are also obliged to co-operate in the holding of democratic elections and not to prevent citizens from exercising their electoral rights.