



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 971
Vienna, 14 November 2013**

EU statement on the elections in Tajikistan

The European Union would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the Statement issued on 7 November by the Spokesperson of the EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on the elections in Tajikistan:

“The High Representative has followed closely the presidential elections in the Republic of Tajikistan, notably the pre-electoral phase and the level of engagement of opposition parties in it.

The EU has repeatedly called on Tajikistan for free, democratic, inclusive and transparent elections and has emphasised the importance of the freedom of media and freedom of speech.

The High Representative takes note of the preliminary findings and conclusions of the OSCE / ODIHR International Election Observation Mission that the presidential elections took place peacefully, but restrictive candidate registration requirements resulted in lack of genuine choice and meaningful pluralism.

The High Representative regrets that previous recommendations by ODIHR issued after parliamentary elections in 2010 were not implemented by the Tajik authorities and renews her call for these recommendations to be fully implemented.

The High Representative calls on the Tajik authorities to effectively address the restrictions and irregularities mentioned in the OSCE/ ODIHR preliminary

statement. The EU stands ready to assist Tajikistan in its efforts to bring the election process into line with OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections."

Mr Chairman,

The recent meeting in Vienna to consider the ODIHR study on Electoral Legislation and Practice in OSCE participating States highlighted the importance of follow-up to ODIHR's recommendations. We urge the Tajik authorities to seize the opportunity of ODIHR's recommendations to redouble their efforts to ensure compliance with OSCE election-related commitments and to carefully study and act upon ODIHR's final report when it is available.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ and SERBIA*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates ALBANIA and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of MOLDOVA align themselves with this statement.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia 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.
