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EU statement on the Presidential Elections in Kazakhstan

The EU would like to draw attention to the statement made by the Presidency of the European Union on 5 December on the Preliminary Findings and Conclusions of the OSCE/ODIHR International Election Observation Mission for the Presidential Elections in Kazakhstan.

“The Presidency of the European Union has been closely following events over the course of the Kazakhstan presidential elections held on 4 December. The Presidency of the EU welcomes the fact that the preliminary findings and conclusions of the OSCE/ODIHR International Election Observation Mission notes that there have been some improvements in the administration of this election in the pre-election period. The Presidency of the EU appreciates the access to election commissions at all levels granted to the observers. The Presidency of the EU is also pleased that voting on the day was conducted in a generally calm and peaceful atmosphere.

But the Presidency of the EU notes with disappointment the assessment of the international election observation mission that the 4 December Presidential elections did not meet a number of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections. In particular the Presidency of the EU regrets the restrictions on opposition candidates' ability to campaign freely, which the international election observation mission believe limited the possibility for a meaningful competition. The Presidency of the EU is also concerned about problems relating to the count including reports of ballot stuffing and tampering with the result protocols. The Presidency of the EU calls on the Government of Kazakhstan to investigate these instances of fraud and malpractice quickly and in a transparent manner and to take appropriate action.

The Presidency of the EU is disappointed that the Kazakh authorities did not amend the legislative framework in line with the recommendations of the OSCE/ODIHR following the Parliamentary elections in 2004. The EU stands ready to assist

Kazakhstan in fulfilling its international commitments in this regard in all fora, including the OSCE.”

The EU also particularly notes the transparency demonstrated by the Central Election Commission in the pre-election period and the inclusive nature of the registration process. The accuracy of voters lists appear to have been somewhat improved and voters lists were generally accessible for public scrutiny. The EU hopes that the Central Election Commission will publish election results from individual polling stations as a measure to increase public confidence in the final results. We look forward to receiving the final assessment of the ODIHR and to studying further recommendations which will be contained therein.

The EU has taken note of the statement by H.E. Foreign Minister Tokaev during the Ljubljana Ministerial Council meeting in which he expressed some concerns about the preliminary report. The EU for its part has full confidence in the objectivity and professionalism of the election observation carried out by the IEOM. The EU was encouraged to hear in Minister Tokaev’s statement that Kazakhstan appreciates the role of ODIHR in monitoring the presidential elections and that Kazakhstan will continue the dialogue and cooperation with ODIHR. The EU equally welcomes the readiness of the institutions represented in the International Election Observation Mission to support the authorities of Kazakhstan. The EU also registered with appreciation Mr Tokaev’s reaffirmation of the importance of respect for protection of human rights and the promotion of free media.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia¹, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro as well as the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

¹ Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process