



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008  
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008  
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

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## **Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union**

**Permanent Council No. 714  
29 May 2008**

### **EU statement on parliamentary elections in Georgia**

The EU holds that the parliamentary elections on 21 May 2008 were an important test for democracy in Georgia, particularly in light of the recent developments in the country, and congratulates the Georgian people for the peaceful conduct of the elections.

The EU welcomes the good cooperation of the Georgian authorities with the OSCE/ODIHR-led International Election Observation Mission. We take note of its 22 May Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions, which concludes *inter alia* that the elections overall offered the Georgian people an opportunity to choose their representatives from amongst a wide array of choices, and that the authorities and other political stakeholders made efforts to conduct the elections in line with Georgia's OSCE and Council of Europe commitments. The EU welcomes these efforts.

However, we note with concern that a number of problems were identified by the International Election Observation Mission which made the implementation of commitments uneven and incomplete. We call on the competent authorities to ensure that all complaints are adequately and urgently addressed. We note that certain problems flagged by the ODIHR were not addressed accordingly following the January presidential elections in Georgia and that distinct challenges remain. Therefore we urge Georgia to take all necessary steps to address the identified shortcomings, *inter alia* on electoral legislation and procedures, also taking into account the ODIHR's final assessment on the elections, which is due to be issued at a later date.

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Finally, the EU urges all political forces to respect the final election results and to engage in a constructive dialogue between the government and the opposition to agree on the way forward in the interest of the country. Given the importance of stability in Georgia and in the region, we urge all parties concerned to respect the rule of law and to use only democratic and peaceful means in seeking to resolve political differences.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area Iceland, as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

\* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

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