



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2013
Warsaw, 1 October 2013

EU statement – Working Session 13 DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS AND ELECTION OBSERVATION – SHARING BEST PRACTICES (CONTINUED)

As we already underlined this morning during working session 12, election observation should not be an end in itself. ODIHR's recommendations should be given consideration and implementation, for which the final responsibility lay with the participating States. The EU calls on participating States to make good use of ODIHR's assistance in the framework of a follow-up to ODIHR's final election monitoring report, including with regard to possible election legislation projects, and to report on follow-up measures at the political level of the OSCE.

The EU welcomes that ODIHR has been continuously intensifying its efforts to work with participating States on implementation of recommendations contained in its final reports. Such efforts were often supported by country visits that evolved into a regular practice. Such follow-up visits are useful to allow discussion of the ODIHR's election recommendations as well as of possible areas of future cooperation and assistance.

The EU believes that the value of democratic elections cannot be reduced to questions related to legislation and procedures. In

implementing ODIHR's recommendations, the participating states should take also into account the important role played by civil society and free media in helping us to ensure full respect for democracy, including free and fair elections, as stated in the OSCE Astana Commemorative Declaration.

In order to improve the implementation of recommendations resulting from election observation the EU supports a concrete and dynamic follow-up also at the political level of the OSCE, first and foremost by informed and timely in-depth debates of related issues in the Permanent Council. The EU calls upon all participating states to accept their ownership for this process and to actively report on follow-up measures to be adopted in reaction to ODIHR's recommendations.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, 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 countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Andorra and San Marino, 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.