



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU statement on the Parliamentary elections in Armenia

Parliamentary elections took place in Armenia on 2 April. We welcome that according to the preliminary conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission (EOM), the elections were well-administered and fundamental freedoms were generally respected. However, the elections were tainted by credible information about vote-buying, and pressure on civil servants and employees of private companies, which contributed to an overall lack of public confidence and trust in the elections.

The International EOM welcomed the introduction of new technologies, which the European Union supported through a project successfully implemented alongside the Armenian authorities, as well as reforms of the legal framework. We also note the important contribution of ODIHR and the OSCE Office in Yerevan to these changes. Whilst an unprecedented number of international and domestic observers were provided an enabling environment in which to carry out their work, international non-governmental organisations were not invited to observe, in contradiction to the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document. Despite some minor technical problems, fewer irregularities concerning ballot box stuffing, double voting, counting and tabulation of results were recorded by observers.

The EU notes that the new Electoral Code was adopted less than one year before elections in a reform process that was characterized as inclusive and as a step forward in building overall confidence in the electoral process. While acknowledging that a number of previous OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe's Venice Commission recommendations were implemented, we call on the authorities in Armenia to address outstanding recommendations.

The European Union is committed to a stable, democratic and prosperous future of Armenia. Once the electoral process has been completed, we look forward to

working with the democratically elected new Parliament and Government to strengthen our political dialogue and continue our support to economic and social reform including on the basis of the recently initialled EU–Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement and within the larger framework of revised European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.