



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on recent parliamentary elections in Tajikistan

The European Union takes note of the final report of the ODIHR Election Assessment Mission (EAM) following the parliamentary elections in Tajikistan on 1 March 2020.

The high turnout in the election demonstrates the commitment of the people of Tajikistan to the democratic process. Nevertheless, the conclusions of ODIHR's EAM report state that the election took place in a restricted political space, where systemic infringements on fundamental political rights and freedoms had left no space for a pluralistic political debate, and genuine opposition had been removed from the political landscape. Operational aspects of the elections appeared to be efficiently administered, yet this cannot offset the long-standing transparency and accountability challenges within the election administration, which undermined the integrity and credibility of the process.

The EU regrets that previous elections-related recommendations by ODIHR were not implemented by the Tajik authorities. We call on the Tajik authorities to effectively address the restrictions and irregularities mentioned in the ODIHR's EAM final report, in particular the priority recommendations which relate to the need to ensure full respect for freedom of expression, including unimpeded work of independent media; to provide for independence and transparency of selection of election commissioners; to develop a centralized voter register; to institute robust procedures for counting and tabulation; to respect voter's right to information and to allow citizen observation. In view of the upcoming Presidential elections, progress in these areas is essential

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

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.