



EUROPEAN UNION
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN
General Elections 2013



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Immediate Release

EU Election Observation Mission Presents Final Report and Recommendations for Future Electoral Processes

Islamabad, 10 July 2013 - A strong democratic commitment was demonstrated in the 2013 elections. Despite escalating militant attacks, and procedural shortcomings, the electoral process progressed with high levels of competition, a marked increase in voter participation, and overall acceptance of the outcome. However fundamental problems remain with the legal framework and the implementation of certain provisions, leaving future processes vulnerable to malpractice.

Chief Observer Michael Gahler, Member of the European Parliament said ***“Now is the time for the new Parliament, the Election Commission and other stakeholders to demonstrate their commitment to democratic Pakistan. Legislation can be further developed and every by-election as well as local elections are an opportunity for implementing improved practices. In this regard we have made 50 recommendations that would help provide for fulfillment of citizens’ right to stand as candidates and to vote.”***

The EU EOM’s final report offers a comprehensive analysis of the 2013 electoral process. Fifty recommendations are included, of these 7 are assessed to require constitutional change and 17 to require changes in the primary legislation. Priority recommendations are:

1. Formation of a special parliamentary committee on elections to review related legislation within a framework of international law commitments. Key issues to address for compliance with Pakistan’s international commitments include: candidacy criteria, transparency requirements, and mechanisms for effective remedy.
2. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) take full responsibility for the administration of the elections, including through management control of the work of Returning Officers (ROs). The ECP fully implement its five-year strategic plan, using the opportunity of any upcoming by-elections and local elections to implement improved practices.
3. The ECP establish a clear regulatory framework for all aspects of the election, including in regards to results management, observation and scrutiny, and complaints. The ECP review and develop procedures to increase checks in the polling and results process, and develop practices to improve the quality of completed results forms.
4. The ECP introduce strong transparency measures including making all notifications, decisions and election related information immediately and easily available to the public. All polling and results information be swiftly publicly available on the ECP website.
5. The legal framework for media be revised so that it fully supports editorial independence and eliminates opportunities for censorship. The Code of Conduct for Media be enforced, so that equitable opportunities are given to candidates and parties by the state and private media.
6. Further measures be taken to promote the participation of women in the electoral process, through for example: further Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) drives, requirements for parties to have publicly available policies and information on women’s participation within the party, and greater coverage of women in politics in the state media. Resolute actions be taken against agreements that prohibit women from voting.
7. The separate list for Ahmadi voters be abolished, so that all voters are on one unified electoral roll, according to requirements for age and Pakistani citizenship.

The report is available in English and Urdu on the mission website www.eueom.eu/pakistan2013

Note to editors:

The EU EOM is independent of the EU institutions and EU member states. The EU EOM operates in accordance with the “Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation”, endorsed under the auspices of the United Nations in 2005.