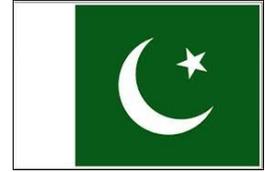




**European Union
Election Observation Mission
Islamic Republic of Pakistan
General Elections 2013**



Press release: EU EOM/2013/02
Date: Islamabad 16/04/2013

Immediate Release

**EU Election Observation Mission Deploys
Long-Term Observers**

Following an invitation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan to observe the 11 May elections, the EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) is deploying 52 long-term observers (LTOs) to different parts of Pakistan today. This is slightly higher than in 2008, when the EU EOM deployed 48 LTOs. The observers left Islamabad this morning to their respective deployment stations to observe the electoral process.

"I am proud to see my fellow observers fan out into Pakistan's provinces. The observers are critical for implementing the EU's long-term comprehensive approach to observation. They will be seeing things first hand and gathering the facts, essential for our assessment. They are the eyes and the ears of our mission in Pakistan", says Chief Observer Michael Gahler, Member of the European Parliament.

The EU EOM teams are deploying to provincial capitals and other base stations to cover 193 National Assembly constituencies out of the 272. They will work in teams of two, covering urban and rural areas. The EU election observers follow a comprehensive observation methodology developed through the EU's experience of observing over 100 election elections in more than 50 countries. The EU EOM observer teams will meet electoral and government officials; candidates and representatives from political parties; and members of civil society and the media, among other stakeholders. The EU EOM is observing in Khyber Pakthunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh. Due to the security situation, the EOM cannot deploy LTOs to Balochistan and FATA. But the mission will be actively following electoral events in these areas.

Towards election day the number of observers will increase to 110, coming from 26 EU Member States as well as Canada, Norway and Switzerland.

The mission's core team in Islamabad includes electoral, legal, political, human rights, and media expertise. The EU EOM will observe pre-election preparations, polling, counting, the tabulation of results, and post-election day developments.

The mission will issue a preliminary statement two days after the elections. A final report - with recommendations for future elections - will be issued approximately two months later.

The EU previously deployed election observation missions to Pakistan in 2002 and in 2008, the latter also led by Mr Gahler.

Note to Editors:

The EU EOM is independent of EU Member States and other EU institutions. 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.

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