



## **EU Election Follow-up Mission calls on Timorese authorities to expedite electoral reform to ensure transparency, inclusivity and a level playing field for all contestants ahead of the next 2027 and 2028 elections.**

**Dili, 11 June 2025** – The European Union deployed an Election Follow-up Mission (EU EFM) to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste from 26 May to 21 June 2025, to assess progress made in the electoral reform process and the implementation status of the recommendations made by the EU Election Observation Mission 2022 (EU EOM) and the Election Expert Mission 2023 (EU EEM). This EU EFM is headed by Mr. Domènec Ruiz Devesa, Chief Observer of the EU EOM 2022 and former Member of the European Parliament.

The EU EFM appreciates very good relations and friendly atmosphere during meetings held with a large number of interlocutors in the electoral process, including the President of the National Parliament, the National Election Commission, the Technical Secretariat for Election Administration, and relevant state institutions, political parties, civil society, media representatives and development partners. On 11 June, the mission organised a roundtable meeting of electoral stakeholders, where participants discussed the progress made so far in implementing the EU EOM 2022 and EU EEM 2023 recommendations and the current status of electoral reform.

At a press conference held today, Mr. Domènec Ruiz Devesa said: *“The current decentralisation process is a welcome step in the deepening of the democratisation of Timor-Leste, while the biometric up-date of the voter register, including persons with disabilities, is a positive measure. We noted, however, a lack of tangible progress in the implementation of the recommendations offered by the EU EOM in 2022 and the EU EEM 2023. Most interlocutors agreed on the urgency for the work to start on the review of the electoral framework.”*

The 2022 EOM and 2023 EEM offered 16 and 13 recommendations respectively, including five priority recommendations for potential improvements in the way elections are regulated and conducted in Timor-Leste.

Domènec Ruiz Devesa emphasized that: *“Two years before the 2027 presidential elections, and three years before the 2028 legislative elections, the window of opportunity for comprehensive and effective legal reforms becomes narrower. I encourage the government and all stakeholders to accelerate this work.”*

The Chief Observer noted that *“Recommendations on consulting the National Election Commission in a consistent manner when preparing the regulatory framework for elections, strengthening the campaign oversight capacity, and revising the campaign finance rules are key to enhance transparency and ensuring a level playing field for all contestants ahead of the next elections.”*

The head of mission also stressed the importance of transparency in the electoral reform process, as well as inclusion and cooperation of electoral actors, including civil society organisations.

Concluding the press conference, Mr. Domènec Ruiz Devesa reaffirmed that the EU will continue to advocate for electoral reforms in Timor-Leste.

A comprehensive final report from the Election Follow-up Mission will be published in the coming months. The full archive of election observation reports and EU recommendations can be found at <http://database.eueom.eu>.