

STATEMENT

The Mission of the Organization of Turkic States conducted observation of the Parliamentary Elections of the Kyrgyz Republic with officials from the Member States and Secretariat of the Organization.

The Parliamentary elections were successfully conducted in compliance with national legislation and international standards. Therefore, we congratulate the Kyrgyz Republic and the brotherly Kyrgyz people, and wish that the results of the elections would further strengthen prosperity of the country.

In the framework of pre-election contacts, the Mission had meetings with the candidates and their campaign representatives in order to get acquainted with the campaigning processes and preparations of the political parties for the elections.

At the meetings, the delegation discussed the new electoral system, main platforms of the parties and the candidates for their election campaigns, their access to media coverage, possible problems in relation to campaign funding, specific concerns on the quality of the legal framework for elections, including the new electoral system.

The Observer Mission also met with the Chairperson of the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda, Ms. Nurzhan Shaildabekova and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Azizbek Madmarov.

The delegation was briefed in detail by the Central Election Commission of the Kyrgyz Republic about the recent constitutional reform and the concomitant changes made in the electoral system of the country, as well as their effects in the work of the Election Commission and in the conduct of the Parliamentary Elections. Taking into account the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Election Commission also provided information about the sanitary and epidemiological safety measures taken in cooperation with the Ministry of Health for the election day to ensure the public safety.

At the meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister, the Mission was informed about the measures taken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs aimed at preparing diplomatic missions and consular offices for the elections. We were informed about the activities targeting to increase the electoral participation of the citizens of Kyrgyzstan residing outside the country and noted that the number of registered voters abroad increased from 32 thousand to 84 thousand and polling stations from 45 to 59 since the last parliamentary elections of October 4, 2020.

The Mission takes note of the recent amendments in the electoral legal framework, which produced a mixed electoral system striking a sensitive balance between the proportional and majoritarian election systems to ensure maximum representation with an inclusive approach while focusing on stability in governance of the country. The Mission wishes to underline herewith that the political parties visited by the Mission expressed their positive views and assessments regarding the mixed electoral system and the recent changes in the election law in view of the realities of the country.

Furthermore, the Mission welcomed the decisions to lower the electoral deposit for political parties from 5 million SOM to 1 million SOM, to bring new criteria for ensuring the representation of women, youngsters, minorities, and people with disabilities in the Parliament. Such requirements brought by the new election system will enhance representation of different segments of the Kyrgyz society in policy making and thereby strengthen the legitimacy of the Parliament in the eyes of the public.

As you know, in order to address the allegations that aired in the wake of the last parliamentary elections, Kyrgyzstan decided to eliminate the use of Form-2 in the elections, which was accepted as a welcome step by most of the political parties and candidates the Mission has met as well as some circles of the society.

Taking steps to phase out possible loopholes in the system that might lead to some misuses is well understandable. However, the Mission wishes to draw attention to the loss of possible votes and the resultant diminished electoral activity of the Kyrgyz society due to the elimination of the possibility for voters to change their electoral addresses inside the country. We believe that in the upcoming period Kyrgyz policy makers would come up with a solution that would strike a balance between these two extremes for the future elections.

Highly welcoming the increasing number of registered voters living abroad and polling stations set up in foreign missions of Kyrgyzstan, the Mission believes that it would be quite contributive to the development of democracy in Kyrgyzstan if the policy makers could adopt further measures for the registration of hundreds of thousands

of Kyrgyz citizens living abroad, which would allow them to vote in the elections taking place in Kyrgyzstan. This would enhance the political representation of the Kyrgyz population and thereby the reflection of the will of Kyrgyz people to the policy making.

The widespread coverage of the elections by the media outlets of the country can be noted as an element contributing to rising awareness in the election process.

The Mission observed elections in 16 polling stations in Bishkek. Observers were given full access to the polling stations and received detailed information from the officials. Elections were prepared and implemented in compliance with the electoral legislation.

The mobile ballot boxes were provided for those who could not cast their ballots at the polling stations. In such cases, national observers were allowed to accompany the ballot boxes.

The Mission observed no attempt to influence voter's choice and did not find any evidence of intervention of administrative or law enforcement authorities in the activities of the polling stations. In line with the law on elections, necessary conditions were provided to national and international observers to conduct impartial observation in the elections.

The Mission witnessed participation of the national and international observers, which reinforces the transparency and accountability in the elections. The Mission noticed that necessary sanitary precautions have been taken by the Election Commission at the polling stations concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Mission observed no biased campaign materials visible inside or around the polling stations, and there were not any campaign activities taking place nearby the polling stations. The polling stations were mostly accessible for persons with disabilities.

The Mission observed that there were no serious technical problems, which would affect the results of the election.

In conclusion, the Observer Mission of the Organization of Turkic States affirms that the Parliamentary Elections of the Kyrgyz Republic were open, transparent and complied with the national legislation and internationally recognized election standards.

The Mission will share with the Member States and relevant International Organizations its assessment of and recommendations on the Parliamentary Elections in the coming days.

We once again congratulate Kyrgyzstan and the Kyrgyz people for successful conduct of the elections and reiterate our hope that the results of the elections would further contribute to increasing welfare in the country.