



INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATION MISSION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF TURKIC STATES

REPUBLICAN REFERENDUM ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

(7 October 2024)

STATEMENT

In response to an official invitation from the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan to observe the Republican Referendum on the construction of a nuclear power plant, the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), in accordance with its mandate, deployed an International Referendum Observation Mission on 3 October 2024.

The Mission was comprised of 11 people – representatives from the Secretariat of the Organization of Turkic States, parliamentarians, government representatives and officials from Central Election Commissions, members of academia from the OTS Member States, with substantial experience in international election observation.

The Mission carried out its activities in accordance with the national legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan and generally accepted principles of international law concerning voting processes.

As part of its pre-referendum observation, the Mission met with H.E. Nurlan Abdirov, Chairperson of the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Kazakhstan. During this meeting, comprehensive information was provided on the preparations for the Referendum, the readiness of polling stations, the organizational aspects, and the key stages of the process. Additionally, the Mission was informed of the accreditation of 177 observers from 30 foreign countries, 4 international organizations, and 200 foreign journalists from 37 countries for the Referendum.

The Mission also met with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Roman Vassilenko, who outlined the Ministry's efforts in coordinating polling stations abroad. A total of 74 polling stations were established in diplomatic missions and consular offices across 59 countries to ensure the right to vote of Kazakh citizens residing abroad.

In a meeting with Vice-Minister of Energy, H.E. Sungat Yessimkhanov, the Mission was briefed on the information campaign conducted in all 20 regions of Kazakhstan, including public debates on nuclear energy's potential and risks.

On Referendum Day, the Mission observed the voting procedures at 24 polling stations in Astana. It found that polling stations were well-prepared, with clear information about procedures available to voters. Election commissions granted full access to international and local observers, ensuring transparency throughout the process.

The voting process was professionally managed, and no major irregularities were observed. The procedures for voting and counting were followed meticulously, ensuring transparency. No instances of unlawful interference by administrative or law enforcement authorities were observed. Voters' rights were fully respected, with no obstacles reported.

The Mission also noted the active participation of national observers, further enhancing the transparency and accountability of the Referendum. Observers encountered no technical difficulties that would have affected the outcome, and public order was maintained at polling stations. There were no reports of campaign materials, coercion by political groups, or other illegal activities during the voting process.

The Mission commends the Central Election Commission for its efforts to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities, including the provision of necessary technical equipment and specialized training for election commission members.

At the close of voting, the Mission observed the vote-counting process at one polling station. The count was conducted in accordance with the relevant national laws and regulations of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In conclusion, the International Referendum Observation Mission of the OTS affirms that the Referendum was conducted openly, transparently, and in compliance with the relevant legislation of Kazakhstan and internationally accepted electoral standards.

The Mission highlights the Referendum as a significant event, demonstrating the Government's commitment to fostering constructive civic engagement on strategic issues, and maintaining a continuous dialogue with the public as the source of power.

The Mission congratulates the people of Kazakhstan on the successful conduct of the Referendum and expresses hope that this step will further strengthen democratic governance and contribute to the welfare of the nation.