



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1342 Vienna, 28 October 2021

EU Statement on the Presidential Elections in Uzbekistan

1. The European Union thanks the Republic of Uzbekistan for actively raising the Presidential elections that took place on Sunday, 24 October. The preliminary findings and conclusions of the OSCE/ODIHR International Election Observation Mission underscore the need to continue comprehensive reforms to address long-standing and systemic shortcomings in the election process in Uzbekistan, particularly regarding the lack of genuine competition among candidates, broad political participation and freedom of the media.
2. We encourage Uzbekistan's authorities to effectively address the shortcomings in the representation of women and persons belonging to ethnic minorities in public and political life, freedom of the media and the national legal framework, which, despite recent reforms that positively addressed a number of previous ODIHR recommendations, still contains restrictions to human rights and fundamental freedoms.
3. The European Union stands ready to assist in this process. The forthcoming recommendations contained within the OSCE/ODIHR International Election Observation Mission's Final Report will provide a solid basis to improve the electoral framework.
4. We welcome the ongoing reforms in Uzbekistan, in particular the steps taken to improve the judicial system, administrative accountability and the fight against corruption, as well as constructive steps towards cooperation with neighbouring countries. The further continuation and full implementation of these reforms will strengthen Uzbekistan's democratic governance and economic and social

development. We commend the government of Uzbekistan for collaborating with the OSCE Project Coordinator in Uzbekistan and encourage the authorities to further increase this cooperation in line with the OSCE principles and commitments.

5. Uzbekistan is a key partner country of the European Union in Central Asia, and we will work with the re-elected President to step up our current engagement with the authorities and the people of Uzbekistan, based on our bilateral Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the EU's Central Asia Strategy. The European Union supports a stable, democratic and prosperous future of Uzbekistan.

The Candidate Countries the REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.