

STATEMENT

The Turkic Council Mission conducted observation of the Early-Presidential Elections of the Kyrgyz Republic. The **Mission was composed of officials** from the Turkic Council Secretariat and Member States.

The Early-Presidential 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 candidates for the elections.

At the meetings, the delegation discussed the main platforms of 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 electoral system.

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

At the meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister, the Mission was informed about the measures carried out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs aimed at preparing diplomatic missions and consular offices for the upcoming elections. We were informed **about the activities aimed at increasing 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 49 thousand** and **polling stations from 45 to 48** since the last parliamentary elections of October 4, 2020.

The delegation was briefed by the Central Election Commission of the Kyrgyz Republic that, taking into account the current COVID-19 pandemic, Election Commission in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, would implement the

“Action Plan for Ensuring Sanitary and Epidemiological Safety and Protection of Citizens' Health” during the elections.

The Mission takes note of the recent amendments in the electoral legal framework lowering the threshold for the return of the electoral deposit for presidential candidates and permitting engagement of volunteers in the campaign as steps encouraging political participation. 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 Early-Presidential elections, which was accepted as a welcome step by some of the candidates and some circles of the society.

Taking steps to phase out possible loopholes in the system that might lead to some misuses would be a wise move. **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 Kyrgyz policy makers **would come with for another solution that would strike a balance between these two extremes for the upcoming elections.**

Highly welcoming the increasing number of 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 urgent 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 **18 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 Turkic Council Observer Mission affirms that the Early-Presidential 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 Early-Presidential Elections in the coming days.

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

Thank you for your attention!