EUROPEAN UNION
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION - NEPAL 2013
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Press Release

WELL-CONDUCTED ELECTIONS WITH HIGH PARTICIPATION ALLOW FOR CONTINUATION OF DEMOCRATIC STATE BUILDING

KATHMANDU, 21 NOVEMBER - The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) considered that the 19 November elections were, so far, well conducted with a high level of participation. "*Noteworthy is the strong and enthusiastic commitment of voters and other stakeholders to participate not only in the polls but in the entire electoral process",* said Eva Joly, Chief Observer today at the presentation of the EU EOM's Preliminary Statement. According to the EU EOM statement, voting was conducted in an orderly and generally calm atmosphere. Polling procedures were followed consistently in the polling stations observed by the EU EOM and the performance of polling staff was mostly assessed to be good.

The mission considers that the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) acted, thus far, in an independent and impartial manner and enjoyed public confidence throughout the entire electoral process. Despite considerable logistical challenges and time constraints, electoral preparations were completed in a timely manner. As for the campaign period, the Chief Observer Eva Joly concluded that freedoms of speech and assembly were well respected as candidates campaigned actively across the country. Nevertheless, the Chief Observer noted that "*several incidents of a violent nature took place throughout the campaign period. However, this did not have a significant impact on the unfolding of the campaign"*, said Eva Joly. The observation mission also considers that the media, in general, provided for a diverse platform for political parties to present their messages to voters in an environment of freedom of expression.

Daniel von der Stoep, Head of the delegation of Members of the European Parliament, which joined the EU EOM for election day, said that *"Nepal has a second chance now to agree on a Constitution, and we urge the new Assembly to quickly grasp this chance. Following the establishment and agreement upon a balanced and inclusive Constitution, it will be equally important that the new government authorities turn words into action by thoroughly implementing it."*

The EU EOM arrived in Nepal on 4 October and deployed throughout the country 112 observers from 27 EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland. The EU EOM will remain in the country to observe counting and tabulation of results as well as possible complaints and appeals. The mission will issue its final assessment and conclusions within two months of the completion of the entire electoral process, including recommendations for future elections.

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