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EU statement on the forthcoming parliamentary elections in Uzbekistan

The EU has carefully studied the OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report of 6 November 2009 regarding the ODIHR's possible involvement in the forthcoming parliamentary elections in Uzbekistan on 27 December 2009.

We cannot but express our concern about some findings of this report and in particular the fact that the OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission did not identify any significant improvements in the electoral framework and that none of the ODIHR's key recommendations offered in the past for consideration appear to have been implemented.

We welcome the recent visit of the ODIHR's Director, Ambassador Janez Lenarčič, to Tashkent and the mutually declared interest, after a long pause, to establish stable working relationships between the ODIHR and the government of Uzbekistan.

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Against this background, the EU supports all efforts to continue this renewed dialogue and encourages Uzbekistan to further seek the ODIHR's advice on all relevant topics such as electoral reforms and review of the legal and administrative framework. In this regard, we invite the Uzbek authorities to co-operate in good spirit with the Election Assessment Mission that the OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission recommends to deploy in the run-up to the Parliamentary elections scheduled on December 27.

The EU would also like to express its hope that elections in Uzbekistan in the future will be conducted fully in line with the OSCE commitments, ODIHR recommendations and other international standards for democratic elections, as stated in its Council conclusions of 27 October.

On a separate note, and recalling our statement made in the Permanent Council on 3 September, we would also like to take this opportunity to convey our condolences to imprisoned independent journalist Dilmurod Said, regarding the recent death of his wife and six-year-old daughter in a traffic accident.

The candidate countries CROATIA* and the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area ICELAND and NORWAY, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.