



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Permanent Council No. 1299 Vienna, 21 January 2021**

### **EU Statement on the Parliamentary Elections in Kazakhstan**

The European Union welcomes the efficient organisation of the Parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan that took place on 10 January 2021, in particular in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We commend the good cooperation of the Kazakh authorities' with the ODIHR Election Observation Mission.

While Kazakhstan has undertaken some political reforms and modernisation processes since the last parliamentary elections, the long-standing recommendations from the ODIHR on several issues also remain unaddressed. We urge the Kazakh Authorities to address remaining challenges regarding the election system of the country.

The election was tarnished by limitations on fundamental freedoms, including the detention of peaceful demonstrators. Systemic shortcomings in relation to respect for freedom of association, of assembly and of expression continue to restrict the political landscape, and had a negative impact on the election. Furthermore, the lack of competition, with no new parties registered since 2013, left voters without a genuine choice.

In line with our Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the EU calls on Kazakhstan to address systemic shortcomings and to fully implement ODIHR's recommendations.

The EU will continue to support Kazakhstan's reform and modernisation processes and democracy, stability and inclusivity in the country.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

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