Statement by the spokesperson of High Representative Catherine Ashton on the presidential and parliamentary elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The spokesperson of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"The High Representative of the European Union and Vice-President of the European Commission, Ms Ashton, has followed closely the conduct of the presidential and parliamentary elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which were held on 28 November 2011, within the time-limits set by the Constitution.

She welcomes the efforts of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), the Congolese authorities and MONUSCO, as well as the commitment of all the partners of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular the African countries, to bring the electoral process to its conclusion. The EU also lent significant support to that process.

She regrets the violence that claimed a number of victims and the tensions that were particularly acute in some places.

She calls on the Congolese people to exercise calm and restraint while the votes are counted and the results compiled and announced. In addition, she urges all the political forces involved to observe the rules of the electoral process and to lodge any objection by legal or judicial means only.

At the invitation of the Congolese authorities, the EU has dispatched an election observation mission, which will issue a preliminary statement in the coming days."

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