EUROPEAN UNION

Declaration by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the European Union, on the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

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

The European Union (EU) is continuing to keep a close watch on the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It welcomes the turnout by Congolese voters on polling day, while noting reports of serious deficiencies. The publication by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) of the provisional results of the presidential ballot marks a key step in this important process. The EU calls on the CENI to proceed with all action to make the process transparent, so as to ensure that the results are credible. Publication by the CENI of the results by polling station provides a suitable way of enhancing transparency in the count and in the electoral process as a whole.

The European Union thanks the Congolese and international parties involved in assisting and observing the electoral process, including the European Election Observation Mission and MONUSCO.

At this crucial juncture for the future of the DRC, the EU appeals to the security forces and to all candidates and political figures to show responsibility and maintain a climate of peace. Any challenge should be made by lawful means, including legal remedies by way of transparent, credible procedures. They would be held personally responsible for any resort to non-peaceful means.

The European Union would point out that the authorities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are the prime guarantors of the security of the population.

The European Union will continue to watch over the process as it proceeds, including for the parliamentary elections.

The Acceding Country Croatia*, the Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Iceland, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.