



EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION TO PAKISTAN

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PRESS RELEASE

EU Chief Observer for 2008 EU Election observation mission (EOM) visits Pakistan

Michael Gahler, Member of the European Parliament, visited Pakistan on 28-29 August 2012. During his visit Mr Gahler met with President Zardari, the full Election Commission of Pakistan, political party leaders, Members of the National Assembly and the Senate of Pakistan, the Advisor to the Prime Minister on Human rights, Mr Mustafa Khokhar and the Advisor to the Prime Minister on National Harmony, Mr Paul Bhatti as well as with civil society representatives amongst others.

Mr Gahler has been looking at the preparations for the upcoming election and the key issues that need to be addressed for credible, inclusive and transparent elections. He used this opportunity to underline the importance of this process for the European Union and its relationship with Pakistan.

Mr Gahler noted the significant progress made through the 18th, 19th and 20th amendments to the Constitution, the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and new initiatives of the Election Commission of Pakistan. He applauded the cross party consensus reached for the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner that brings the institution outside the political contest and furthers its independence.

The remaining months should be used to address some priorities. These include: the continuous update of the voters' list, agreed Code of conduct between political parties, efficient dispute resolution before and after the elections, good training of the more than half a million needed polling staff and public campaign to inform the voters about their role as citizens in this democratic exercise.

As all interlocutors raised specifically the issue of law and order, special attention should be paid to safeguard the peaceful character of the elections through a Code of conduct adhered to by political parties and their supporters.

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