



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 24 August 2009
12713/1/09 REV 1 (Presse 250)
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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the elections in Afghanistan**

The European Union congratulates Afghanistan on the holding of the second presidential and provincial elections under the democratic constitution of the lunar year 1382 (2004). The fact that they were the first to be conducted by Afghan authorities in three decades marks an important milestone for democracy in Afghanistan.

While deploring the loss of life, the European Union hails the personal courage and the commitment to democracy of all those Afghans that yesterday, under challenging circumstances, took part in the governance of their country. The EU furthermore praises the efforts of the Afghan and international security forces, that helped make the elections possible.

In close cooperation with thousands of Afghan election observers, the European Union Election Observation Mission (EOM) will continue to monitor independently the election process.

P R E S S

While looking forward to learning of the EOM's preliminary findings, the EU continues to urge the Afghan authorities to proceed in accordance with international electoral standards and transparency, and calls on all stakeholders involved to continue to respect the electoral process and promote national unity and stability in Afghanistan.

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

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