



EU Election Observation Mission presents final report with recommendations

ACCRA 13 April 2021 - Today, the European Union Election Observation Mission to Ghana 2020 (EU EOM) presented its final report on December's presidential and parliamentary elections. The report includes recommendations to stakeholders for future elections.

At a press conference in Accra, Chief Observer Javier Nart, a Member of the European Parliament from Spain, explained that the mission had returned to Ghana to present the report to the country's authorities, and to discuss with stakeholders the proposed reforms contained in the report. The EU EOM's final report is a comprehensive assessment of the electoral process that builds on the initial findings of the preliminary statement, which was issued shortly after the elections in December.

"The conclusion in the mission's final report is that the elections were efficiently organised, competitive, that voters participated freely in large numbers, and that the process successfully met a range of international standards," Mr Nart said, adding that the overall conduct of voting was assessed positively in 95 per cent of polling stations observed. "However, shortcomings already identified by previous EU election observation missions remain, such as the misuse of state resources, the abuse of incumbency, vote-buying and unregulated campaign finances. These resulted in an uneven playing field."

Mr Nart said the final report contained 18 recommendations for future elections, eight of which were considered to be priorities. Over the coming days the EU EOM will meet stakeholders from all areas of society with a view to initiating a debate on these suggested reforms.

The Chief Observer said: "The priority recommendations ask for improved procedures for counting and collation, and for the publication of detailed results. They suggest an affirmative action law that would introduce a quota for women in governance of at least 30 per cent. Regulations governing campaign finance are also recommended, as well as effective sanctioning mechanisms against the misuse of state resources. Improved regulation and monitoring of the media as well as effective implementation of the Data Protection Act are also addressed."

He stressed, "These recommendations are proposals for consideration by the Ghanaian people. They are suggestions aimed at improving future electoral processes and strengthening Ghana's democracy -- but it is up to the authorities and wider civil society to decide on their implementation."

The return visit is the EU EOM's final activity, Mr Nart explained. "From here, the EU Delegation will support the Ghanaian authorities and civil society in efforts to implement the recommendations."

Following an invitation by the Ghanaian authorities, the European Union deployed an EU EOM to Ghana between 31 October and 30 December 2020. In total the mission comprised 80 observers from EU member states as well as Norway, Switzerland and Canada. The mission's mandate was to assess the electoral process against international obligations and commitments for democratic elections as well as the laws of Ghana.