Early Presidential Election  
9 June 2019, Republic of Kazakhstan

Introduction
Following an invitation from the authorities of the Republic of Kazakhstan and in accordance with its mandate the TURKPA International Observers Mission (hereinafter referred to as Mission or Observers) conducted a short-term monitoring of the early presidential election held on 9 June 2019 in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The mission included representatives of the parliaments from member countries: Republic of Azerbaijan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Republic of Turkey, as well as the representatives of the TURKPA Secretariat. The advance group of the Mission began work directly on 4 May 2019 and the main group of Observers began its work on 7 May 2019.

On 9 April 2019, the Acting President called for an early presidential election for 9 June following the 19 March resignation of the First President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Legal framework
The president is directly elected for a five-year term by an absolute majority. If no candidate receives above 50 per cent of the votes cast, a second round between the two candidates with the highest number of votes is held within two months. In the second round, the candidate who receives the higher number of votes is elected.

As a member of many international organizations Kazakhstan is a party to major international and regional instruments related to the holding of free, democratic and competitive elections, including the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1979 Convention for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the 2002 Convention on the Standards of Democratic Elections, Electoral Rights and Freedoms in the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

**Election administration**

According to the information of the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the election administration is three-tiered, comprising of the CEC, 232 Territorial Election Commissions (TECs), and 9,970 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs). The CEC was responsible for the overall conduct of the election, including the registration of candidates and maintenance of the nationwide voter list. It was also in charge of campaign finance oversight. The CEC website provided a range of election-related information to the public.

**Candidate registration**

The nomination and registration of candidates was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the current legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Seven candidates participated in this election: Mr. Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev from the Public Association “Nur Otan Party”, Mr. Sadi-Bek Tugel from the Republican Public Association “Uly Dala Kyrandary, Public Social and Cultural Movement”, Mr. Amangeldy Taspikhov from the Republican Association of Trade Unions “Federation of Trade Unions of the Republic of Kazakhstan”, Ms. Daniya Yespayeva from the Public Association “Ak Zhol Democratic Party of Kazakhstan”, Mr. Toleutai Rakhimbekov from the Republican Public Association “Auyl People’s Democratic Patriotic Party”, Mr. Zhambyl Akhmetbekov from the Public Association “Communist People’s Party of Kazakhstan” and Mr. Amirzhan Kossanov from the Republican Public Association “Ult Tagdyry, United National Patriotic Movement”.

With regard to the participation of seven candidates in the election in Kazakhstan, it should be noted that the development of competitive environment and the gender equality was observed in this election with the participation of woman candidate.

**Campaign environment**

The state of Kazakhstan guarantees equal conditions of access to the media for election campaigning. The election campaigning started on May 5, 2019. Provision of candidates with airtime and print space in the media did not create an advantage to a particular candidate or political party. Presidential candidates and political parties that nominated them had the equal rights and conditions to participate in election TV debates organized by the Central Election Commission.
It should be noted that in general, campaigning was carried out openly and publicly. Voters were informed about the timing and procedure for the implementation of electoral actions, about electoral platforms of candidates who participated in the elections. Observers of the TURKPA note that the election campaign took place in the framework of the current legislation and in the correct form.

Meetings with official authorities
In the framework of the visit, the TURKPA Mission held meetings with Mr. Beibut ATAMKULOV, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Mr. Konstantin PETROV, Deputy Chairman of the Central Election Commission (CEC) of the Republic of Kazakhstan. During these meetings, observers were given detailed information on the pre-election environment, preparations and improvement of election process. According to the information of the CEC, 11947995 in-country voters and about 15000 out-of-country voters were registered to vote at election. 65 polling stations were established in 51 foreign states within representatives of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Besides, the mission held meetings with the leadership of the “Federation of Trade Unions of the Republic of Kazakhstan”, “Ak Zhol Democratic Party of Kazakhstan” and the “Nur Otan Party”. The officials of the political parties briefed the observers on the electoral platforms and basic aspects of their parties’ policies.

Election day
On election day the polling stations were opened from 7:00 a.m. till 20:00 p.m. Voting was conducted in a generally calm atmosphere and according to the information of Central Election Commission nearly 77.4% of voters took an active part in the election.

On the election day, on 9 June 2019, the TURKPA observers had the opportunity to monitor election in four major cities of Kazakhstan, including Nur-Sultan, Almaty, Shymkent and Turkistan. Observers mission visited polling stations, gained opportunity to form a personal impression on voting process – from the opening of points up to calculation of votes and up to the definition of election results - at all stages of voting.

All the legal and logistical conditions were provided for international observation of election in Kazakhstan. Within the mandate the TURKPA observers visited polling stations, estimated the preparation process and were given possibility for unobstructed observation of election, as well as had a conversation with the voters, representatives of polling stations and Central Election Commission.

The observers followed the objectivity, justness, transparency and impartiality principles confirmed in Code of Conduct for International Observers approved in 2005 by the United Nations Organization, recommendations of Venice Commission of the Council of Europe and other international legal instruments.
Assessment and conclusions
The assessment of the observation of the election are made by the TURKPA mission on the principles of political neutrality, impartiality, non-interference in the electoral process of the Republic of Kazakhstan.
The Mission assessed equal conditions were provided for all candidates. The process of election was not interfered by the administrative and law-enforcement bodies during the voting. The necessary conditions were created for the implementation of exit poll. At the same time, Observers from TURKPA note that there have been created all the necessary legal, organizational and technical conditions for the implementation of international observation of election.
TURKPA observers group conclude that early presidential elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan were held, excepting some technical irregularities, in democratic conditions conforming to the national legislation of Kazakhstan and international democratic standards. Some technical shortcomings could not have significant impact on the entire voting process.
According to the preliminary information of the Central Election Commission for 10 June 2019 (by 00:03 local time), the percentage of voting rates were as follows:
Zhambyl Akhmetbekov of the Communist People’s Party of Kazakhstan – 3.86%;
Daniya Yespayeva of the Ak Zhol Democratic Party – 5.32%;
Amirzhan Kossanov of the Ult Tagdyry, United National Patriotic Movement – 15.39%;
Toleutai Rakhimbekov of the Auyl People’s Democratic Patriotic Party – 3.03%;
Amangeldy Taspikhov of the Federation of Trade Unions of the Republic of Kazakhstan – 1.41%;
Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev of the Nur Otan Party – 70.13%;
Sadibek Tugel of the Uly Dala Kyrandary, Public Social and Cultural Movement – 0.86%.
In general, the early presidential election held in Kazakhstan on 9 June 2019 met the international election standards and the national legislation.

10 June 2019, Nur-Sultan, Republic of Kazakhstan.