



**INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS MISSION OF THE
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF TURKIC-SPEAKING COUNTRIES
Parliamentary Elections, Republic of Azerbaijan - 1 November, 2015**

STATEMENT

The TURKPA International Observers Mission conducted a short-term monitoring of the parliamentary elections held on 1 November 2015 in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The mission included representatives of the parliaments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey, as well as Secretary General of TURKPA accompanied by the representatives of the TURKPA Secretariat.

The parliamentary elections are primarily regulated by the Constitution and Election Code. The regulatory framework also includes the Law on Freedom of Assembly, the Law on Radio and Television Broadcasting, the Law on Political Parties, the Law on Non-Governmental Organizations, relevant provisions of the Criminal Code, the Code of Administrative Procedures and the Code of Administrative Offences, as well as regulations of the Central Election Commission (CEC). Azerbaijan is a party to major international and regional instruments related to the holding of democratic elections.

In the visit's framework, TURKPA observers led by Mr. Serikjan Kanayev, member of Mazhilis of the Parliament of Kazakhstan and Chairman of the TURKPA Commission on Economic Cooperation, held meetings with current TURKPA Chairman-in-Office and head of the Milli Mejlis of Azerbaijan Mr. Ogtay Asadov, the Chairman of the Central Election Commission Mazahir Panahov and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Mahmud Mammad-Guliyev. During these meetings, observers were given detailed information as regards the measures taken on preparation for the parliamentary elections. According to the information of the Central Election Commission, about 5,2 million citizens of Azerbaijan are registered to vote.

The Central Election Commissions informed observers that 768 candidates were registered, 331 of which represent 24 political parties along with one political bloc that united seven parties.

Mass media provided coverage of pre-election campaign and TURKPA observers emphasize that media corporations granted the candidates equal conditions to conduct campaign through the mass media, which also ensured coverage of candidates' meetings with voters.

Parliamentary elections are administered by a three-level structure consisting of the Central Election Commission (CEC), 125 Constituency Election Commissions (ConECs) and about 5547 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs). Several ConECs are tasked with facilitating voting for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from occupied territories of Nagorno Karabakh, with polling stations under their jurisdiction located throughout the country.

The observers' mission is of the view that technical and procedural aspects were well organized, including adoption of election calendar, voter registration and preparation of training materials for the members of lower bodies of election administration.

TURKPA mission had the opportunity to monitor a voting process at all stages. Polling stations on election day were open from 8:00 until 19:00. According to the information of the Central Election Commission, voter turnout was 55,7%. Members of the mission visited polling stations of Binagadi, Narimanov, Nasimi-Sabail, Sabail and Yasamal Constituency Election Commissions in Baku. At the same time, observers paid visit to those polling stations which under the jurisdiction of the Constituency Election Commissions from occupied territories of Nagorno Karabakh. Thus, members have observed a voting process at the polling stations of the Qarabagh, Agdam and Shusha-Hojavend-Hojali Constituency Election Commissions. The observers monitored vote cast, having talked to voters, polling officials and representatives of political parties.

All the legal and logistical conditions were provided for international observation of elections in Azerbaijan. 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.

The mission has not observed any significant violations or deviations from the legal framework and election procedure was administered in conformity with national legislation of Azerbaijan and international norms. Certain technical shortcomings can be characterised as isolated cases and could not have any significant impact on the entire voting process.

TURKPA International Observers Mission concludes that the parliamentary elections in the Republic of Azerbaijan were held in compliance with the national legislation of Azerbaijan and international election standards.