INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS MISSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF TURKIC-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

Parliamentary Elections, Republic of Turkey, 7 June 2015

STATEMENT

The TURKPA International Observers Mission conducted a short-term monitoring of the parliamentary elections held on 7 June 2015 in the Republic of Turkey. The mission included representatives of the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan accompanied by the representatives of the TURKPA Secretariat.

The parliamentary elections are primarily regulated by the Constitution, the Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Voters Registers, the Law on Parliamentary Elections, the Law on Political Parties, regulations and decisions of the Supreme Board of Elections. The legal framework also includes the Constitutional Law on Election to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey from 21 October 2007.

In the visit’s framework, TURKPA observers held meetings with the Chairman of the Supreme Board of Elections, the President of the Constitutional Court, the Chairman of the Justice Commission of the Grand National Assembly and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. 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 Supreme Board of Elections, about 53 million in-country voters and 2,8 million out-of-country voters are registered to vote and around 74 000 000 ballots was printed for these elections. Out-of-country voting has been organized in 54 countries and lasted from 8 May till 31 May. At the same time, out-of-country voters were able to cast their ballot at 33 custom points until 7 June.

TURKPA observers are of the view that Turkey has a long-standing tradition of democracy and elections have always been held in a free, fair and transparent manner. 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.
The Supreme Board of Elections informed observers that 20 political parties with 9,861 candidates and 165 independent candidates have been registered for participation in elections. Mass media provided a prominent coverage of campaign and TURKPA observers emphasize that media corporations and commercial broadcasters abode by the principles of impartiality, truthfulness and accuracy. During the last seven days of election campaign, political parties were granted free airtime on the public broadcaster. The candidates were granted equal conditions to conduct agitation work through the mass media and possibility for unimpeded organization of the meetings on the entire territory of Turkey.

TURKPA mission had the opportunity to monitor a voting process at all stages. Polling stations on election day were open from 8:00 until 17:00. According to the information of the Supreme Board of Elections, voter turnout was approximately 87%. Members of the mission visited about 50 polling stations in Çankaya and Gölbaşı districts of Ankara. The observers monitored vote cast, having talked to voters and representatives of political parties and polling officials. The TURKPA observers were also present at the counting of votes at a polling station in Çankaya district.

All the legal and logistical conditions were provided for international observation of elections in Turkey. 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 Turkey 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 Turkey were held in compliance with the national legislation of Turkey and international democratic standards.
On behalf of the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

Head of the International Observers Mission of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-Speaking Countries, Member of the Milli Mejlis

Nizami JAFAROV

Member of the Milli Mejlis

Eldar IBRAHIMOV

On behalf of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan:

Member of the Senate of the Parliament

Bekmyrza YELAMANOV

Member of the Mazhilis (Lower House) of the Parliament

Serikjan KANAYEV

On behalf of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic:

Member of the Jogorku Kenesh

Kurmanbek Diykanbayev

On behalf of the TURKPA Secretariat:

TURKPA Secretary General

Jandos Asanov