



PRESS STATEMENT

August 17, 2009

On August 20, 2009 Afghans will go to the polls to elect the next President and members of the Provincial Councils. The Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) encourages all eligible voters to exercise their right to vote and to ensure that election day is successful. The legitimacy and credibility of the elections rests with all stakeholders and the ECC reminds participants to remain vigilant and report any violations which they have witnessed.

The ECC stands ready to receive and investigate complaints about irregularities during polling and counting:

The ECC has adopted procedures to quickly identify and handle cases that could impact the election results. ECC staff has been trained in recognizing and investigating polling irregularities. In addition the ECC has established contacts with observers and campaign teams, and has agreed with IEC on procedures to obtain any information necessary for the investigation of complaints.

The credibility of the electoral process is first and foremost the responsibility of the candidates and their supporters.

The credibility of the electoral process is in the hands of candidates and their supporters. Candidates and their supporters are obligated to obey the electoral law. Should irregularities occur, the ECC will need clear information from complainants, as well as supporting evidence. The ECC will investigate and adjudicate these complaints within the framework of the Electoral Law.

The ECC reminds candidates, as well as their agents and supporters to:

- **Comply with all electoral rules**
Violations can lead to sanctions and remedial measures such as the exclusion of ballots from polling stations
- **Raise complaints through established procedures**
Only established legal procedures, such as filing a written complaint with the ECC, should be followed to address violations. Intimidation and threats will not help the process.
- **Act responsibly in filing complaints**
Complaints must be based on facts. The ECC will quickly dismiss frivolous complaints, and complaints that are intended purely to disrupt or cast doubt on the process.
- **Be patient in awaiting results**
The process of transporting and tallying results data, and properly investigating complaints, will take time.



The ECC is committed to following its procedures promptly and consistently, regardless of who the complainant is.

Adherence to the media Campaign Silence Period

The ECC stresses the importance of the adherence by all candidates, their supporters and the media to the Campaign Silence Period. This period begins 48 hours before polling.

There is no set date for the certification of results

The ECC will do everything possible to allow the IEC to certify results as quickly as possible, but the exact date will depend on the number and gravity of complaints. Allegations of irregularities may require extensive investigations, and it is not possible to predict how long the process will take. The ECC will be thorough about serious cases, and candidates and their supporters should be patient for the outcome of the complaints process.

The ECC will be issuing regular press statements throughout this time period to keep voters and candidates apprised of this process.

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