



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

**Information Submitted to the
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on
Human Rights
as a Stakeholder in the
Universal Periodic Review of the
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**



WARSAW, 17 JUNE 2013

The following information is submitted by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR) about an OSCE participating State or Partner for Co-operation under consideration in the Universal Periodic Review process:

Participating/Partner State: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

UPR Session and Date of Review: 18th Session, January – February 2014

Background

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has been a Partner for Co-operation of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) since 2003. Over the years, the OSCE has been able to share experience with Afghanistan on a number of relevant topics, including on elections and the wider human rights framework.

The present submission provides publicly available reports on elections in Afghanistan that may assist participants in the Universal Periodic Review process in assessing the situation in Afghanistan and its implementation of past recommendations, as well as to formulate new recommendations that may be relevant to enhancing the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Afghanistan, in particular related to elections.

Election-Related Reports

Parliamentary Elections, 18 September 2010

Following an invitation from the Afghan Independent Election Commission (IEC) to support Afghanistan's election process, the OSCE Permanent Council tasked ODIHR with deploying an election support team (EST). A team of eight experts was deployed to Kabul on 9 September for a period of five weeks.

The report from this EST¹ noted that “since 2004, the OSCE/ODIHR has provided nearly 300 recommendations that are supplemented by reports of domestic and international observer groups. During the course of the 2010 elections, the OSCE/ODIHR EST reviewed this rich body of recommendations from which it drew seven priority areas that could form the basis for future electoral reform.”² *The full report, together with its recommendations, is annexed.*

¹ OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Final Report of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Support Team for the 18 September 2010 Parliamentary Elections in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan*, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/73723>

² The areas identified by the OSCE/ODIHR EST as those most critical for reform include: reforming the electoral legal framework, strengthening mechanisms for the effective protection of electoral rights, building the IEC as an independent, professional and impartial electoral management body, developing inclusive voter registers for safeguarding electoral integrity, establishing accepted electoral boundaries, bolstering effective political parties and reinforcing citizen observation as an essential element of scrutiny in elections.

Presidential and Provincial Elections, 20 August 2009

Following an invitation from the Afghan government, the OSCE Permanent Council mandated ODIHR to deploy an Election Support Team (EST) to the 2009 presidential and provincial council elections “to support government and international efforts” and “to produce a report on the electoral process [...] including a set of recommendations” for the next elections in 2010 and beyond.

The OSCE/ODIHR EST was composed of twenty team members from eleven OSCE participating States. Following a small advance team deployment, the majority of experts arrived in country on 26 July and departed on 20 September. Due to the protracted election process, the OSCE/ODIHR EST continued to operate with a limited number of experts in Afghanistan until 4 November.

Although there was no permanent field presence outside Kabul, field visits were undertaken as security allowed and regular discussions were held with domestic and international observers with a field presence. *The full report from this EST,³ together with its recommendations, is annexed.*

³ OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Final Report of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Support Team for the 20 August 2009 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan*, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/40753>