European Union Election Observation

European Commission
DG for External Relations & DG Europe Aid
Election Team
EU Election Observation

• Since 2000 Communication on Election Assistance & Observation, more than 78 EOMs deployed to Africa, Asia, Central & South America

• In 2009, EOMs deployed to El Salvador, Ecuador, Bolivia (2), Malawi, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Lebanon and Afghanistan

• “Expert Missions” were namely deployed to the Maldives, Côte d’Ivoire, South Africa, Aceh, Niger, Iraq, Honduras
Why EU is involved in election observation?

- EU is based on the principle of democracy & rule of law: Charter of Fundamental Rights & Treaty on European Union.

- EC partnership & co-operation agreements (e.g. Cotonou) have strong emphasis on HR & democracy.

- Observation funded under European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), approved by European Parliament.
EU Methodology

Consistent, comprehensive & impartial

• **2000 Communication** – based on:
  
  (i) strategic approach to programming, (ii) coherence with human rights and democracy initiatives (iii) standard methodology involving long term, comprehensive observation, and (iv) independent assessment
1. Consistent:

- Based on the 2000 Communication on Election Assistance and Observation and in line with the *Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation*

- Assessment of an electoral process in accordance with international & regional standards related to democratic elections

- Observers are obliged to adhere to code of conduct for EU Election Observers
2. Comprehensive:

- Observation of all aspect of the electoral process, including:
  - political context
  - legislative framework & its implementation
  - work of election administration
  - Voter registration
  - Candidate and parties registration
  - campaign activities
  - media coverage
  - role of State institutions and civil society
  - voting, counting & tabulation of results
  - complaints & appeals

- Long term presence in the country (around 8 weeks)
3. Impartial

- EU EOMs are independent in their findings & provide an impartial assessment of the electoral process

- Cooperation with EU institutions but distinct mandate

- Cooperation with other observation missions but conclusion based on its own findings

- Non interference in the electoral process
Steps for deploying EOM

- **Identification**: List of priority countries
- **Official invitation** to observe
- **ExM recommendations**
- **Decision** made by Commissioner for External Relations
- **Preparation & implementation**
- **MoUs** signed with host country
Programming Identification

- Election calendar
- Consultations with Council & European Parliament
- List of priority countries: 2 categories ("priority" and "to be followed" countries)
- Deployment of Exploratory Mission (ExM)
Exploratory Mission

3 main criteria on which assessment is based:

Useful?
Feasible?
Advisable?

Minimum conditions required:
- suffrage is generally universal
- political parties & individual candidates are able to take part to elections
- freedom of expression & movement
- reasonable access to the media for all
Reporting on ExM findings

• **Note to High Representative** drafted by DG RELEX to recommend or not deployment of EU EOM

• **ExM final report = EU internal document** which provide an assessment of:
  – Political situation
  – Legal framework
  – Electoral preparations
  – Logistics & security conditions for an EU EOM
  – Indicative budget of an EU EOM

• **Summary** of report distributed to MS
Criteria for deploying EOM

Decision taken by High Representative in charge of external relations based on :

- Invitation to observe
- Memorandum of Understanding signed with country where election will be observed
- Consistency with EU democratisation and crisis management initiatives
- Value of constructive engagement, added value
Implementation of EU EOMs

- Identifying **needs & budget** (ExM)
- Selecting Service Provider (SP) to organise security & logistics
- **5 entities shortlisted** as possible IP: IOM, GTZ, UNOPS, ICON & TRANSTEC
- Request for services is launched – 14 days to answer – **offers evaluated by a selection committee** chaired by AIDCO.
Selection of Service Provider

• Quality of experts (logistics, security & project manager)

• Quality of methodology (addressing main bottlenecks identified during ExM)

• Ability to work EFFICIENTLY: observers’ deployment, import material, set up security system, evacuation plan…
Selection of observers

- **Chief Observer**: Decision by Commissioner for External Relations
- **Core Team**: selected by Commission
- **LTO/STO’s**: Nominated by Member States, selected by Commission
- **MEP Delegation**: Decided by European Parliament ECG
Current Challenges

Increase Follow-up

• Mainstream EOM findings and recommendations at various levels:
  - EU declarations
  - political dialogue
  - co-operation programmes
  - EIDHR programming

• Follow-up missions
• Reinforce the assessment of crucial part of the process:
  – voter registration (Expert Missions)
  – tabulation of results

• Include ICT component in EU observation methodology
  – Biometric voter registration
  – E-voting & tabulation

• Strengthen observer's training & enhance their knowledge on new ICT