



EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Sri Lanka - 2005

For the 17 November Presidential Elections

Colombo, 28 October 2005

Upon the invitation of the Commissioner for Elections of the Republic of Sri Lanka, the European Union has established an Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) to observe the 17 November Presidential Elections in Sri Lanka. The EU EOM is led by Chief Observer Mr John Cushnahan (Ireland), who was also Chief Observer for the 2000, 2001 and 2004 parliamentary elections.

In addition to the Chief Observer, the mission has a Core Team comprising of Deputy Chief Observer Ms Delphine Blanchet (France), Legal/Electoral Expert Ms Idoia Aranceta (Spain), Media Expert Mr Andrea Malnati (Italy), Observer Co-ordinator Ms Hannah Roberts (United Kingdom), Operations Expert Mr Miguel Arranz (Belgium) and Security Expert Mr Juan Garcia (Spain).

The EU EOM to Sri Lanka was established on 23 October and will remain in the country until the completion of the electoral process. The mission will have 22 Long Term Observers (LTOs) who will arrive on 29 October. They will be deployed throughout the country. In addition, at least 44 Short Term Observers (STOs) will join the EU EOM to observe polling and counting procedures.

The EU considers the observation of elections to be an important component of its policy in promoting democratisation and human rights throughout the world. The EU undertakes such activities on the basis of partnership with the host country and with the objective of developing national capacity.

The key objectives of the EOM are to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the electoral process, offer an impartial and balanced assessment of the elections and strengthen the confidence of voters to participate freely.

The EU EOM will examine the legislative framework, the election administration, the political environment, the election campaign including the use of state resources, the conduct of the media during the campaign, voting, counting and tabulation procedures, and any complaints and appeals. This approach is based on internationally accepted standards for election observation.

Regular meetings are held with officials of the election administration, other relevant authorities, political parties, candidates, civil society, other observer groups and the media. On Election Day observers will follow the voting, counting, and tabulation procedures throughout the whole country.

After the election, the EU EOM will issue its statement of preliminary findings and conclusions based on observation of the entire process. A more comprehensive final report will be issued approximately two months after the elections. The final report will include recommendations to improve the conduct of future elections in Sri Lanka.

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