

Parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan: UK statement

World news story

Delivered by Nicola Murray, Deputy Head of Delegation, at the OSCE Permanent Council on 21 January 2021.



Madam Chairperson,

I would like to thank Ambassador Umarov for raising the issue of the Parliamentary elections held in his country on 10 January, and to thank Ambassador Domański and his team for their valuable work conducting ODIHR's mission in Kazakhstan. The UK was pleased to support the mission by funding four out of the 24 long-term observers.

Kazakhstan remains an important and strategic partner country for the UK. We look forward to continuing and expanding our bilateral cooperation in 2021, as Kazakhstan marks its 30th anniversary of independence. However, we were concerned to hear ODIHR's preliminary statement on 11 January, which stated that, although the elections process was technically well prepared amid the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the elections themselves lacked genuine political competition and many procedural aspects, on the day, lacked full transparency.

These elections, sadly, were a missed opportunity for the Government to pilot their announced political reforms and to ensure that the electoral system fully lives up to Kazakhstan's international obligations and commitments.

Madam Chair,

I would like to finish by thanking ODIHR for their work thus far and look forward to receiving their final report. These reports continue to give all participating States a valuable and accurate account of elections across the OSCE region, and set a standard we should all aspire to meet. We hope that the Kazakh government will address the recommendations in ODIHR's final report.

The UK will always support Kazakhstan to strengthen its democratic institutions and the rule of law.

Thank you.

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