



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

# REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

## PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

7 June 2015

### OSCE/ODIHR NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION REPORT

14 – 17 April 2015



Warsaw  
27 April 2015

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**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**  
**PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS**  
**7 June 2015**

**OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Following an invitation from the authorities of the Republic of Turkey to observe the 7 June 2015 parliamentary elections and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) undertook a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) from 14 to 17 April. The NAM included Mr. Steven Martin, OSCE/ODIHR Senior Adviser on New Voting Technologies, Mr. Vladimir Misev, OSCE/ODIHR Election Adviser, and Mr. Andreas Baker, Director of Elections for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

The purpose of the mission was to assess the pre-election environment and preparations for the parliamentary elections. Based on this assessment, the NAM should recommend whether to deploy an OSCE/ODIHR election-related activity for the forthcoming elections, and if so, what type of activity best meets the identified needs. Meetings were held with officials from state institutions and the election administration, as well as with representatives of political parties, media, civil society and the resident international community. A list of meetings is annexed to this report.

The OSCE/ODIHR would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its assistance and co-operation in organizing the NAM. The OSCE/ODIHR would also like to thank all of its interlocutors for taking the time to meet with the NAM and to share their views.

**II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The forthcoming parliamentary elections will take place on 7 June. The unicameral 550-seat Turkish Grand National Assembly (parliament) is elected for a 4-year term under a proportional representation system. Parties must surpass a national threshold of 10 per cent of valid votes cast to participate in seat allocation.

The legislation is generally conducive to the holding of democratic elections. A limited number of legal reforms have occurred since the last parliamentary elections, with most provisions in effect for the 2014 presidential election. However, a number of OSCE/ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed. These include certain restrictions on active and passive suffrage rights; limited regulations for campaign finance; a lack of a possibility to challenge decisions of the Supreme Board of Elections (SBE), and an absence of legal provisions for international and citizen election observation.

The elections are held under judicial supervision and administered by four levels of election bodies: the SBE, Provincial Electoral Boards, District Electoral Boards, and Ballot Box Committees. Eligible political parties can appoint members and non-voting representatives to various levels of the election administration. While parties are represented in the election bodies, some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors raised concerns regarding the transparency and impartiality in the work of the election administration.

Citizens over eighteen years of age have the right to vote, although some restrictions exist for certain categories of voters. Voter lists are maintained by the SBE and linked to a civil registry, managed by the Ministry of Interior. During an election period, the SBE compiles voter lists and forwards them to DEBs for public review. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed general confidence in the voter registration process.

Out-of-country voting will take place in 112 polling stations in 54 countries. Citizens living abroad are allowed to vote if registered with consulates and embassies. A targeted voter education campaign is being prepared for out-of-country voters.

Citizen over the age of twenty-five years are eligible to contest the elections. Contestants may participate through closed party lists or as independent candidates. A total of 9,271 candidates from 20 political parties and 176 independent candidates were included on provisional lists by the nomination deadline. Final candidate lists will be published on 24 April.

The election campaign started on 10 March and is expected to be dynamic and potentially hard-fought, due to the continued polarization between the governing party and opposition parties. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors anticipate the campaign to focus on economic issues, human rights, corruption investigations, the Kurdish-Turkish peace process as well as the question of Constitutional reform towards a more presidential system. Many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors raised concerns over a potential misuse of state administrative resources and the president's active role in the campaign. In addition, some concerns were noted regarding the freedom of assembly and the possibility to campaign freely in several provinces due to heightened security-related issues.

There is limited regulation and transparency over campaign finance, which is overseen by the Constitutional Court. Political parties are only required to declare campaign contributions and expenditure within their annual financial reports and independent candidates through individual tax declarations. Many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted that the regulation of campaign finance remains insufficient overall.

The media environment is characterized by numerous broadcast and print outlets and an ever-increasing significance placed on online and social media. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stated that the majority of media outlets are perceived to be associated with certain political parties, with significantly more coverage allocated to the governing party. Parties are already running paid political advertisements and will be granted free airtime on the public broadcaster during the last ten days of the campaign. Independent candidates do not qualify for free airtime. Compliance with media regulations during the campaign is overseen by the Radio and Television Supreme Council.

The legislation allows for election observation by representatives of political parties and independent candidates and stipulates that the vote count is public. Representatives from several citizen observer organizations informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that they intend to observe the elections, with a particular focus on specific regions in the country.

Most interlocutors met with during the OSCE/ODIHR NAM highlighted the positive role of OSCE/ODIHR election observation in Turkey and for the need for an OSCE/ODIHR election observation activity for the forthcoming elections. Many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stressed the need to deploy an election observation mission with a long-term and regional presence to cover all aspects of the process.

They particularly noted that in being parliamentary elections, there should be extensive regional coverage down to the district level where campaigning would take place and issues could develop.

Many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors also stressed that the elections should be covered through a comprehensive regional approach, noting a specific need to follow the process in the larger cities across the country and provinces in the east and south-east where difficulties may arise. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM has considered the findings outlined in this report and the concerns expressed by stakeholders, including issues related to the implementation of the legal framework, confidence in administering the elections, the conduct of the election campaign, and the work of the media.

On this basis, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of a Limited Election Observation Mission (LEOM) to observe the 7 June parliamentary elections. In addition to a core team of analysts, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the secondment of 20 long-term observers from OSCE participating States. In line with OSCE/ODIHR's standard methodology, the LEOM would include a media monitoring element. While the mission would visit a limited number of polling stations on election day, systematic observation of election day proceedings is not envisaged.

### **III. FINDINGS**

#### **A. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT**

Turkey is a parliamentary republic with executive power exercised by the Council of Ministers (government) and headed by the prime minister who is appointed by the president. Legislative power is vested in the 550-member Turkish Grand National Assembly (parliament). The president serves as the head of state and holds certain limited functions and authority related to the legislative, executive and judicial fields.

Parliamentary elections were called by Supreme Board of Elections (SBE) on 5 January. The outgoing parliament is composed of the governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) with 312 seats along with the Republican People's Party (CHP) with 125 seats, and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) with 52 seats. The pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democracy Party (HDP) is represented with 29 members who were elected as independent candidates. Of the remaining 32 seats, 5 went to smaller parties, 12 to independent candidates and 15 remain vacant.

In October 2007, a constitutional referendum reduced the parliamentary term from five to four years and reformed the presidential election system. Another referendum in September 2010 paved the way for the adoption of a number of important constitutional changes, such as improving respect for individual and human rights, increasing access of the public to courts, limiting the power of military courts, and reform of the judiciary.

Local and presidential elections took place in March and August 2014, respectively. The AKP nominated candidate was elected as president and the party's candidates were elected as mayors in 48 of 81 provinces. These elections reaffirmed AKP's central position in the political system at different levels of government. The upcoming parliamentary elections are viewed by many as a part of a longer election cycle encompassing all three elections.

The OSCE/ODIHR has previously assessed four elections in Turkey; most recently, the 10 August 2014 presidential election. In its report on the presidential election, the OSCE/ODIHR concluded that candidates were generally able to campaign freely and that the freedoms of assembly and

association were respected. However, the use of official position by the Prime Minister as well as biased media coverage gave him a distinct advantage over the other candidates.<sup>1</sup>

## **B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM**

The primary legal framework for the conduct of parliamentary elections includes the 1982 Constitution, the 1983 Law on Parliamentary Elections, the 1963 Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Voter Registers (Law on Basic Provisions) and the 1983 Law on Political Parties (LPP).<sup>2</sup> Regulations and decisions of the SBE supplement the legal framework. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted that the legislation is generally conducive to the holding of democratic elections.

Since the 2011 parliamentary elections, a limited number of legal reforms have been carried out with the majority of amended provisions in force for the 2014 presidential election.<sup>3</sup> Notwithstanding, a number of the OSCE/ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed. These include certain restrictions on active and passive suffrage rights; limited regulations for campaign finance; a lack of a possibility to challenge SBE decisions and an absence of provisions for international and citizen election observation.

Fundamental rights and freedoms are guaranteed by the Constitution, which concentrates on bans and prohibitions for the protection of the state rather than broad guarantees such as the rights of ethnic groups. In addition, the Constitution entrenches and permits legislation to establish undue limitations on the freedoms of association, assembly, expression, and on electoral rights. A two-year process to draft a new civil constitution to broadly guarantee fundamental rights and freedoms stalled in October 2013, which the OSCE/ODIHR NAM was informed that will restart under the next parliament.

In addition, a number of draft amendments to the electoral framework have been initiated although not adopted, including on removing the requirement for candidates to have completed military service, more comprehensive political party and campaign finance regulations and increased oversight for the dissolution of a political party.

Members of parliament are elected for a four-year term under a proportional representation system from closed political party lists and as independent candidates in 85 multi-member electoral constituencies.<sup>4</sup> For these elections, the SBE redistributed the number of seats in several constituencies based on population data from 2014.

To qualify for seat allocation, parties must surpass an electoral national threshold of 10 per cent of valid votes cast, despite previous recommendations by the OSCE/ODIHR, Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe and the European Parliament for it to be lowered.<sup>5</sup> The majority of OSCE/ODIHR interlocutors also noted that the high threshold unduly limits entry into parliament

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<sup>1</sup> See [all previous OSCE/ODIHR reports on Turkey](#).

<sup>2</sup> In addition, some provisions of the Law on Peaceful Assembly and Demonstrations and the Criminal Code are applicable.

<sup>3</sup> Legislative changes were introduced to permit out-of-country voting and campaigning in languages other than Turkish. While Article 81 of the LPP still prohibits the use of other languages in the campaign, the Ministry of Justice noted that amendments in the Law on Basic Provisions addressing the same issue to permit contestants to campaign in other languages are more recent and take precedence over similar provisions in the LPP.

<sup>4</sup> The number of deputies elected from each constituency varies from 2 to 30.

<sup>5</sup> [The 2011 OSCE/ODIHR Final Report on the Parliamentary Elections](#); [PACE Resolution 1380\(2004\)](#), 'Honoring of Obligations and Commitments of Turkey', points 6 and 23.ii; and [EP Report on Turkey's 2007 Progress Report](#), 25 April 2008.

and should be lowered. Independent candidates are awarded a seat if they receive sufficient votes in their district.

### C. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

The Constitution provides that elections are held under the general administration and supervision of the judiciary. The upcoming elections will be organized by four levels of election administration: the SBE, 81 Provincial Electoral Boards (PEBs), 1,436 District Electoral Boards (DEBs), and 174,244 Ballot Box Committees (BBCs).<sup>6</sup>

The SBE is a permanent 11-member administrative body composed of judges elected by and from the Supreme Court and Council of State for 6-year terms and tasked with overall authority and responsibility for the conduct of elections. PEBs and DEBs are permanent bodies with two-year terms. PEBs consist of three members appointed from judges in their respective provinces based on seniority. DEBs have seven members, four nominated by political parties and two local civil servants, and chaired by the most senior judge in the district. BBCs are constituted ahead of each election and are composed of seven members, out of which five are nominated by political parties and one by the local council; the chairperson is chosen by lot from among nominations of political parties.

Eligible political parties can appoint non-voting representatives to the SBE, PEBs and DEBs. The law provides that the four political parties that garnered the highest number of votes in the last parliamentary elections may nominate non-voting SBE representatives.<sup>7</sup>

The SBE published its electoral calendar and preparations are already underway. The SBE has introduced some enhancements to its activities related to its IT system, through which it manages its operations. The SBE will expand the information accessible to contestants via an online portal, including tabulated results at DEC and PEB levels in addition to available information on voter lists and scans of BBC protocols.

The majority of OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors referenced the country's long-standing tradition of holding democratic elections; however, some expressed concerns regarding the transparency and impartiality in the work of the election administration and potential pressure on election officials by local authorities in some provinces. Some OSCE/ODIHR interlocutors also raised concerns over perceived malpractices during the previous local and presidential elections and possible problems that might occur during the tabulation of the parliamentary voting results.

Decisions of each level of the election administration can be appealed to the next higher level. The SBE is the final instance for appeals at all levels and its own decisions cannot be appealed. In addition, PEB decisions on complaints related to the formation of DEBs and BBCs, and DEB and PEB decisions on voter registration complaints cannot be appealed. A 2010 constitutional amendment established the right to file individual petitions to the Constitutional Court for violations of fundamental rights and freedoms within the scope of the ECHR and guaranteed by the Constitution.<sup>8</sup> The Court noted that it uses a prioritization system in reviewing individual

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<sup>6</sup> In many cases, more than one BBC will be located in the same building; thus the actual number of polling locations is around 55,000.

<sup>7</sup> In addition, the HDP was permitted to nominate a non-voting representative to the SBE, even though it did not participate in the last parliamentary elections as a party.

<sup>8</sup> The Constitutional Court has previously considered several individual applications, including on the possibility to appeal DEB decisions in certain cases, restrictions on elected members taking up their seats while in prison, and printing of leaflets by a political party in languages other than Turkish.

applications related to elections based on importance and the potential size of the affected population.

#### **D. VOTER REGISTRATION**

Citizens over eighteen years of age have the right to vote. However, restrictions exist for active conscripts, students in military schools and prisoners convicted of committing ‘deliberate crimes’. The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has previously ruled that Turkey’s ban on prisoners’ voting rights contravened the ECHR related to the right to free elections and the OSCE/ODIHR has previously stressed the need to fully implement ECtHR decisions.<sup>9</sup>

Turkey operates a passive voter registration system. The central voter list is maintained by the SBE and linked to a civil and address registry, managed by the Ministry of Interior. The registry identifies citizens through a unique personal identification number, which is linked to their place of permanent residence and only permits registration at one location. Local and district authorities are responsible to update other personal information such as births, deaths, and marital status. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed general confidence in the voter registration process.

During an election period, the SBE compiles voter lists and forwards them to DEBs for posting and public review. During the review period, from 14 March to 8 April, voters could request changes to their information. After this period modifications are not permitted and voters changing address are required to vote at their previous place of residence. Voters could also review their information on the SBE website. A total of 53,741,883 voters are registered on in-country voter lists and 2,866,940 registered abroad.

Citizens living abroad are able to vote if registered with their resident consulates and embassies. Voting abroad will take place between 8 and 31 May in 112 polling stations in 54 countries.<sup>10</sup> One DEB in Ankara is designated to co-ordinate out-of-country voting and to facilitate the counting of these ballots.

#### **E. CANDIDATE REGISTRATION**

Citizens over the age of twenty-five years are eligible to contest the elections. Grounds for ineligibility include legal incapacitation, ongoing or not completed military service, limitation on public service as confirmed by court, as well as certain criminal convictions. Contestants may participate through closed party lists or as independent candidates.

The LPP sets a number of requirements for parties to contest the elections, including having an organizational structure in at least half of the provinces and convening a party congress six months prior to the elections or having a parliamentary group in the outgoing parliament. To qualify for seat allocation beyond surpassing the threshold, parties must present a full list of candidates in more than half of the provinces. Independent candidates may stand upon making a non-refundable electoral deposit.<sup>11</sup> The formation of electoral blocs is not allowed.

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<sup>9</sup> See judgement *Söyler v. Turkey*, January 2014, where the ECtHR found that the ban on convicted prisoners’ voting rights was not proportionate to the gravity of the offence. During the 2014 presidential and local elections, the SBE issued decisions that partially addressed the ECtHR judgment and allowed convicts outside of prison to vote.

<sup>10</sup> The number of days for voting will vary in each country, from 1 to 24 days, depending on the number of out-of-country voters. Voting will be also available at border crossings customs gates.

<sup>11</sup> The deposit is 10.167 TL (equivalent to approximately 3,500 EUR).

The candidate nomination period ended on 4 April with candidate lists to be finalized by the SBE by 24 April following a public display and contestation period. A preliminary list of 9,271 candidates from 20 political parties and 176 independent candidates was announced by the SBE. Most parties met with by the OSCE/ODIHR NAM noted that they conducted primaries to select candidates for inclusion in party lists. While parties generally noted the importance of having women in their candidate lists, only one party cited specific measures to ensure the inclusion of women candidates.

## **F. CAMPAIGN**

The election campaign started on 10 March and will finish on 6 June at 18:00. Stricter campaign rules apply during a shorter period commencing 10 days before election day aimed at ensuring equitable opportunities to all electoral contestants. These include provisions on the allocation of free airtime, a ban on the use of state resources for campaign purposes and the prohibition against electoral contestants organizing and contributing to events related to publicly funded services.

OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors anticipate the campaign to focus on economic issues, human rights, corruption investigations, the Kurdish-Turkish peace process as well as the question of Constitutional reform towards a more presidential system. Interlocutors anticipate the campaign to be dynamic and intense with different activities such as rallies, door-to-door canvassing, posting printed material and campaigning via social media. Some parties also noted the intention to conduct campaign activities abroad.

Opposition parties and some civil society representatives expressed concerns over the president's perceived active role in the election campaign and his declared public support for the governing party.<sup>12</sup> In addition, OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concerns regarding the equality of campaign opportunities linked to a potential misuse of state administrative resources.

Some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed broader concerns regarding security issues, which may impact the freedom of assembly, the possibility to campaign freely and potential for intimidation of voters particularly in the provinces in east and south-east. Particular concerns were linked to provisions of a recently adopted Security Law, which among other provisions, grant police and governors authority to reinstate public order without prior court authorization.<sup>13</sup>

## **G. CAMPAIGN FINANCING**

The legislation does not contain comprehensive regulations of campaign financing. It imposes some restrictions on the amount and nature of donations, including an exclusion of foreign funding and loans; however, there are no limitations on general party and campaign-related spending. Political parties are also entitled to receive state funding. In line with previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, amendments have lowered the threshold from 7 to 3 per cent of votes received in these elections for parties to qualify for such funding.<sup>14</sup>

Political parties are required to declare their campaign funds through annual party financial reports submitted to the Constitutional Court. Independent candidates disclose their campaign funds

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<sup>12</sup> Article 101 of the Constitution states that "If the President-elect is a member of a party, his/her relationship with his party shall be severed and his/her membership of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey shall cease."

<sup>13</sup> The Law on Amending the Law on Duties and Powers of Police, Law on Gendarmerie Organization, Task and Authority, Law on the Civil Registration Services and Other Decree Laws published on 3 April 2015.

<sup>14</sup> The amendment was introduced in the LPP on 2 March 2014.

through individual tax declarations. The review of financial reports by the Constitutional Court focuses on compliance with reporting requirements and with parties' internal regulations. A lack of compliance can result in sanctions ranging from a warning to the dissolution of a political party, depending on the gravity of a violation. Political parties' financial reports are not publicly available; only summarized audit reports of the Constitutional Court, published up to several years later are posted online.<sup>15</sup> Several OSCE/ODIHR interlocutors expressed concerns regarding insufficient transparency and accountability of the party and campaign finance framework.

In 2015, the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) concluded that "no tangible progress has been achieved" since 2012.<sup>16</sup> While draft legislation related to party and campaign finance was prepared in 2012 by the Ministry of Justice, the amendments have not yet been submitted to the parliament.

## H. MEDIA

The media environment is characterized by numerous broadcast and print outlets along with an ever-increasing significance placed on online and social media. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stated that majority of the media outlets are perceived to be associated with one of the political parties, with significantly more coverage allocated to the governing party.

The coverage of the electoral campaign in the broadcast media is regulated by the Law on Broadcasting, the Law on Basic Provisions, and SBE decisions and regulations adopted for each election. Among the general principles for broadcasting, media are obliged to ensure accuracy, impartiality and objectivity of reporting. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concern over existing pressure on media outlets and on individual journalists, including frequent defamation lawsuits, which challenge their independence and could lead to self-censorship.

The regulatory framework includes undue restrictions on freedom of expression that have been deemed problematic during previous election assessments by the OSCE/ODIHR. The Constitution does not fully protect the right to freedom of expression by permitting undue restrictions, among others, to protect "the basic characteristics of the Republic and the indivisible integrity of the state with its territory and nation". Legislation and its implementation criminalize speech on certain matters of public importance. In particular, this includes broad provisions on criminal defamation in the Criminal Code, including defamation of the Turkish nation, and on propaganda in favour of a terrorist organization in the Anti-Terrorism Act.

In addition to the option of paid political advertisements, political parties contesting the elections are granted free airtime on the public broadcaster, Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), during the last ten days of the campaign.<sup>17</sup> Independent candidates do not qualify for free airtime. Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concerns regarding the TRT's impartiality and objective coverage and noted that a recent paid advertisement of the CHP was not broadcast by the TRT and one private broadcaster. Despite the TRT's initiative debates among party leaders are not foreseen during the campaign.

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<sup>15</sup> One political party met with by the OSCE/ODIHR NAM stated its candidates would voluntarily disclose their assets and donations received.

<sup>16</sup> [GRECO, Third Evaluation Round, Interim Compliance Report on Turkey, 4 February 2015.](#)

<sup>17</sup> Parties are entitled to two 10-minute slots on radio and television each. Additional airtime is granted to parties with a parliamentary group (10 minutes), the party in power or senior partner in a coalition government (20 minutes), minor partners in the coalition (15 minutes) and the main opposition party (10 minutes).

Compliance with media regulations is overseen by the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTSC), which has the authority to review complaints related to coverage by local and regional broadcasters.<sup>18</sup> During the election campaign period, the RTSC submits weekly reports to the SBE, which has the authority to apply a range of sanctions for violations.<sup>19</sup> As of 14 April, the SBE informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that 27 warnings have been issued to broadcasters and 1 program had been suspended; thus far, these sanctions have not been made public.<sup>20</sup>

On 15 December 2014, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM) reiterated the appeal to the Turkish authorities to bring the country's media legislation in line with OSCE commitments on media freedom. The appeal anticipates a reform of a series of laws governing media freedom in Turkey, including the provisions of the Criminal Code and the Anti-Terrorism Act, most often used to imprison journalists.<sup>21</sup> The OSCE RFoM has also expressed concern over the provisions to the 2014 Internet law that grant authority to the communications regulator and are used for blocking of websites without sufficient court supervision.<sup>22</sup>

## **I. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS**

The legislation allows for observation of the electoral process by representatives of political parties and independent candidates and stipulates that the vote count is public. However, it does not contain provisions permitting effective observation by international and citizen observers. The OSCE/ODIHR has previously recommended that to remove any possible uncertainty, the legislation should be amended to provide for access of international and citizen observers to all stages of the electoral process, in line with the commitments from the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.

Representatives from several civil society organizations stated their intention to observe the forthcoming elections with some organizations monitoring different aspects of the election process including the election campaign. Two organizations met with by the OSCE/ODIHR NAM applied to the SBE for election observation accreditations; however, their applications were dismissed due to a lack of provisions for observation in the law. Interlocutors also informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that they intended to submit individual petitions to the Constitutional Court concerning citizen election observation. In practice, some civil society organizations will observe on election day through political parties, while others stated their intention to undertake their own election observation activities.

## **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

Most interlocutors met with during the OSCE/ODIHR NAM highlighted the positive role of OSCE/ODIHR election observation in Turkey and for the need for an OSCE/ODIHR election observation activity for the forthcoming elections. Many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stressed the need to deploy an election observation mission with a long-term and regional presence to cover all aspects of the process.

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<sup>18</sup> The RTSC consists of nine members elected by parliament: five nominated by the AKP, two by the CHP and one member each by the MHP and HDP.

<sup>19</sup> According to the RTSC, some 132 broadcast media will be monitored.

<sup>20</sup> Of these, 20 warnings were issued to media that broadcasted an election campaign advertisement of the governing party that did not comply with campaign regulations and 7 warnings to broadcaster for violating the rules for publishing opinion polls.

<sup>21</sup> [An annual survey commissioned by OSCE RFoM showed the number of imprisoned journalists in 2014 decreased to around 20 \(updated 18 June 2014\).](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Press Release of the OSCE RFoM, 17 February 2014.](#)

They particularly noted that in being parliamentary elections, there should be extensive regional coverage down to the district level where campaigning would take place and issues could develop. Many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors also stressed that the elections should be covered through a comprehensive regional approach, noting a specific need to follow the process in the larger cities across the country and provinces in the east and south-east where difficulties may arise. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM has considered the findings outlined in this report and the concerns expressed by stakeholders, including issues related to the implementation of the legal framework, confidence in administering the elections, the conduct of the election campaign, and the work of the media.

On this basis, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of a Limited Election Observation Mission (LEOM) to observe the 7 June parliamentary elections. In addition to a core team of analysts, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the secondment of 20 long-term observers from OSCE participating States. In line with OSCE/ODIHR's standard methodology, the LEOM would include a media monitoring element. While the mission would visit a limited number of polling stations on election day, systematic observation of election day proceedings is not envisaged.

## **ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS**

### **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Hasan Ulusoy, Ambassador and Director General for Multilateral Political Affairs  
Kıvılcım Kılıç, Deputy Director General for the Council of Europe and Human Rights  
Tolga Orkun, Head of Human Rights Department  
Emine Gök Aytaç, Third Secretary

### **Ministry of Interior**

Rahmi Doğan, General Director of Provincial Administration  
İlker Haktankaçmaz, Head of the Department for European Union and Foreign Relations  
İbrahim Süha Karaboran, Head of Department under the Directorate General for Population and Citizenship Affairs  
Salih Öztürk, Assistant Expert

### **Ministry of Justice**

Musa Heybet, Deputy Undersecretary  
Kasım Çiçek, Deputy Director General for International Law and Foreign Relations  
Mahmut Budunoğlu, Head of the Department for International Law and Foreign Relations  
Hakan Şeker, Head of the Department under the Directorate General for Legislation  
Mustafa Özoğul, Reporter Judge

### **Supreme Board of Elections**

Ayhan Okurer, Voter Registration Deputy General Manager  
Harun Özkan, Head of the Administrative and Financial Affairs  
Sarp Sertcan, IT Department Chief  
Murat Özeren, Editorial Department Chief

### **Constitutional Court**

Selim Erdem, Secretary General  
Recep Kaplan, Deputy Secretary General  
Ömer Duran, Rapporteur  
Akif Yıldırım, Rapporteur

### **Radio and Television Supreme Council**

Prof. Dr. Davut Dursun, President of the Supreme Council  
İlker Ilgın, Deputy President of the Supreme Council  
Hamit Ersoy, Member of the Supreme Council  
Emir M. Ulucak, Head of the Monitoring and Evaluation Department  
Murat Ellialtı, Deputy Head of the Monitoring and Evaluation  
Şemsettin Gürpınar, Deputy Head of the Department of International Relations  
Özlem Sevgi Keleş, Legal Adviser  
Hüseyin Demirbilek, Specialist  
Ahmet Yanık, Assistant Specialist

### **Turkish Radio and Television Corporation**

Nasuh Güngör, Head of the News and Sports Broadcasting Department  
Serhat Akça, Deputy Head of the News and Sports Department  
Süleyman Erdal, Head of the International Broadcast Department  
Çağlan Tankur Yörümez, Head of the Foreign Relations Department

**The Justice and Development Party**

Mehmet Sayım Tekelioğlu, Chairperson of the EU Harmonization Committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly

**The Republican People's Party**

Levent Gök. Deputy Chairperson

**The Nationalist Movement Party**

Yıldırım Tuğrul Türkeş, Deputy Chairperson

**The Peoples' Democratic Party**

Nazmi Gür, Member of Turkish Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

**Human Rights Joint Platform**

Hüsnü Öndül, Lawyer

**Human Rights Association**

Asim Murat Okur, Assistant to Secretary General

**Transparency International – Turkey**

Özlem Zingil, Board Member

Pelin Erdogan, Board Member

**Association for Monitoring Equal Rights (AMER)**

Nejat Tastan, Director

**Individual Expert**

Ceren Sözeri, Media Expert

**Diplomatic Missions**

Irineusz Fidos, Counsellor, Head of Section Political Affairs, EU Delegation to Turkey

Aycan Akdeniz, Political Officer, Domestic Politics and Political Affairs, EU Delegation to Turkey