



EUROPEAN UNION ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION NEPAL Constituent Assembly Election 2008

70 more observers join EU Election Observation Mission

Kathmandu, 3 April 2007 – Forty-four European Union short-term election observers will leave Kathmandu tomorrow for the districts to observe the Constituent Assembly election scheduled to take place on 10 April. Thirteen locally recruited short-term observers from EU member state embassies in the capital are also joining the EU election observation mission in the run up to the election. In addition, a delegation from the European Parliament will arrive in Nepal next week, bringing the total number of short-term observers to 70.

The mission is now made up of 120 people from 22 different EU countries as well as Norway and Switzerland, making it the largest international election observation mission in Nepal.

A core team of nine election experts has been based in Kathmandu since the beginning of March and 40 long-term observers have been observing election preparations and the campaign period throughout Nepal for nearly two weeks.

The mission is led by Jan Mulder, a Dutch Member of the European Parliament. *“We are watching the security situation in the country very carefully and hope that our presence in large numbers all over Nepal will contribute to a more peaceful environment and greater confidence in the election,”* Mr Mulder said. *“The fact that our short-term observers will have a full six days in the field before the election shows the importance we attach to this part of the election process.”*

After an extensive briefing from the core team in Kathmandu, the short-term observers will be deployed throughout the country in teams of two. They will attend a regional briefing with long-term observers already in the field before holding meetings with election stakeholders in their area of deployment. On election day they will observe voting in polling stations across Nepal as well as the beginning of the counting process.

All EU observers are bound by an internationally accepted code of conduct as well as the Nepali code of conduct for election observers. This means that they maintain strict neutrality in their work and cannot interfere in any way in the electoral process.

The EU election observation mission will give its preliminary assessment of the election at a press conference in Kathmandu two days after election day. Observers will stay in Nepal for several weeks after the election to observe the counting and tabulation of results. The mission will publish a more comprehensive, final report in June.

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