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Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, made the following statement today:

"I would like to congratulate the people of Kazakhstan for the way in which they exercised their democratic rights in the legislative elections on 15 January. I also welcome the fact that three parties will be represented in Parliament, which is a positive step towards the development of a pluralistic and democratic political culture in Kazakhstan.

However, I regret that these elections, as noted by the OSCE, fell short of being genuinely pluralistic and did not meet key democratic principles.

I encourage the Kazakh authorities to address the shortcomings identified by the OSCE as a matter of priority, in line with their commitments regarding democratic principles and human rights.

Kazakhstan is a key partner for the EU, and we are ready to continue our support to the implementation of further political reforms."

P R E S S

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