



بنیاد انتخابات شفاف افغانستان
د افغانستان درنو ټاکنو بنسټ

Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan

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Concerns on emerging challenges and illegal practices in electoral process

Kabul: As per the election calendar, 115 days are left for the parliamentary and district council elections to arrive and be conducted, considering all the daily emerging challenges, drawbacks and misconducts which tend to jeopardize the sound conduct of the upcoming elections. Ambiguity and lack of proper consideration in introducing an individual for the position of “Head of Secretariat” at IEC, evaluating candidates with no proper work plan and a designated committee, acting-headship system in central commission, 20 provinces being led by acting provincial chiefs, lack of required legal documents for district council elections, lack of both male and female registered candidates in 14 provinces concerning the upcoming district council elections, 11 provinces in the midst of decline, interventions of Commission’s leadership in secretariat-related affairs, in addition to acting beyond the commission’s defined authorities, monopolizing operations and decision making process to Commission chief, disputes among commission members, shortage of international aid in terms of providing salaries to temporary employees, lack of motivation in commission’s employees, IECC’s dilatory performance and their inability to hire provincial commissioners, while taking the tight deadline for addressing electoral complaints into account, have severely concerned TEFA in these days regarding the upcoming elections.

In addition to all the mentioned problems in the overall electoral process, IEC recently decided on dividing Ghazni province into 3 distinctive constituencies for conducting elections in this province discrete from other provinces, and has already proposed its plan to the afghan government. TEFA condemns this act and declares it to be thoroughly illegal, based on the Election law Article 36 which clearly states that “The boundaries of the electoral constituencies shall be determined at least (180) days before the Election Day, by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance with cooperation from the Central Statistics Office and other relevant agencies and in consultation with the Commission” while this decision of IEC has been made 115 days prior to the Election Day; which is why from a technical angle and owing the all the problems faced by IEC, this decision is not practical.

TEFA as an election observer views IEC and IECCs’ current condition unfavorable, and is highly concerned about how the upcoming parliamentary and district council elections will eventually be held on October 20th. 2018. TEFA calls on both IEC and government to consider and implement the following recommendations for restoring and maintaining public’s trust on elections and resolve all the mentioned electoral drawbacks within the given time:

1. TEFA requests the Afghan government to take legal action against IEC’s proposed suggestion on dividing Ghazni into 3 constituencies, and to avoid furthering electoral problems, because this act of IEC is a positive response towards the complaints and stands made by people of Ghazni, which will eventually provoke citizens of other provinces like Helmand, Baghlan, Maidan Wardak, and Kandahar who demanded their provinces to be

divided into smaller constituencies, to use the same methods used by people of Ghazni such as blocking the commissions door for having their province divided into smaller constituencies.

2. TEFA urges the Afghan government to introduce the Head of Secretariat of IEC (accountable for all the commission's operations) as soon as feasible bearing in mind the ongoing drastic electoral condition.
3. TEFA calls on the Afghan government to assist the Election Commission when required for holding transparent elections.
4. TEFA calls on the Independent Election Commission to uphold its commitment and unison and to stand against all the external interventions, for securing its independency.
5. TEFA urges IEC's leadership members not to intervene in Secretariat affairs and to know their defined authorities.
6. TEFA requests International Community to have their assistance with both election commissions and civil societies same like the previous years for conducting sound elections and strengthening democracy in Afghanistan, moreover, for ensuring transparency, International Community is also requested to provide the platform for international observers to observe the elections alongside domestic observers.