



EUROPEAN UNION ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
Electoral Support Centre
Markas Compound
Dili – East Timor

PRESS CONFERENCE

European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM)

Election Press Centre, Friday 31 Aug. 2001

Wolfgang Kreissl-Doerfler MEP, Chief Observer

Summary of the Provisional Findings of the European Union Election Observation Mission

We would like to congratulate the East Timorese people on the conduct of this historic election. The voters have demonstrated exceptional patience during the whole election process. The overall atmosphere appears calm and suggests that the election has been conducted in a peaceful manner. Our feed-back suggests a very high turn-out which we believe is most encouraging for East Timor's transition process.

With over forty observers, the largest single contingent of observers being deployed comes from the European Union. The Presidency of the European Union, Ambassador Luc Darras (Belgium) is joined by the European Parliament delegation led by Mr Carlos Costa Neves from Portugal, representing the European People's Party; together with Mr Richard Howitt from the United Kingdom, representing the European Socialist Party; and Mr Toine Manders from the Netherlands representing the European Liberal Party.

Our mission has been in East Timor since the start of July, establishing our office, and conducting an assessment of the campaign and of the pre-election situation. Our Short-term Observers have been in all districts since 27th August. We have received detailed reports from our observers in all 13 districts

We have received no information of serious incidents or shortcomings relating to the conduct of the election. The main issue of importance has been the late opening of the majority of Polling Stations observed. Our reports do suggest some examples of difficulties of management (queue control etc.) at some Polling Stations. We do not regard these reports as significantly detrimental to the election process.

We would like to praise the IEC's prompt response to problems experienced during election day. We would also like to state that the relevant sectors of UNTAET have worked enormously hard to make this crucial election possible.

As one of the major donors to East Timor, the European Union is glad to note the remarkable success of this election. Our observation mission continues to monitor the count process. The Chief Observer and core-staff will remain in East Timor until after the official announcement of the result.

The presence of the observer mission from the European Union, following the mission for the 1999 Popular Consultation, underlines the continuing commitment of the EU to supporting the East Timorese people and the development of their democracy. The issue of East Timor's independence was, in particular, the subject of several resolutions in the European Parliament which were crucial in keeping East Timor on the international agenda.

The European Union will publish a declaration on these elections, after receiving the results of the observer mission.

The Chief Observer, on behalf of the mission, would like to take this opportunity, on this historic day, to express every good wish for the continued success of East Timor's democracy and the prosperity of its people

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