

## **Statement by David McAllister on the parliamentary elections in Ukraine**

**Full statement by the Head of the EP election observation delegation to Ukraine David McAllister (EPP, DE), following the parliamentary elections on Sunday 21 July.**

“First and foremost, it is the Ukrainian people that are at the forefront of my mind today: the citizens went to the polling stations and exercised their democratic right to choose their representatives. They did this with enthusiasm and a profound conviction that they can have a say in the future of their country.

This is even more remarkable as, just a few hundred kilometres away to the east, Ukrainian soldiers die defending their country against Russian aggression and in support of the values of freedom, which are so dear to all of us. Millions of citizens continue to be trapped and suffer due to Russia’s direct and indirect involvement in this armed conflict. Millions of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons scattered around Ukraine need assistance. When assessing these elections, the international community does not underestimate the complicated and volatile security context or lose sight of the efforts and sacrifices inflicted on Ukraine by this hybrid war that is still a very real and present danger.

Despite this dire context, and notwithstanding the fact that these elections are taking place a few months earlier than planned, one can undoubtedly say that they were competitive, well administered and managed in an efficient way. The Central Election Commission has notably done its best to correct several shortcomings identified during the presidential elections earlier this year, such as the registration process for IDPs or mobile workers. The rising public confidence in this institution is a well-deserved testimony of these efforts. The fight against corruption was clearly a prominent and overarching issue in this campaign. Undeniably, the results of the last five years have fallen short of citizens’ expectations and those of the international community. However, at the same time the efforts undertaken exceeded everything that was done in this regard since independence. The newly elected members of the Verkhovna Rada, together with the President of Ukraine, now have to build on the achievements of the last five years and step up their efforts to finally deliver on citizens’ expectations. Stalling and prevarications will not be accepted.

Since the Revolution of Dignity, Ukraine – a strategic partner of the European Union – has always been one of the European Parliament’s highest priorities: five years ago, people fought and died for the right to choose their country’s future, a European future. Since then, we have been on the side of the Ukrainian people and its representatives. We have been assisting in the implementation of projects carried out by the EU and Ukraine, namely the Association Agreement, which is the most ambitious agreement of its kind signed by the EU with a non-EU country. At its core are the values and principles that have made the EU such a successful project over the past several decades and can help Ukraine become more resilient when facing external threats.

The European Parliament and the Verkhovna Rada have developed genuine mutual trust over the past few years. We have reached an unprecedented level of cooperation and streamlined how parliament’s internal work is structured, including organising policy issues and legislation. Several democracy support activities have been developed for the Verkhovna Rada, for example capacity-building activities for members and for officials, or mediation and dialogue activities among factions’ leaders. We hope that the new leadership will ensure that a spirit of dialogue and compromise amongst all factions is embedded in the work of the Verkhovna Rada, as a means of building the national consensus essential to the reform agenda.

The European Parliament is keen to push its cooperation even further, and provide the Verkhovna Rada with all the expertise and assistance needed in the follow-up to this election observation mission. As a legislator, the Verkhovna Rada will play an instrumental and pivotal role in implementing most of the recommendations our mission will present, and the European Parliament will be at its side in this endeavour, for the benefit of the Ukrainian people.”

## **Background**

The European Parliament delegation that observed the parliamentary elections in Ukraine was headed by David McAllister, and also consisted of MEPs Sandra Kalniete (EPP, LV), Isabel Santos (S&D, PT), Petras Austrevicius (Renew Europe, LT), Viola von Cramon-Taubadel (Greens/EFA, DE), Lars Patrick Berg (ID, DE) and Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR, PL).

## **Links**

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