

# Press release: EU deploys a reinforced Election Expert Mission t



General elections have been set for 18 October in Bolivia, following a second postponement due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In line with the European Union long-standing commitment to accompany and support peaceful, credible, inclusive and transparent elections in Bolivia, Josep Borrell, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, has decided to deploy a reinforced Election Expert Mission.

High Representative and Vice President Josep Borrell stated: *"The organisation of genuine and credible elections is of paramount importance for the Bolivian people, who stand ready to reaffirm their commitment to democratic values and restore the country's much-needed stability. Despite the difficult context in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led us to suspend or cancel the deployment of some EU Election Observation Missions, we continue to stand by Bolivia's side, to help achieve their objective, including with a reinforced Electoral Expert Mission."*

Member of the European Parliament and former Chief Observer of the Election Observation Mission to Bolivia Isabel Santos declared: *"The deployment of this mission reflects the unfailing commitment of the European Union to support democratic elections in Bolivia, while at the same time ensuring people's health in a context where all countries, including in Europe, are still struggling with the COVID-19 pandemic. I am confident that the Election Expert Mission will provide an important contribution to democracy in Bolivia."*

This technical mission will be composed of 5-6 experts who will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the electoral process until its end. The mission will draft a report analysing how the elections were implemented according to international and national laws as well as best practices for democratic elections and will provide a set of recommendations to improve future elections. The report will be made public at the end of the process.

In addition to this mission, the European Union is providing under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace a €2m support to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal in Bolivia to ensure that elections abide by international principles for democratic elections. Moreover, the European Union is supporting under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and for a budget worth €600,000 the efforts of Bolivian civil society organisations to conduct a national observation of the process.

The European Union is a key partner of Bolivia and is committed to support a constructive and consensual approach via national dialogue as basis for democratic elections in Bolivia where Bolivians can exercise their right to vote despite COVID-related challenges.