

Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on the Pakistan election

I congratulate the millions of voters who participated in Pakistan's elections on 25 July. The people of Pakistan have shown they will not be cowed by the terrorists who seek to disrupt the democratic process. I extend my deepest condolences to those affected by recent attacks.

This is an important moment for democracy in Pakistan, marking an unprecedented second successive transfer of power from one full-term civilian government to another.

I welcome the initial findings from international and domestic observers. Running elections in a country of 208 million people is a challenging and complex task. The Election Commission of Pakistan should be commended for its work to improve accountability, transparency and inclusiveness.

Like the election observation missions, we are also concerned about reports of pressure on the media and the number of parties with links to proscribed groups who preach violence and intolerance. Jinnah's vision of a tolerant, pluralist Pakistan remains central to a stable and cohesive society.

It is now for Pakistan's elected representatives to work together to ensure a successful transition. I hope all sides will resolve any disputed results peacefully and in accordance with Pakistan's electoral laws.

The UK and Pakistan enjoy a longstanding partnership, underpinned by strong links between our people. We look forward to continuing our work with the new federal and provincial governments. The people of Pakistan can be certain of UK support to build the democratic, secure and prosperous future they deserve.