

the 4th April, 2017

Subject: CONDUCT OF GENERAL ELECTIONS 2018 - FINALIZATION OF DRAFT ELECTION ACT 2017.

My Dear

May I draw your attention to the fact that Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms in its meeting held on 20th December, 2016 had presented the Draft Election Act 2017 and provided copies thereof to all members of the Parliament and other stakeholders for their feedback within 30 days. The draft bill was also placed on website of the National Assembly for feedback from general public within aforesaid period.

2. To give you benefit of background, Election Commission was invited vide letter No.22(2)/2014-COM-I, dated 21st August, 2014 to brief the Committee on Electoral Reforms during its meetings. Since then, the Election Commission of Pakistan has been attending each and every meeting of the Committee and its Sub-Committee. The attendance of the Election Commission comprised Secretary, Additional Secretary, Director General Law, I.T and Additional Director General Gender Affairs and Trainings etc. The Election Commission of Pakistan has made all out efforts to assist the Parliamentary Committee (s) by providing (i) draft legislative proposals, (ii) comparative statements of the existing and proposed legislation. (iii) modalities for introduction of electoral technology and (iv) international best practices in respect of Unified Election Laws.

3. The General Elections, 2018 is fast approaching. As you are aware that the Election Commission of Pakistan has to undertake the following tasks well before the expiry of term of Assemblies:-

- a. Delimitation/re-description of constituencies;
- b. Revision/updation of electoral rolls;
- c. Appointment and training of DROs, ROs, AROs, polling staff;
- d. Provision of logistic support to the DROs, ROs, AROs etc.;
- e. Preparation of list of polling stations and list of polling personnel;
- f. Enlistment of political parties;
- g. Finalization of codes of conduct for political parties, security/polling personnel, media etc.
- h. Allocation of symbols;
- i. Printing of ballot papers and engagement of printing presses;
- j. establishment of Result Management System for election results;
- k. Printing of handbooks, manual for training of election officials;
- l. Printing of forms / envelopes to be used in different stages of elections;
- m. Arrangements for election observers;
- n. Appointment of the Appellate and Election Tribunals; and
- o. Security measures.

4. Furthermore, under section 14 of the Draft Election Law, 2017, the Election Commission of Pakistan shall, at least six months before the General Elections is due to be held on expiry of terms of an assembly, prepare a comprehensive action plan specifying all legal and administrative measures that have been taken or are required to be taken.

Continued on page/2

5. Keeping in view the importance and magnitude of work, it is apprehended that in case of delayed enactment of new Election Act by the Parliament, timely completion of aforesaid activities could become a huge challenge for the ECP, impacting quality of elections. Hence, the Hon'ble Commission has desired that the Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly may ask the concerned Committee to finalize its recommendations and lay the bill before the Parliament for making necessary legislation and enact the Election Act, 2017 as early as possible so that ECP could start and complete its work in time according to the new law.

6. Needless to say that all suggestions and objections of the ECP in this regard are already on the record of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Electoral Reforms.

7. I have been asked by the Competent Authority to convey the above request, through you, to the Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly.

To Secretary NA.