

ELECTION COMMISSION OF PAKISTAN

Islamabad, dated 13th October 2023

NOTIFICATION

No.F.4 (2)2021-MCO-Vol-I(3) In exercise of the powers conferred upon it under Article 218(3) of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, read with Section 233 of the Elections Act 2017, and all other powers enabling it in that behalf, the Election Commission hereby issues the Code of Conduct for International Observers/ Media. International observers/ media shall follow this Code of Conduct during the upcoming General Elections, local government elections and subsequent bye-elections in letter and spirit.

Code of Conduct for International Observers / Media

1. Any person observing and reporting the electoral process as a member of an International Election Observation Mission must read and understand this Code of Conduct and shall sign **a pledge annexed to this Code.**
2. The International Observers and Media persons intending to visit Pakistan shall submit their visa applications well in time, according to the rules laid down by relevant authorities of the Government of Pakistan. No observer or media person shall stay in Pakistan beyond the prescribed duration of granted visa.
3. International Observers and Media persons shall respect the sovereignty of Pakistan as well as the fundamental rights and freedom of its people.
4. International Observers and Media persons shall adhere to the Constitution and laws of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and respect the authority of the Election Commission and its election officials.
5. International Observers and Media persons shall ensure that their observations and reporting is impartial, objective and depict the highest standards of accuracy.
6. International Observers and Media persons shall follow instructions issued from time to time by the Election Commission and State authorities and maintain a respectful attitude towards them.
7. International observers and media shall comply with Advisories that may be issued by the government or security agencies to ensure their safety during their stay in Pakistan.
8. Observers and Media persons shall respect the culture and customs of the country and observe the highest level of professionalism.
9. International Observers and Media persons shall display their official identification badges /accreditation cards issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan, at all times and shall present it to electoral officials and other relevant authorities as and when requested.
10. International Observers and Media persons at all times during election process shall maintain strict political impartiality. They shall not exhibit any bias or preference with regard to political parties and candidates.
11. International Observers and media persons shall obey rules concerning photography and restrictions on taking pictures as per laws/local culture.
12. International Observer and Media persons shall have right to ask any question and to clear any query but they will not obstruct directly or indirectly any pre-election, election and post-election process.

13. International Observers and media persons shall work harmoniously with other observers, media persons and election officials.
14. International Observers and Media persons shall select areas for election observation and reporting in consultation with Election Commission of Pakistan for their security and safety. However, International Observers and media persons shall choose the area to ensure balanced observation /reporting.
15. International Election Observers and media persons may hire services of Pakistani interpreters if so required. However, they shall provide all necessary details of these interpreters while applying for accreditation card. These interpreters shall also remain non-partisan and unbiased.
16. International Observers and media persons may observe and report all aspects of management and conduct of elections including actual polling day without interfering in electoral proceedings.
17. International Observers and media persons shall not interfere in the internal process at any polling station.
18. International Observers and Media International Observers and media persons shall not maintain their personal and professional relationships with individuals / organizations in a way that could lead to conflict of interest with duties as observers and reporters.
19. International Observers and media persons shall not accept any gift or favors from political parties, organizations or persons involved in the electoral process.
20. International Observers and media persons shall not wear, carry or display any party symbols or colours of a partisan nature.
21. Observer shall not make any personal comments about his/her observation or conclusion on the election process to the media.
22. International Observers and Media persons shall not conduct or participate in any activity that may generate an impression of favouring or opposing any political party or a candidate.
23. The content on international print & electronic media and any international media persons, newspaper and channel on digital media and other social media influencers shall not reflect any aspect which might create parochialism or threatens peace and security of the country or threatens or incite hatred/violence against any particular person or group in Pakistan.
24. The content on international print & electronic media and any international media person, newspaper and channel on digital media and and other International social media influencers shall not include any aspect which might be construed as personal attacks on candidates, political parties of Pakistan on the basis of gender, religion, sect, caste, baradari etc.
25. No International radio or television channel shall broadcast/telecast or print media shall publish anything that adversely affects the public opinion against a particular political party or a candidate in Pakistan. This code of conduct is also applicable to official social media accounts of international newspapers, channels, media persons and other social media influencers.
26. International print, electronic media and International digital media persons /influencers on their official accounts on digital media shall refrain from entrance and exit polls or conducting any kind of surveys at any polling station or constituency that may influence the voters' free choice of casting votes.
27. International print, electronic media and International digital media persons /influencers shall broadcast telecast or publish only authentic election results officially issued by the Returning Officer or the Election Commission of Pakistan.

28. Observer Organizations shall share their findings, methodology, recommendations and reports with the Election Commission of Pakistan.
29. The government and law enforcing agencies of Pakistan shall provide protection to International Observers and media persons to maintain their security.
30. In case of violation of this Code of Conduct, the Election Commission of Pakistan reserves the right to withdraw observer accreditation of an individual Observer/Observer Mission and Individual journalist/Media Organization. The authority to determine the violation also rests with the Election Commission of Pakistan.

By orders of the Election Commission of Pakistan.



(Haroon Khan Shinwari)
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13 -10-2023

To,

The Manager,
Printing Corporation of Pakistan Press,
Islamabad.

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