



## **2019 Sri Lanka Presidential Poll largely peaceful, orderly — ANFREL**

*For Immediate Release*

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The Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) commends the people of Sri Lanka for a largely peaceful and orderly conduct of the 2019 Presidential Election held on 16 November 2019.

A proud moment for Sri Lankans, the election concluded without any major electoral violations or violent activities. The high voter turnout of 83.9 percent is a clear indication of the country's commitment to staying the course of achieving genuine democratic and mature political processes.

The ANFREL Mission, however observed issues in the polling and counting centers which involve ballot secrecy, voter accessibility, and uneven implementation of procedures. The exclusion of some eligible voters from exercising their electoral right and the level of voters' civic education were also issues in this election.

While no electoral system is perfect, various stakeholders can collaborate to address these issues to further enhance the country's electoral processes and also to promote public confidence in them.

All stakeholders, in particular the Election Commission, must continue to exercise the active engagement and vigilance ANFREL witnessed to ensure resolving the issues highlighted above effectively.

The Mission also hopes that the Sri Lankan stakeholders will take into consideration the set of recommendations included in the interim report in future reform efforts to promote an environment conducive to the holding of democratic elections.

As Sri Lanka moves forward, ANFREL urges all the political parties and electoral stakeholders to remain committed to the smooth transfer of power.

"The success of Sri Lanka's 2019 Presidential Election is an endeavor that can be achieved by placing transparency and openness at the core of a country's political processes," said Mr. Damaso Magbual, ANFREL's Head of Mission.

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*ANFREL is the only Asian international non-governmental organization accredited by the Election Commission of Sri Lanka for the 2019 Presidential Election. The observation mission will be guided by ANFREL's methodology, tailor-fitted to comply with the Declaration of Principles and Code of Conduct for International Election Observation.*

*Covering different parts of Sri Lanka, ANFREL's international election observation mission for the presidential election is composed of nine long-term and 32 short-term observers, and two electoral analysts who were deployed to better understand the electoral environment in the country.*