



د افغانستان د آزاد او عادلانه ټولټاکنو ټولنيزه موسسه
موسسه اجتماع انتخابات آزاد و عادلانه افغانستان
Free & Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan organization

Press Release

IEC is Wasting Time to Provide a Proposal on Amendment of Election Law and Brining the Electoral Reforms

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The Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA) expresses its deep concerns over IEC's failure (wasting time) and delay to bring electoral reform. FEFA believes that wasting time or ignoring electoral reform will have negative impinge upon election process, building public trust on elections, gaining international community's support for conducting elections, and election outcomes.

Electoral reform is a part of the political agreement signed between the president and chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation. The agreement indicates that electoral reform, including legal, technical and cadre reforms, including standard use of biometric shall be undertaken as soon as possible. The challenges and shortcomings of recent elections showed that undertaking necessary measures to bring electoral reform is a must. Moreover, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) indicated the election weaknesses of Afghanistan in its recent report and called for bringing the necessary electoral reforms.

After the 2019 presidential elections, FEFA developed several electoral reform packages on legal, technical and cadre reforms, standard use of biometrics based on its findings from different electoral stages and shared with the electoral commissions and other relevant organizations in order to help them take the necessary measures to reform all electoral stages but as seen the IEC hasn't taken necessary measures to bring legal, technical and cadre reforms and proper use of biometrics.

The Independent Election Commission as the election management body has not taken substantive and remarkable measures to open the way for electoral reform. It has been several months that IEC hasn't been able to finalize its proposal on amendment of the election law which forms a remarkable part of the electoral reform. However, the IEC could properly use the opportunity to draft and finalize a proposal on amendment of the election law and submit to the Ministry of Justice for processing but wasted time and is still wasting. IEC's

failure and weakness in finalizing the proposal on amendment of the election law and submitting it to the Ministry of Justice paves the way for continuation of the current situation and ambiguity of fate of electoral reform.

The IEC focused its attention on planning and conducting 4 elections (Parliamentary election in Ghazni, provincial council elections, district council elections and municipality elections in major cities) instead of electoral reform which is a precondition for a good election. A plan implementation of which in the current status quo and without implementing electoral reform will face many challenges or deadlock.