



## **AFGHANISTAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS: DEMOCRACY TRIUMPHS BUT CHALLENGES AHEAD TO ENHANCE DEMOCRACY FORWARD**

Seoul October 22<sup>nd</sup> – The Asia Democracy Network congratulates the people of Afghanistan in achieving democratic victory in the recent parliamentary elections. With security threats and electoral reforms delaying the elections for three years, this year’s elections were the first parliamentary polls in eight years. Threats of violence by insurgents to block the polls did not deter the people of Afghanistan to exercise their political rights. We laud government authorities, security forces, and non-government organizations for their dedication in ensuring the operation of polling centers are safe and transparent.

The spirit of democracy within the people of Afghanistan is alive and well and has spread inspiration across Asia. Despite reports of logistical glitches in polling centers and threats of violence, more than [4 million people](#) came to cast their vote. When technical issues on Saturday October 20<sup>th</sup> did not allow for many to vote, over 1 million people returned the very next day to voice their choice. The political will for change and stability in Afghanistan is strong within its people. Women played a significant role in numbers at the polls clearly stating their will to politically participate.

It is important also to highlight that this year’s elections is significant as a new generation of democracy advocates emerged with support from the people. Over 400 women across the nation registered to run for 250 seats in the lower house of the Afghan parliament, as well as an unprecedented number of young people. The people of Afghanistan has vocalized that they are ready for change and [want to see a new generation of politicians that will ensure rule of law](#) and democracy.

Despite the exciting democracy movement in Afghanistan, “more efforts are needed within the security sectors to better guarantee the safety of the Afghan people when exercising their rights and duties as citizens in a democracy. The exercise of freedom of expression, assembly and association requires an environment free from fear of violence as an ultimate ingredient to create a robust democracy. It is vital that all stakeholders cooperate to ensure safety and non-violence,” states Ichal Supriadi, Secretary-General of ADN.

The Asia Democracy Network extend its solidarity and support to the Afghan civil society and all democracy stakeholders who are at the frontline risking their life to ensure that the elections are free and fair.

Asia Democracy Network