



## PERIOD FOR FILING CHALLENGES ENDS

### ELECTORAL COMPLAINTS COMMISSION RECEIVES 268 CHALLENGES

**KABUL, 24 May 2009** – As the period for filing challenges against candidates closed on 23 May, the Election Complaints Commission today announced that it received a total of 268 challenges between 16 and 23 May. 37 of these related to the presidential election, and 231 related to provincial council candidates. A breakdown of these challenges has been published by the ECC.

Candidates will be notified of valid challenges filed against them, and they may respond at any IEC provincial office or the ECC headquarters in Kabul before 4:00 pm on Friday 29 May. The final list of eligible candidates will be published on 12 June by the Independent Electoral Commission, after all challenges have been adjudicated by the ECC.

**Mawlawi Mohammad Mustafa Barakzai**, one of five ECC Commissioner's said "ECC investigators have begun reviewing valid challenges and will obtain information from all relevant sources. We will work strictly on the basis of the Constitution and the Electoral Law, to ensure the integrity of this year's presidential and provincial council elections is protected."

With the period for submitting challenges against candidates now over, no additional challenges will be accepted by the ECC. Complaints based on other violations of the Electoral Law can be submitted to the ECC throughout the electoral process.

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The ECC today also issued a reminder to all political parties, candidates and their agents that until 16 June 2009, any type of electoral campaigning such as the display of posters, distribution of leaflets or pamphlets, the holding of campaign rallies is strictly prohibited. This reminder is based on the Electoral Campaign Regulation, which states that candidates may only campaign from 16 June until 18 August 2009.

The ECC calls on individuals and organizations that are responsible for posting campaign materials to remove them immediately. Anyone not adhering to these regulations will be sanctioned by the ECC for violating the Electoral Campaign Regulation.

The ECC also reminded all government officials that they must take an impartial role in these elections.

The ECC calls on all stakeholders involved in the elections to follow the electoral law and associated regulations.

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

- The ECC is an independent Afghanistan electoral institution. It will have offices in every province of the country in addition to its headquarters based in Kabul.
- The ECC is responsible for two main issues: 1) challenges against nominated candidates, and 2) complaints related to electoral violations.
- The mandate of the ECC is laid out in Article 52 of the Elections Law. Offences are identified in Article 53 and Sanctions in Article 54.
- There will be approximately 280 ECC staff across the country. Twelve staff are international advisors.
- The ECC is not a criminal court or a transitional justice body. It can only deal with matters that are electoral offences as defined under the Electoral Law and Afghanistan's Constitution.
- For more information please visit the ECC website: [www.ecc.org.af](http://www.ecc.org.af)