

Letter of Transmittal



Commonwealth Observer Mission Pakistan General Elections 11 May 2013

16 May 2013

Dear Secretary-General,

Following your invitation to observe the 11 May General Elections in Pakistan, we have now completed our Final Report and we are pleased to forward it to you with this letter. These elections represented a significant milestone for Pakistan, as one elected civilian government handed over power to another following a scheduled election and respecting the will of the people.

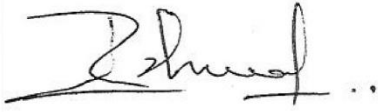
Pakistani voters turned out in very large numbers on 11 May to cast their ballots and express their will to elect their Provincial and National representatives. The elections were credible and overall represented notable progress for Pakistan towards holding fully democratic elections. As well as the remarkable turnout of voters we also noted that there is a higher level of confidence in the Election Commission of Pakistan at the national level and a significantly improved voter registration process. Also the election day procedures were handled well in most areas.

However, the Mission also raised a number of concerns, including: the level of violence in some parts of the country impacted on the democratic process; and, the level of women's participation as voters and candidates, despite some improvements and a positive trajectory, still requires further work.

What was remarkable, though, was that despite the level of violence against the process by militants, there was a determination by political parties to remain engaged in the process and ensure it was not derailed. Also, the high turnout of voters was in spite of threats of violence and reports of actual violence. These two factors bode well for the further consolidation of democracy in the country.

We have offered a number of recommendations in our Final Report to help improve the process. This Mission will now depart from Pakistan and we would very much like to thank you for this opportunity. It has been a highly rewarding experience for us all. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for all its support to the Observer Mission. We hope we have made a contribution to Pakistan and its people and to the Commonwealth's continuing engagement here.


Hon Sir Douglas Kidd KNZM
Chairperson



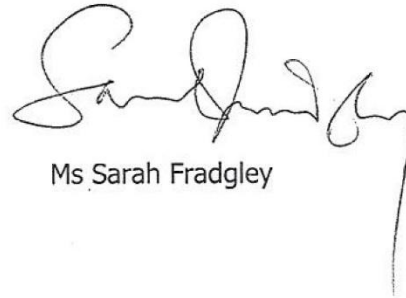
Mr Irfan Abdool Rahman



Dr Zahurul Alam



Dr Carey Francis (C.F.) Onyango Awino



Ms Sarah Fradgley



Mr Henry Hogger



Ms Sheila Roseau, CM



Ms Pauline Welsh