Almost 6,000 Afghan citizens in 33 of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces have stepped forward as Candidates for the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council elections on September 18, 2005.

At the closure of Candidate Nominations at 4.00 pm Monday May 23 in all provinces except Nangarhar, a total of 5,995 Afghan men and women had filed nomination papers to run as candidates for the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of the National Assembly) and Provincial Council elections.

“This enthusiastic response shows the Afghan people’s eagerness to embrace this opportunity to represent their people and participate in building legislative institutions for our nation,” said the Chairman of the Joint Electoral Management Body, Mr Bissmillah Bissmil.

In 33 provinces, a total of 2,893 people had nominated themselves as Wolesi Jirga candidates, including 69 Kuchis and 344 women, of which six are Kuchi women.

A total of 3,102 Afghans had come forward as candidates for Provincial Councils in 33 provinces, including 279 women.

The Candidate Nomination period, which began April 30, was extended beyond its original May 19 deadline after security problems forced the closure of some provincial Candidate Nomination offices.

The deadline was extended by three days in all provinces except Nangarhar, where the deadline was extended by six days to make up for the longer closure of the Candidate Nomination office in that province.

Candidate Nominations resumed in Nangarhar on Wednesday, May 18 and will end at 4.00 pm Thursday, May 26.

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