



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

### **What are the responsibilities of a President?**

The President is the leader of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. He or she is democratically elected, and serves for a period of five years. A President may not serve for more than two five-year terms.

The President of Afghanistan is responsible to: Supervise the implementation of the national Constitution; endorse laws and judicial decrees; act as Commander-in-Chief of the national armed forces; make decisions to defend territorial integrity and preserve the nation's independence; Convene the *Loya Jirga* (advisory council); inaugurate the National Assembly and *Loya Jirga* sessions; accept the resignations of vice-presidents of the Republic; appoint Afghan political representation to foreign states, and international organizations and accept foreign diplomatic representations to Afghanistan.

In accord with legal provisions, he or she may: appoint and dismiss judges, officers of the armed forces, police, national security and senior officials; conclude international treaties; reduce or pardon penalties; bestow medals, insignias and honorary titles; and establish commissions to improve national administration.

With the approval of the National Assembly, he or she may: determine the fundamental lines of national policy; declare war and peace; declare and terminate a state of emergency; and dispatch armed forces outside of Afghanistan.

With the approval of the House of Representatives, he or she may: appoint and dismiss Ministers, the Attorney-General, the President of the Central Bank, the National Security President, the President of the Red Cross, the Supreme Court Judge and Justices of the Supreme Court (Constitution of Afghanistan, Article 64).

### **Who is eligible to be a Presidential candidate?**

To be a Presidential candidate, he or she must:

- Be a citizen of Afghanistan, Muslim, born of Afghan parents and not be the citizen of another country;
- Be 40 years of age or older, on the day of his or her candidacy;
- Not have been convicted of crimes against humanity or other criminal act, and must not be deprived of his or her civil rights by court;
- Not command or belong to any non-official military force; and
- Not have served as President for two terms already.

### **How is the President elected?**

In order to be elected President, a candidate requires an absolute majority of votes. Specifically, this means that the winning candidate must have more than 50% (effectively, 50% +1 vote) of the valid ballots cast in the election. If neither candidate has received 50% (+1 vote) of the valid ballots cast, a "run off" (second election) will, if possible, be held within the given 6-week timeframe. In this case, only



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the two candidates with the highest number of votes in the first election will compete. Of these two, the candidate with the most votes will be declared President.

### **How do voters make known their choice of Presidential candidate?**

All candidates running for the position of President will be identified on a blue ballot, by their name, photograph, symbol and number. Candidates representing a registered political party will use the party symbol. Independent candidates will have the chance to present their own symbol or use symbols provided by the Independent Election Commission (IEC). In order to ensure the validity of their vote, voters should mark the box beside the candidate they support, and should make no other marks on the paper.