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International Observers Call for Electoral Reform to Enable Citizen Election Monitoring in Hungary

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The 2026 parliamentary elections in Hungary have been conducted in a polarized and contested political environment. Voter mobilization as well as international attention to these elections were extremely high as its outcome may have far-reaching consequences not only for the future of Hungary but also of its neighboring countries and the European Union as a whole.

Four independent non-partisan international election observer groups were present around the parliamentary elections of 12 April: the European Platform for Democratic Elections (EPDE), the European Dialogue and Democracy Association (EDDA) from Norway, Silba - Initiative for Dialogue and Democracy from Denmark, and Agora Election Observation (AEO). They have deployed 124 election experts from 23 countries.

They met with a variety of electoral stakeholders, including representatives of political parties, civil society, independent media, researchers, and the National Election Office. They visited 533 polling stations and vote-count on election day.

Additionally, 47 Hungarian volunteers assisted the observation teams as interpreters during election day. This common effort constituted an act of European solidarity for the citizens of Hungary standing for their right to vote and their right to observe their elections.

The international observers are concerned that according to current legislation Hungarian citizens are deprived of the right to observe their elections. As Stefanie Schiffer, Chair of the Board of the EPDE, noted: *"Hungarian citizens should finally have the right to observe their own elections. A democracy that excludes its own people from scrutinizing the electoral process cannot claim to be fully accountable."*

We recommend to include into any forthcoming electoral reform process in Hungary a comprehensive regulation for citizen election observation in line with international standards and Hungary's OSCE commitments. We recommend that citizen election observers are allowed to observe all aspects of the electoral process, including voter and candidate registration, campaign finance and the complaints and appeals process. They should have the right to observe the work of election commissions at all levels and attend their meetings, the right to follow election day procedures, including the vote count and tabulation. Only then will Hungarian citizens and organized civil society be able to meaningfully contribute to the integrity of the country's elections, including by proposing evidence-based recommendations for electoral reform.

We are very grateful to Commit Global for providing us with the Vote Monitor App, part of the Infrastructure for Good developed by Commit Global.

For further information or media inquiries, please contact:

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