Promoting Fair and Transparent Elections – Media Meeting in Kabul

Kabul, 18th October 2018 – Today, the 18th Media Meeting took place in Kabul. Three experts and more than 50 journalists exchanged ideas and thoughts about the upcoming parliamentary elections and their importance for Afghanistan. Further, they discussed ways for media and civil society to contribute to a fair and transparent process. The Afghan-German Cooperation's programme Monitoring, Evaluation and Communication (MEC) hosted the event.

The panellists presented their views and concluded that media and civil society play a significant role in promoting transparency and people's participation as well as by raising awareness. This way, they can contribute to fair and just elections. The Deputy spokesperson of the Independent Election Commission Afghanistan (IEC), Ms Shima Alam Sorush, emphasised: "The IEC is in constant contact with media and journalists. We are committed to providing information throughout the whole election process."

Addressing media's and civil society's importance, the Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan's (FEFA) Executive Director, Mr Mohammad Yousuf Rasheed, commented: "Media organisations, committed journalists and civil society institutions paved the way for electoral reform in our country. They raised their voices and held the government accountable. We hope that media remain as committed in the future."

Appreciating media's role in informing the electorate about candidates and their programmes, the Head of the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee (AJSC), Mr Sediqullah Tawhidi, stated enthusiastically: "While also airing paid advertisements by candidates, almost all media outlets have presented special programmes aimed at informing the electorate neutrally."

After the speeches, the panellists entered a lively discussion with the audience and answered questions from national and local TV, radio and newspaper journalists. Media help to allow the electorate to make a better-informed decision during elections. They further promote transparency by reporting on the process and potential inconsistencies, increasing accountability.

"Media Meetings 2018 – Afghan Media for Social Responsibility" are regular events held by the Afghan-German Cooperation and Mediothek. These meetings bring together experts from the public sector, civil society, development organisations and media to discuss important development issues. So far, 17 Media Meetings took place in Kabul, Mazar-e Sharif, Herat and Feyzabad. On average, about 80 media representatives participate in each session.