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# PRESS RELEASE

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
**Office of the Spokesman**

**For Immediate Release**  
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**Statement by Adam Ereli, Deputy Spokesman**

**Azerbaijan Parliamentary Elections**

The United States believes that the November 6 parliamentary elections were an improvement over previous elections in some areas. However, we share the preliminary assessment of the OSCE Observer Mission that, despite these improvements, the elections did not meet a number of international standards.

The Government of Azerbaijan's decision to allow large numbers of candidates to register and provide them with greater access to the media gave voters a real choice on election day. Implementation of measures outlined in the May 11 and October 25 Presidential decrees, including allowing exit polls and extensive monitoring by domestic and foreign observers, improved voter lists, and finger inking all contributed to a more orderly and transparent vote.

We are disturbed, however, by credible reports in selected districts around the country of major irregularities and fraud that may have disenfranchised voters in those districts. Flaws included credible reports of serious violations in vote counting and tabulation as well as intimidation of observers. The OSCE's preliminary assessment also noted significant problems in the pre-election period. These irregularities, if left uncorrected, would harm the improvements we have noted.

We note President Aliyev's stated intent to take corrective action. The United States looks to his government to do so in those districts where impartial and transparent

investigations show that irregularities and fraud affected the results. We call on all citizens of Azerbaijan to address complaints about election violations through legal and peaceful channels and to refrain from violence. We urge the government of Azerbaijan to allow for peaceful freedom of assembly and to exercise restraint in responding to protests.