



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION
ISLAMABAD

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Australia announces \$4.2 million to support the Election Commission of Pakistan

The Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Peter Heyward today announced an additional US\$4.2 million commitment to support the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

The funding is additional to Australia's initial contribution of US\$3.2 million provided in 2011-12, bringing Australia's total contribution to the ECP to US\$ 7.4 million.

"Australia is making this commitment to support transparent, credible and inclusive elections in Pakistan," Mr Heyward said.

"Pakistan's upcoming elections are an important milestone for the country. For the first time in its history, Pakistan has the opportunity to transfer from one democratically elected government to another.

"Australia recognises the significance of this moment in Pakistan's history and is ready to support it," he said.

The Electoral Cycle Support to the ECP Project has been developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to help ECP deliver its five year (2010-2014) Strategic Plan. It aims to increase the capacity of the ECP, strengthen electoral laws and procedures around elections, and improve engagement of citizens, particularly women and youth, in electoral processes.

"The AusAID funding that I am announcing today will support the ECP through the upcoming general elections and assist it to develop its capacity further in the post election period," Mr Heyward said.

With the aid of project funding, polling staff training is well underway and 65,000 transparent ballot boxes are ready for use on polling day. The ECP and UNDP have also been working closely with UN Women to launch mass media campaigns to educate and mobilise voters to cast their vote.

Other donors to the Electoral Cycle Support to the ECP Project include the European Union, Norway, Japan, the United States and the UNDP.