

Annex 3

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Press release 20 April 1997

ELECTIONS IN BULGARIA 19 APRIL 1997

A Delegation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, led by Bjørg Hope Galtung of the Parliament of the Norway, monitored elections in Bulgaria on 19 April 1997. On 17 April the Delegation met with the representatives of the Central Electoral Commission. On 18 April the Delegation met with leaders of United Democratic Forces, Democratic Left, National Salvation Alliance, Bulgarian Business Block and the Euro-Left. The Delegation also met with several representatives of the diplomatic corps in Bulgaria.

On election day, members of the Delegation visited over 100 polling stations in several parts of Bulgaria, including Sofia, Butevgrad, Jablanica, Pancerevo, Pleven, Plovdiv, Kurdzhali, Doliko, Gabrovo and Turnovo as well as rural areas.

The Delegation concludes that Bulgarian law provides citizens with sufficient opportunities to freely express their will in the electoral process.

The election authorities appeared to have performed their duties in a professional, efficient and orderly manner. This goes, in particular, for the authorities in polling stations. The Delegation takes this opportunity to congratulate them for their contribution to the democratic process in Bulgaria.

Based on its findings the Delegation concludes that the elections were carried out in a free and fair manner. This was an important achievement in consolidation of Bulgarian democracy.

The composition of the Delegation is attached. The Delegation will issue its detailed report shortly. Further information can be obtained from the International Secretariat in Copenhagen by Deputy Secretary General of the OSCE PA Pentti Väänänen or Ms. Birgit Laukkanen.