

News from Copenhagen

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Rerun Preparations in Azerbaijan

On December 15-16 2000, Ms. Asta Johannesdottir (MP, Iceland) travelled to Baku to discuss the measures undertaken by the authorities to address violations during the 5 November parliamentary elections and to review preparations for the rerun elections scheduled in 11 constituencies where the results had been cancelled. In Baku meetings were held with the President of Azerbaijan, the Head of the Presidential Administration, the Chairman of the CEC and as well as the main opposition parties. The visit was organized in conjunction with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the OSCE/ODIHR. Paul LeGendre, Program Officer, accompanied Ms. Johannesdottir.

The Elections

Ms. Paula Kokkonen (MP, Finland), Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, led the OSCE observers in the 7 January rerun elections in Azerbaijan. In a joint statement with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the International Election Observation Mission concluded that "the repeat elections in Azerbaijan mark some improvement, but still do not meet a number of international standards." The OSCE PA delegation was represented by parliamentarians from Finland, Iceland, Italy and Belgium. Paul LeGendre, Program Officer, accompanied the delegation on behalf of the International Secretariat.

President Severin leads OSCE Observation of Serbian Elections

President Adrian Severin was appointed by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office as her Special Representative to lead the OSCE Observation Mission for the Parliamentary Elections in Serbia on 23 December 2000 and to deliver the preliminary post election statement. The Election Observation Mission was a joint effort of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the OSCE/ODIHR and the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly. The OSCE PA observation team included twenty-six parliamentarians from fifteen OSCE Member States

The OSCE Observers concluded that the Serbian elections marked considerable progress in meeting international standards for democratic elections. Voting was conducted in a

generally calm atmosphere and both polling and counting procedures were followed accurately in accordance with the law. In the pre-election period, fundamental freedoms were respected and the media environment has improved significantly since the September 2000 elections generally providing a diversity of political views. It was noted, however, that although the amended version of the electoral law presented a step forward, further developments in the legislative framework is needed. During the December elections, the multi-party election administration managed to overcome many of the flaws in the legislation through regulations.

Prior to Election Day, the OSCE PA Delegation held a series of

meetings with, among others, the Speaker of the House of Citizens, the President of the Republic Election Commission, international as well as local NGO's, media representatives, political parties and the ODIHR Core staff in Belgrade and OSCE Long-term Observers. On Election Day, Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Delegation visited polling stations in Belgrade city, the greater Belgrade area, Novi Sad, Cacak, Valjavo, Topola and Niz.

The Delegation was accompanied by Secretary General, Mr. Spencer Oliver as well as Mr. Paul LeGendre; Ms. Tina Schön and Mr. Alexander Staun-Rechnitzer.

Presidential visit to FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

From 14-24 December 2000 President Severin visited the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia including Kosovo to meet senior government representatives, political leaders and visit the OSCE Missions and Offices in the area.

In FYR of Macedonia (14-16 December), Mr. Severin was briefed by the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission in Skopje on the political situation in the area surrounding, as well as within the country. Mr. Severin had meetings with the President of Macedonia, Boris Trajkovski; the President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Stojan Andov; the Prime Minister, Mr. Ljubco Georgievski as well as with leading opposition party leaders including Mr. Arben Xhaferi of the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA), Mr. Branko Crvenkovski of the Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia (SDSM) and Mr. Risto Gushterov of the Liberal Party. Whilst in Macedonia Mr. Severin chaired a session of a conference arranged by the Italian Social Science Council entitled 'Project Macedonia'. Other participants in the Seminar included former President Gligorov and editor of *Koha Ditore* a Kosovo daily, Mr. Veton Surroi.

In Kosovo (17-18 December) Mr. Severin was briefed by the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Ambassador



President Severin and President of the FYR of Macedonia, Mr. Stojan Andov

Daan Everts and had meetings with the UN Special Representative Mr. Bernard Kouchner, with the Commander of KFOR, Lt. Gen. Carlo Cabigiosu as well as with representatives of political parties and communities, including Dr. Ibrahim Rugova of the Democratic Alliance of Kosovo (LDK), Mr. Haradin Kuqi of the Party of Democratic Progress of Kosovo (PDK) and Serb representative Mr. Momcilo Trajkovic.

In Montenegro (18-20 December) Mr. Severin was briefed by the OSCE/ODIHR Office in Podgorica and accompanied by the Head of Office, Mr. Julian Peel Yates during meetings with the President of Montenegro, Mr. Milo Djukanovic; Speaker of Parliament, Mr. Svetozar Marovic; Prime Minister Filip Vujanovic;

Minister of Justice and President of the People's Party (NS), Mr. Dragan Soc; President of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Mr. Zarko Rakcevic and with Vice-President of the Socialist People's Party (SNP), Mr. Predrag Bulatovic.

In Belgrade (20-24 October) Mr. Severin had meetings with the Yugoslav Foreign Minister Mr. Goran Svilanovic and the Chief of Staff to President Kostunica, Mrs. Liljana Nedelcovic and concluded his visit to the area by acting as the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Austrian Foreign Minister Mrs. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, for the observation of the Serbian Elections held on the 23 December 2000.