

'Tangible progress' in Kyrgyzstan elections



Special Co-ordinator for the elections, Kimmo Kiljunen delivered the preliminary post-election statement, July 11.

During the press conference following the 10 July Early Presidential election in Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Kimmo Kiljunen (MP, Finland) related the findings of the observers that "tangible progress" had been made by the

Kyrgyz Republic towards meeting OSCE commitments, as well as other international standards for democratic elections. Fundamental civil and political rights were generally respected and there was an improved media environment. Appointed as Special Co-ordinator for the short-term observation by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Mr. Kiljunen continued by stating that he was "pleased to note the increased political will to hold democratic elections this time around. The election marked a clear progress, although the quality of the process deteriorated during the vote count."

The Election Observation Mission was a joint undertaking of the ODIHR, OSCE PA and the European Parliament. It consisted of 340 observers from 45 countries, which was the highest number of countries participating in an election observation on behalf of these organizations. Mr. Kiljunen headed the OSCE PA delegation which consisted of 18 Members of Parliament from 10 countries. Mr. Paul LeGendre, Programme Officer, accompanied the delegation on behalf of the International Secretariat.

Albanian elections competitive, with procedural shortcomings

While most members of the OSCE PA were participating in the Annual Session in Washington DC, the OSCE PA nevertheless managed to send a group of 24 participants from 10 countries to observe the parliamentary elections in Albania, July 3 2005. In a press conference held the following day, the international observation mission delivered the preliminary conclusions which said in essence that the elections "were competitive and the people were provided with a diversity of information. The voters were obviously dedicated to making use of their rights, and the local voting commissions were determined to have free and fair elections." Nonetheless, state and local authorities and major political parties failed to demonstrate sufficient political will corresponding to their responsibilities in the electoral process.

After extensive briefings, which included meetings with leading candidates of all parties, the OSCE Parliamentarians observed the voting and vote counting in over 120 polling stations throughout the country. Despite the PA's Annual Session taking place at the same time, the OSCE PA fielded the largest parliamentary delegation to the elections, which together with 20 participants from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and eight from the European

Parliament, contributed their expertise as parliamentary and political practitioners to the overall election observation mission of the OSCE, which included a total of 408 short-term observers from 36 OSCE participating States, deployed in over 1,200 voting and 82 counting centres.

Ambassador Andreas Nothelle, Special Representative of the OSCE PA in Vienna, coordinated the PA team's activities.



Mohammed Boukourna (MP, Belgium) taking notes at a local voting commission, with interpreter Blerina Shytilla.