

# News from Copenhagen

## Kyrgyzstan elections competitive, observers say, highlighting possible reforms

Kyrgyzstan's 4 October parliamentary elections were competitive and provided voters with a wide range of choice, while the manner in which they were administered highlighted the need for better procedures and increased transparency, observers concluded in a statement issued Monday.

"These lively and competitive elections were unique in this region as, until 8 o'clock last night, nobody knew what the composition of the parliament would be," said Ignacio Sanchez Amor (MP, Spain), Special Co-ordinator of the short-term OSCE observer mission. "Impressive efforts were made to implement biometric registration and new voting technologies, but procedural shortcomings point to the need for further work."

While the use of new voting technologies, signaling the political will to improve elections, was successful in many respects, the hurried introduction of biometric registration resulted in significant problems in the inclusiveness of the voter list. This, concerns over ballot secrecy and significant procedural problems during the vote count were the main issues that tarnished what was a generally smooth election day, observers said.

Ivana Dobesova (MP, Czech Republic), Head of the OSCE



PA delegation, noted the positive impact of televised debates on the electoral process. "The embrace of live debates, enabling voters to clearly compare their candidates, was a welcome addition to what became a vibrant campaign," she said. "The expectation that politicians should be held accountable in front of television audiences is, for this region, a rare but healthy practice."

The OSCE PA delegation consisted of 23 MPs from 14 countries and worked closely with colleagues from the OSCE/ODIHR, PACE and the European Parliament. The observation mission was supported by OSCE PA Director of Elections Andreas Baker, Programme Officer Maria Chepurina, Operations Officer Iryna Sabashuk, and Research Assistant Belek Ibraev.

## OSCE PA participates in OSCE Code of Conduct Workshop

OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on South East Europe, Roberto Battelli (MP, Slovenia), and the PA's Special Representative in Vienna, Ambassador Andreas Nothelle, are participating this week in the Joint Serbian-Swiss OSCE Code of Conduct Workshop, taking place from 6-9 October in Belgrade.



Roberto Battelli speaks at the Belgrade workshop, 7 Oct. 2015.

In his presentation at the workshop Wednesday, Battelli emphasized how important the Parliamentary Assembly considers the Code of Conduct in promoting democratic oversight and control of the armed forces and intelligence services. Battelli also highlighted two recent resolutions adopted by the Assembly, in Baku (2014) and Helsinki (2015), which specifically call on participating States to increase their implementation of the Code of Conduct.

The workshop is part of an ongoing effort of the consecutive Swiss and Serbian OSCE Chairmanship to raise awareness on the politico-military and operational provisions of the Code of Conduct on Politico Military Aspects of Security. Battelli's and Nothelle's participation in the workshop continues Thursday.

## Delegation from Turkmenistan's Parliament, OSCE Centre visit PA HQ



A delegation from the Mejlis (Parliament) of Turkmenistan, accompanied by officials from the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, visited the OSCE PA International Secretariat in Copenhagen on 2 October to discuss further co-operation. OSCE PA Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares provided an overview of recent Assembly activities and initiatives, welcoming the Mejlis's increasing interest and participation.

Mammetmyrat Geldinyazov, the Head of Science, Education and Youth Policy Committee in the Mejlis, and Gulshat Mammedova, the Head of Social Policy Committee in the Mejlis, spoke about recent developments in Turkmenistan. Vardon Deniz Hoca, Programme Manager at the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, highlighted the Centre's ongoing projects. Turkmen parliamentarians Rejepgeldi Meredov and Ayshat Gojenova, along with Kurban Babayev, National Adviser at the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, and Ejobay Charyyeva of Turkmenistan's National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, also participated.