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**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Election Observation
Mission of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

**Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security
and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly
(OSCE PA)**

**Ukraine
February 5 - 8, 2010**

Report

On February 7, 2010, Senator Consiglio Di Nino led a Canadian delegation composed of Mr. David Christopherson, M.P., Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P., Ms. Monique Guay, M.P. and Ms. Martha Hall Findlay, M.P. to take part in the International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) of the second round of Ukraine's presidential election. The following report is mainly based on the "Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions", as published by the IEOM on February 8, 2010.

About 600 short-term observers were deployed as part of the IEOM, including a 69-member delegation from the OSCE PA. In total, there were observers from 45 OSCE participating States. The IEOM observed voting in some 2,000 polling stations out of a total of 33,667, counting in 194 polling stations and tabulation in 150 District Election Commissions (DECs). The Mission was deployed at the invitation of the Government of Ukraine, pursuant to commitments made by all OSCE participating states.

Ukraine's run-off presidential election confirmed the IEOM assessment that the electoral process met most OSCE and Council of Europe commitments.

Observers noted that the election consolidated progress achieved since 2004. But they also concluded that the lack of mutual trust between the candidates and the deficient legal framework were at the root of the problems observed and constitute an immediate challenge for the new leadership. The professional, transparent and honest voting and counting should serve as a solid foundation for a peaceful transition of power.

Despite shortcomings, the existing legal framework can still provide a basis for holding democratic elections, as confirmed by the first round. However, the provisions in the election law concerning the second round leave important aspects unaddressed and others open to varying interpretations.

Generally, the election commissions were cooperative and granted the observers access to their sessions and documents. Despite rising political tension, the Central Electoral Commission continued to be efficient and to operate mostly in a nonpartisan manner.

The voter lists for the second round contained 36,518,290 voters, an increase of 215,817 compared to the first round final voter lists.

The candidates were able to campaign freely in a competitive, yet polarized election environment. The campaign atmosphere was negatively affected by mutual accusations of fraud, last minute amendments to the election law and attempts to remove the heads of key institutions for partisan purposes. Institutions with an important role to play in the election process became engulfed in a pre-election power struggle.

The media generally provided voters with an opportunity to make an informed choice. Political talk shows on private and state owned TV stations offered the public a variety of opinions and an opportunity for candidates to discuss policy issues. Overall, they granted candidates more balanced coverage than newscasts and the journalists made an effort to provide an equal amount of time to the contestants.

On election day, voting was conducted in an orderly, professional and transparent manner across the country in a calm atmosphere. IEOM observers assessed the voting process as good or very good in 98 per cent of the polling stations visited. Commission members managed the process in a professional manner without serious violations or incidents. Voting at special polling stations (prisons, hospitals) was assessed less positively. The large presence of domestic and international observers in polling stations throughout election day enhanced the transparency of the process. Party or candidate observers were present in 9 out of 10 polling stations visited, and observers from civil society in 4 out of 10.

The Canadian delegation attended an all-day briefing session in Kiev on February 5 as well as area specific briefings in their respective deployment places on February 6. Senator Consiglio Di Nino was deployed in Kiev, M.P. David Christopherson in Kharkiv, M.P. Peter Goldring in Donetsk, M.P. Monique Guay in Sevastopol and M.P. Martha Hall Findlay in Odessa. All delegates were also able to attend either their regional debriefings or the Kiev debriefing on February 8.

The delegation issued a press release on February 8, a copy of which is attached as appendix 1.

The full preliminary report prepared by the IEOM is available in English at www.oscepa.org.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Senator Consiglio Di Nino,

Director

Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation
in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
ACTIVITY	Election Observation Mission of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
DESTINATION	Ukraine
DATES	February 5 – 8, 2010
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Senator Consiglio Di Nino
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. David Christopherson, M.P. Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P. Ms. Monique Guay, M.P. Ms. Martha Hall Findlay, M.P.
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$22,731.77
ACCOMMODATION	\$3,921.60
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$2,366.64
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$239.03
TOTAL	\$29,259.04



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 8, 2010

Election Observation Mission of Canadian Parliamentarians: Ukraine chooses Viktor Yanukovich as President

Ottawa, February 8, 2010 – Five members of the Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), led by the Honourable Consiglio Di Nino, Senator, participated in the International Election Observation Mission in Ukraine¹.

In the second round of the Presidential Election held February 7, 2010, Ukrainians chose Mr. Yanukovich as their new President. The preliminary results favored Mr. Yanukovich over the current Prime Minister, Ms. Yulia Tymoshenko by a margin of about 3%. Official results will be announced later. These elections were judged to conform to most OSCE and Council of Europe standards and of very good quality.

The hard fought and at times bitter campaign gave Ukrainians a clear choice, resulting in some 70% of eligible voters casting their ballots, despite difficult weather conditions in many parts of the country.

“Clearly the real winners in this election are the Ukrainian people who have passionately embraced democracy”, said Senator Di Nino, Head of the Canadian Delegation to the OSCE PA.

Also participating in the International Election Observation Mission were Members of Parliament David Christopherson from Hamilton Centre, Peter Goldring from Edmonton East, Monique Guay from Rivière-du-Nord and Martha Hall Findlay from Willowdale.

Observing the election from Kharkiv, David Christopherson explained: “Our focus was on the process of a free, fair and transparent election which, from my personal observations, they succeeded in achieving.”

From Donetsk, Peter Goldring said: “The legacy of the Orange Revolution, the free expression of democratic will, was demonstrated fully at the many polls I visited. Ukrainians I spoke with on election day were confident this was a free and fair election.”

¹ www.oscepa.org

Monique Guay was observing the election in Crimea, a region she qualified as distinctive for historical purposes. She added: "We have observed more enthusiasm for the second round than with the first round. Turnout was higher since the issue was greater. Democracy has spoken, it must now be respected."

From Odessa, Martha Hall Findlay concluded: "This election is a positive legacy of the Orange Revolution of 2004, which discarded a flawed election and forced a second one that ultimately, democratically, reflected the will of the Ukrainian people. The conduct of this election shows that Ukrainians have embraced democracy, and its key elements of an open media, due and transparent process, and vigorous challenge and debate. I was proud to have participated even in a small way."

- 30 -

For information, please contact:

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