



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's
Election Observation Mission in Ukraine**

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

Ukraine

September 30, 2007

Report

On September 30, 2007, Senator Consiglio Di Nino, Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P., Mr. Luc Malo, M.P., Mrs. Peggy Nash, M.P. and Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij, M.P., took part in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly's International Election Observation Mission of the parliamentary elections in Ukraine.

The September 30 parliamentary elections in Ukraine were conducted mostly in line with international commitments and standards for democratic elections and confirm an open and competitive environment for the conduct of election processes, the OSCE-led International Election Observation Mission concluded in a joint preliminary statement today.

Some 140 parliamentarians and 570 short-term observers monitored the elections for the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), the European Parliament (EP) and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, (NATO PA).

These elections followed a political crisis which developed in spring 2007 between the President and the ruling coalition, largely stemming from a lack of clarity in the respective powers and Constitutional prerogatives of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers, compounded by ineffective checks and balances. It ended on 27 May when the President, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament agreed to hold parliamentary elections on 30 September.

The September 30, 2007 pre-term parliamentary elections were the fifth held since the independence of Ukraine in 1991. The last parliamentary elections, held on March 26, 2006 and were assessed as having been conducted largely in line with OSCE Commitments, although certain shortcomings were noted with regard to the formation of election commissions, the work of the Constitutional Court, and the voter registration process.

The Parliament of Ukraine consists of 450 members elected in a nationwide multi-member constituency for a five-year term. Mandates are distributed proportionally among lists of political parties and blocs receiving more than three per cent of votes cast.

The campaign was generally calm and a diverse media environment provided for broad coverage of the campaign. There were, however, cases of hidden political advertising and campaigning by State and local officials who were not candidates.

Voters had a diverse choice of candidates and parties and the fundamental freedoms of assembly and expression were respected. However, recent amendments to the election law adopted as a part of a compromise to end the political crisis, impacted negatively on the election process.

Election Day was calm and overall, voting was conducted in an orderly and transparent manner throughout the country. Voter turnout reached 62 per cent according to official CEC data. Observers assessed the voting process as good or very good in 98 per cent

of polling stations visited; there were no significant regional variations in this assessment. The main problems observed during voting were connected with the poor quality and accuracy of Voters Lists. The count was assessed positively, though procedures were not always strictly adhered to.

“Despite difficult circumstances, these elections were conducted in a positive and professional manner. The high turnout on election day was the Ukrainian people’s contribution to overcoming the political crisis. It is now the turn of the political forces to deliver,” said Tone Tingsgaard, the Special Co-ordinator of the short-term election observers and Vice President of the OSCE PA.

Adrian Severin, who headed the European Parliament delegation, said: “We have observed that during the electoral campaign all main political parties in Ukraine expressed the desire to see their country fully integrate into the EU, to positively contribute to Europe’s relations with Russia, as well as to carry out a comprehensive constitutional reform at home. In order to accomplish these goals, it is essential for all Ukrainian political forces to respect the free will expressed by the Ukrainian people, to form a stable government which would respect the pre-electoral consensus for power-sharing between the coalition and opposition and thereby to start realizing an ambitious national reform agenda.”

“We were concerned by the problems with the voter lists, which were mainly due to the specific circumstances of this pre-term election, but I was very encouraged by the orderly and transparent processes we witnessed on election day,” said the Head of the NATO PA delegation, Jan Petersen.

Hanne Severinsen, the Head of the PACE delegation, said: "Politicians must start playing by the rules instead of playing with the rules. The electoral law was not perfect and the amendments introduced during the political crisis failed to improve it. This was apparent from the number of people losing their right to vote because of traveling. Nevertheless, I was heartened by the efforts of the electoral administrators to remedy the situation and secure voter rights. Now it is time for the politicians to meet the expectations of the society and not just work for political self interest."

While amendments to the law, the poor quality of voter lists and possible disenfranchisement of voters who crossed the borders after August 1 caused concern, observers in all parts of Ukraine reported that many voters not on the lists were nevertheless allowed to cast their ballot. An additional concern was the removal of legal provisions safeguarding the integrity of homebound voting.

Members of the Canadian Delegation were deployed to various area of Ukraine. Senator Di Nino, in his capacity as Deputy Head of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s Election Monitoring Team stayed in Kyiv on Election Day, whereas Mr. Goldring went to Poltava/Lubny area; Mr. Malo to Dnipropetrovsk; Mrs. Nash to Kharkiv and Mr. Wrzesnewskij to the Sebastopol/Yalta region.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Senator Consiglio Di Nino
Director, OSCE
Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA)
ACTIVITY	OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Election Observation Mission in Ukraine
DESTINATION	Ukraine
DATES	September 30, 2007
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Senator Consiglio Di Nino
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Peter Goldring, M.P., Mr. Luc Malo, M.P., Mrs. Peggy Nash, M.P., Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj, M.P.
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$63,924.54
ACCOMMODATION	\$10,924.27
HOSPITALITY	\$0
PER DIEMS	\$3,358.26
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$17.37
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$1,509.86
TOTAL	\$79,734.30