

Canada - Europe
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
Canada - Europe

OSCE PA

AP OSCE

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
to the Election Observation Mission of the OSCE
Parliamentary Assembly in Moldova**

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

**Moldova
April 2-7, 2009**

Report

On April 5, 2009, Mr. David Christopherson, M.P., took part in the International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) for the parliamentary elections in Moldova. The IEOM was a joint undertaking of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), and the European Parliament (EP). The following report is mainly based on the “Preliminary Post-Election Statement of the International Election Observation Mission”, as published by the IEOM on April 6, 2009.

On April 5, 2009, some 400 short-term observers were deployed throughout Moldova, observing about 1,300 polling stations out of a total of 1,977. Participating in the IEOM were 70 members of the OSCE PA delegation, 19 from PACE and 13 from the EP, the other observers being from 43 OSCE participating States. The OSCE/ODIHR opened offices on February 26, 2009, in Chisinau and in seven regional centres, deploying 42 experts and long-term observers of 23 OSCE participating States.

The elections were assessed for their compliance with the OSCE and Council of Europe commitments for democratic elections, as well as with Moldovan legislation. The “Preliminary Post-Election Statement of the International Election Observation Mission” was published prior to the completion of the election process, which means that the final assessment of the elections will depend, in part, on the conduct of the remaining stages of the election process, including the tabulation and announcement of results, and the handling of possible post-election day complaints or appeals. A comprehensive and final report will be issued by the OSCE/ODIHR approximately eight weeks after the completion of the election process.

The “Preliminary Post-Election Statement of the International Election Observation Mission” offered the following analysis:

“The 5 April 2009 parliamentary elections took place in an overall pluralistic environment, offering voters distinct political alternatives and meeting many of the OSCE and Council of Europe commitments. Further improvements are required to ensure an electoral process free from undue administrative interference and to increase public confidence. Voting on election day was well-organized and took place in a calm and peaceful atmosphere, without any major incidents reported. Observers noted good knowledge of electoral procedures both by election commission members and most voters. Counting was also assessed positively, but a number of significant procedural shortcomings were noted. Processing of results by District Electoral Councils requires further improvement.

The media provided contestants with opportunities to convey messages to the electorate, in particular through debates and paid airtime, and therefore allowed voters to make a more informed choice. However, the public broadcaster *Moldova 1* in its news offered preferential treatment of the authorities, blurring the distinction between the coverage of duties of top State officials and their campaign activities.

The IEOM noted the following additional positive aspects of the electoral process:

- Party lists and candidates were registered in an inclusive process;
- The Central Election Commission (CEC) operated in an overall professional and transparent manner;
- Electoral contestants were able to benefit from an improved framework for campaign rallies provided by the new Law on Public Assemblies;

However, the following shortcomings remain to be addressed:

- The campaign environment was affected by frequent allegations of intimidation, including by the police, of voters and candidates, and allegations of misuse of administrative resources. Some of these allegations were verified;
- Voter registration lacked uniformity and an adequate legal framework. Compilation of voter lists varied considerably among local government units, particularly with regard to the inclusion of voters residing abroad;
- The Audiovisual Co-ordination Council failed to act in a timely manner to address problems related to the media coverage of the campaign;
- The CEC Regulation on Media Coverage of the campaign included restrictions that were not in line with the principle of freedom of expression and access to information guaranteed by the Constitution.

The Election Code generally provided an adequate basis for the conduct of democratic elections. Nonetheless, the combination of the electoral threshold, prohibition of preelectoral alliances and the restriction of electoral rights of persons with multiple citizenship created obstacles for many political parties and candidates. In addition, the voter turnout requirement for an election to be valid allows for cycles of failed elections.

As in previous elections, voting did not take place on the territory that is, since 1992, under the *de facto* control of the Transdniestrian authorities. Voters residing in Transdniestria could vote at 10 special polling stations. In Corjova, a disputed commune on the eastern bank, voting was aggressively prevented during the day by a seemingly organized crowd.”¹

Mr. Christopherson was deployed to various areas both within and outside of the capital city of Chisinau.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. David Christopherson, M.P.
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 in Moldova
DESTINATION	Moldova
DATES	April 2-7, 2009
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. David Christopherson, M.P.
STAFF	
TRANSPORTATION	\$5,079.78
ACCOMMODATION	\$685.17
HOSPITALITY	\$0.00
PER DIEMS	\$349.84
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$133.96
TOTAL	\$6,248.75