

**Opening speech by Ambassador Andrew Tesoriere to  
the Donors Coordination Meeting on Electoral Assistance :  
16.00, 17 May 2011, OSCE Academy**

I am pleased to **welcome** you to this donor electoral coordination meeting. As you know, the meeting is chaired on a rotational basis by the OSCE CiB, UNDP and the EU Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic.

I hope through discussion we can shape the **agenda and outcomes** for today's meeting. As I understand, I would suggest there are two aims of this meeting (i) to reach a shared understanding of the probable content and calendar or timetable for the electoral framework and (ii) a shared understanding of the preparatory requirements for the forthcoming Presidential Election so that partners can start to prefigure their potential contributions.

The **context and background** is familiar to most in the room and so I shall not speak at length. But in summary we can say that this meeting comes at a vital stage in Kyrgyzstan's democratic development. The upcoming Presidential Elections will have a significant stabilizing impact for the country if held in line with democratic principles. The Kyrgyz authorities may request considerable support from the international community in organizing and administering the elections in line with international standards.

Promoting electoral reform on the basis of ODIHR Election Observation Mission recommendations and assistance in their implementation continue to be among the top priorities of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek (CiB).

The OSCE Centre has facilitated an official request for ODIHR commentary on the draft electoral laws and hopes that ODIHR and Venice Commission recommendations for the improvement of the electoral legislation will be taken into consideration.

The new electoral legislation, part of which was adopted by the Parliament last week, is likely to include a number of significant changes to the existing system. These changes, taken together with current momentum in other electoral developments, will benefit considerably from well-coordinated international electoral support. The OSCE CiB stands ready to discuss cooperation with all stakeholders on this matter, and this forum is the natural venue for focusing our future efforts in this crucial area.

According to our latest information, the final versions of the electoral laws are currently under preparation. The constitutional law on presidential and parliamentary elections was supposed to be finalized over the weekend, incorporating all last-minute changes from Friday's parliamentary debate. As for the law on election commissions, it was only adopted last Friday so it will probably take a few more days. The status and contents of the new legislation should certainly be addressed by our discussion today.

For the Presidential Elections, the OSCE CiB is planning to be involved in training of election commissioners, support to domestic observation, improving of voter lists, public awareness raising campaign, and voter education. We will welcome cooperation with stakeholders in these areas as well.