

Delegation of Kyrgyzstan

**STATEMENT BY MR. MURATBEK BAIHODJOEV,
CHARGÉ D’AFFAIRES AD INTERIM OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
TO THE OSCE, AT THE 762nd MEETING OF THE OSCE
PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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Mr. Chairman,

We are sorry that our delegation was unable to familiarize itself with the text of the statement in advance. The intention of the United States delegation to intervene only came to our notice a few minutes before the opening of the meeting, and we have only just received the text of the European Union (EU) statement. This is not good working practice on the part of the Organization and we hope that this does not turn into a habit or become part of the modus operandi of the Permanent Council. The concerns raised by the European Union and other delegations will be relayed to my capital.

Kyrgyzstan has been and remains a sovereign State and has the right to determine the method and format of monitoring in the country without prejudice to the outcomes, until international legislation should establish otherwise.

Kyrgyzstan has shown flexibility on the basis of the obligations contained in the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE (1990), the Document of the Budapest Summit of the CSCE (1994), and the Charter for European Security (1999). And it is that Charter which stipulates that States invite international observers, including observers from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), to monitor elections. It does not, however, set any parameters for the number and category of observers, nor does it contain any provisions authorizing the ODIHR to set such parameters. With regard to the number of long-term observers, we have departed from the framework suggested by the OSCE needs assessment mission and propose that they number 30 per cent of those invited; so there will be more of them accordingly.

Regarding the statements by the EU, Norway and other delegations about the possible ODIHR reaction, there can be none besides disappointment.

In his statement, the representative of the Czech Republic referred to so-called standard methodology. How can we talk about standard methodology if that document has not been collectively adopted? Certainly it merits attention, but at this juncture we can only speak of an internal ODIHR document.

Our delegation would like to stress that the presidential elections in the Kyrgyz Republic will be conducted with the greatest possible openness, honesty and transparency, and strictly in accordance with national legislation. The Central Election Commission will do its utmost to ensure that the candidates enjoy a level playing field and the citizens their suffrage. In particular, on election day, representatives of all the presidential candidates, who are entitled to a deliberative voice at the precinct commission, will attend the polling stations. In addition, a third of the precinct commissions will be made up of representatives of the political parties. Also, to provide evidence of transparency and honesty in the elections on 23 July 2009, there will be television broadcasts from the polling stations during voting, not only in Bishkek but in the other regions as well.

During the current election campaign, the Central Election Commission will consider the comments of the observers on the results of previous elections, most of which have already been taken into account, and the Commission's work will be informed by the Constitution and the Code "On elections in the Kyrgyz Republic".

Mr. Chairman,

The situation with elections both past and present in the OSCE area, whether presidential, parliamentary or municipal, regardless of their type and location, clearly shows that uniform, objective criteria and standards need to be devised for the monitoring and assessment of the election process by missions. What faith can we have in the objectivity of their monitoring when several OSCE participating States have still failed to legally establish the institution of international observer and have not established mechanisms for representatives of participating States, international organizations and national non-governmental organizations to access the polling stations? Hence the variable size of the international election observation mission, which sometimes does not carry out an observation at all, or only does so in a very limited form, or at other times ends up getting actively involved in the political process.

These circumstances make it all the more imperative to speed up the implementation of Brussels Ministerial Council Decision No. 19/06 on improving election observation activities. We believe that the ODIHR is in a position to do this.

In conclusion, we would note that we are all bound by the Copenhagen Document to take responsibility for its implementation. Therefore the activities of international observers must abide by the principles of the sovereign equality of States and respect for their territorial integrity and political independence.

We are all equal partners. Therefore all members of our Organization must be treated equally. We must all work together on the basis of rules which are uniform, generally acceptable and universally adopted within the Council.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.