

**2008 HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
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**Working Session 17, Democratic institutions
9 October 2008**

**Statement of the Delegation of
the Republic of Macedonia
on Democratic elections**

Mr. Moderator,

The early parliamentary elections in the Republic of Macedonia were held on 1st of June 2008. Upon the invitation of the Macedonian Government, OSCE/ODIHR established an Election Observation Mission.

The State Election Commission finished all the necessary preparations for the elections on time, which was assessed positively by the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission.

The Final report of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission states, inter alia, that "In most of the country the elections were procedurally well administered". However, during the electoral process, certain electoral irregularities and incidents were committed in the northern and western parts of the country. All the irregularities in the pre-election period and on the Election Day are noted in the report of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission. This report provides an objective analysis of the whole process and is a useful tool for the Macedonian authorities in upgrading the electoral legislation and practice.

Let me say few things on the actions taken by the authorities to address the irregularities during the election process and after. The State Election Commission annulled the voting results in 38 polling stations ex officio. Upon considering the complaints, voting results were also annulled in further 159 polling stations. In the appeal procedure, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Macedonia confirmed almost all decisions of the State Election Commission.

After having the second re-runs in small number of polling stations on 29 June, the elections were completed and all 120 members of the assembly were elected.

The State Election Commission dismissed the presidents of six municipal electoral commissions who were found to have performed their duty illegally, while several election commissions imposed relevant measures against members of electoral boards.

By the end of September, the Ministry of Interior, authorized representatives of political parties and citizens lodged 68 criminal charges with the Public Prosecutor's Office against 373 known perpetrators, as well as

5 criminal charges against unknown perpetrators. In 33 cases, requests for conducting investigation against 143 persons were submitted to the competent courts. Upon completion of investigation, in 6 cases indictments were brought against 19 persons. September this year inclusive, 2 convicting verdicts were passed against 4 persons and they were given prison sentences. For the other persons, the proceedings are pending and are at different stages. In this context, let me reiterate the commitment of the authorities to sanction all the persons responsible for election violations.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted an Action Plan for the implementation of Recommendations contained in the Final Report of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission. The Ministry of Justice has prepared amendments to the Electoral Code which encompasses all recommendations from the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report related to the legal framework, election administration, election campaign, voting procedures and media coverage. Upon completion of the government procedure, the amendments to the Electoral Code are expected to be soon adopted by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. The Electoral Code amendments will further regulate the issues of financing election campaigns, supervising the funding of the political parties and auditing the donations received by the political parties.

It is important to mention that the leaders of the political parties in Macedonia have debated the draft-amendments in a transparent way, by which their stance has been known to the public at large.

At the end, let me point to the fact that the existing Electoral Code supports a more balanced gender representation in the electoral process, as a result of which women are represented by 30% in the new Parliament. This is an achievement to be further built upon.