



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON ELECTIONS IN KYRGYZSTAN

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
21 December 2007

Mr. Chairman,

Norway joins the European Union in expressing concern over the way in which Kyrgyz parliamentary elections on 16 December were conducted. While appreciating that voting took place in a generally calm environment, the Norwegian delegation takes note of the preliminary conclusions drawn by the ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, stating that the parliamentary elections failed to meet a number of OSCE commitments. We would especially like to voice our concern regarding the reported lack of transparency in the compiling of voter lists, as well as in the counting and tabulation of the votes.

With twelve parties participating in the electoral contest, the Kyrgyz parliamentary elections exhibited promising pluralistic features. As noted by ODIHR and the OSCE PA, however, this pluralism was hampered by the de-registration of opposition candidates, abuse of administrative resources, and the failure of Kyrgyz media to provide adequate information for the voters to make an informed choice. Furthermore, we would like to express our concern regarding new provisions in the election law that may impact on the objective of proportional representation.

The active participation of both men and women in political life is an important feature of a genuine democracy, and Norway welcomes steps taken by Kyrgyz authorities in order to reach this goal through the introduction of a new gender quota on candidate lists.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, Norway would like to encourage Kyrgyz authorities to make full use of the expertise and support offered by the ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in the follow-up of the elections, in order to bring future elections in line with OSCE commitments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman