

CIO.GAL/52/04
18 June 2004

ENGLISH only



Bulgarian Chairmanship

Vienna, 18 June 2004

SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN DIMENSION MEETING ON *ELECTORAL STANDARDS AND COMMITMENTS*

Dear Colleagues,

Please find enclosed the agenda, annotated agenda and organizational modalities for the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Electoral Standards and Commitments, which will take place in Vienna on 15 and 16 July 2004.

Please circulate the attached information to relevant national NGOs.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Ivo Petrov".

Ivo Petrov

Chairman of the Permanent Council

To: All OSCE Delegations
All OSCE Institutions
OSCE Secretariat
OSCE Missions and Other Field Activities
OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
All Partners for Co-operation

SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN DIMENSION MEETING

“ELECTORAL STANDARDS AND COMMITMENTS”

**15-16 July 2004
HOFBURG, VIENNA**

AGENDA

- Day 1** **15 July 2004**
- 15.00 - 16.00 **OPENING SESSION:**
Opening remarks
A representative of the OSCE Chairmanship and ODIHR Director
- Keynote speeches*
- Technical information by the OSCE/ODIHR*
- 16.00 - 18.00 **Session I: The OSCE/ODIHR 2003 Progress Report “Existing
Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE Participating States”**
- Introductory speeches*
Discussion
- 18:30** *Reception offered by the OSCE Chairmanship*
- Day 2** **16 July 2004**
- 09.00 - 12.00 **Session II: Implementation of existing OSCE commitments for
democratic elections and follow-up on OSCE/ODIHR recommendations**
- Introductory speeches*
Discussion
- 12.00 - 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 16.00	Session III: Identification of possible areas for supplementing the existing OSCE commitments and the potential need for additional commitments. <i>Introductory speeches</i> <i>Discussion</i>
16.00 - 16.30	Break
16.30 - 17.30	CLOSING PLENARY: Reports by the Working Session Moderators Comments from the floor
17:30	Close of Day 2

SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN DIMENSION MEETING

“ELECTORAL STANDARDS AND COMMITMENTS”

15-16 July 2004
HOFBURG, VIENNA

ANNOTATED AGENDA

OVERVIEW:

The OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting entitled Electoral Standards and Commitments will focus on the following three areas:

- An overview of the OSCE/ODIHR 2003 Progress Report “Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE Participating States.” A discussion of universal election principles, existing OSCE commitments, and best practices for democratic elections.
- Implementation of existing OSCE commitments for democratic elections and follow-up to ODIHR recommendations in the key areas of civil and political rights of candidates and voters, unbiased state media coverage, fair access to media, modalities of election administration formation, compilation of accurate voter lists, vote count and tabulation, adjudication of election complaints and appeals, facilitation of women’s participation, enhanced inclusion of national minorities, access for disabled voters to the election process and observation by international observers and domestic observers (both partisan and non-partisan) with a view to enhancing transparency and confidence in the process.
- Identification of possible areas for supplementing the existing OSCE commitments and the potential need for additional commitments, taking into account current problem areas, as well as emerging challenges.

SESSIONS:

Session I: The OSCE/ODIHR 2003 Progress Report “Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE participating States”

The 2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council, in its Decision No. 5/03 (2 December 2003) welcomed the OSCE/ODIHR Progress Report on “Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE Participating States”. The document was developed by the ODIHR in 2003 to establish an inventory of existing election-related norms, commitments, principles and best practices that have emerged and been established since the adoption of the 1990 Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the

OSCE. Commonly known as the “Copenhagen Document”, this document has been acknowledged as one of the main texts setting forth principles for democratic elections in the OSCE region and has served to guide the election-related work of the OSCE/ODIHR for the last decade.

The 2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council also noted the importance and need for confidence by the electorate in elections, for transparency of election procedures, and for accountability on the part of authorities conducting elections. Further, the Ministerial Council tasked the Permanent Council, drawing on ODIHR expertise, to give consideration to the need for additional commitments on elections to supplement existing ones. The OSCE/ODIHR 2003 Progress Report “Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE Participating States” addresses the initial points since raised by the 2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council and is the basis for the discussion in Session I.

Issues that can be discussed in connection with this topic are universal election principles, existing OSCE commitments for democratic elections and best practices relevant to:

- Ensuring public confidence in elections;
- Guaranteeing the right to universal and equal suffrage;
- Providing for transparency in election procedures; and
- Requiring accountability on the part of authorities conducting elections.

Session II: Implementation of existing OSCE commitments for democratic elections and follow-up on OSCE/ODIHR recommendations

After a decade of experience with the Copenhagen Document and observation of more than 100 elections in the OSCE region, the OSCE/ODIHR has identified key areas of the electoral processes where implementation in the OSCE region has proved problematic and hindered the conduct of democratic elections. Moreover, the 2003 Ministerial Council in its Decision No. 5/03 tasked the ODIHR to consider ways to improve the effectiveness of its assistance to participating States in following up recommendations made in the ODIHR election observation reports.

Key areas that directly impact upon the fundamental principles of public confidence, universal and equal suffrage, transparency, and accountability and that can be discussed in connection with issues of implementation of existing OSCE commitments include:

- Civil and political rights of candidates and voters
- Unbiased state media coverage and fair access to the media
- Modalities of election administration formation
- Compilation of accurate voter lists
- Vote count and tabulation
- Adjudication of election complaints and appeals

- Improvement of women's participation
- Observation of election processes by international observers and domestic observers (both partisan and non-partisan)
- Enhanced inclusion of national minorities
- Access for disabled voters to the election process
- Follow-up of ODIHR's election assessments and recommendations

Session III: Identification of possible areas for supplementing the existing OSCE commitments and the potential need for additional commitments.

The 2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council tasked the Permanent Council, drawing on expertise from the ODIHR, to consider the need for additional commitments on elections, supplementing existing ones. This is particularly appropriate to address since, in addition to known problem areas, participating States will face emerging challenges in new areas. This discussion necessarily requires consideration of universal election principles and existing OSCE commitments as well as issues of implementation.

Discussion of issues that arise from this topic include identification of possible areas for supplementing the existing OSCE commitments, including:

- Taking into account the need for democratic elections to:
 - ensure public confidence,
 - guarantee the right of universal and equal suffrage,
 - provide for transparency in election procedures, and
 - require accountability on the part of authorities conducting elections;
- Addressing emerging issues that could affect democratic elections in the OSCE region, such as electronic voting, low turnout trends, recall elections and referenda.

SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN DIMENSION MEETING

“ELECTORAL STANDARDS AND COMMITMENTS”

**15-16 July 2004
HOFBURG, VIENNA**

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The modalities for this meeting are set out in accordance with the decision of the Permanent Council (PC.DEC/476, as of 23 May 2002).

I. AIM OF THE MEETING

OVERVIEW

The main objective of this Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting is to discuss universal election principles, existing OSCE commitments and best practices for democratic elections. The 2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council, in its Decision No. 5/03 (2 December 2003), welcomed the OSCE/ODIHR 2003 Progress Report “Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE Participating States.” This document was developed by the OSCE/ODIHR to establish an inventory of existing election-related norms, commitments, principles and best practices in the OSCE-region which have emerged since the adoption of the 1990 Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the OSCE.

Further, the Ministerial Council tasked the Permanent Council, drawing on ODIHR expertise, to consider the need for additional commitments on elections to supplement existing ones and report to the next Ministerial Council. The OSCE/ODIHR 2003 Progress Report “Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE Participating States” addresses to the initial points since raised by the 2003 Maastricht Ministerial Council and will serve as the basis for the discussion.

The meeting will focus on the following three areas:

- Overview of the OSCE/ODIHR 2003 Progress Report “Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in the OSCE Participating States”;
- Implementation of existing OSCE commitments for democratic elections and follow-up to OSCE/ODIHR recommendations in key areas; and
- Identification of possible areas for supplementing the existing OSCE commitments and the potential need for additional commitments, taking into account current problem areas, as well as emerging challenges.

Recommendations may be addressed to the participating States, the OSCE as a whole, OSCE institutions including the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and its various Sections, as well as the OSCE field operations, or other inter-governmental or non-governmental organisations, as well as other civil society actors of the OSCE participating States.

II. LANGUAGES

Translation will be provided in the six working languages of the OSCE.

III. PARTICIPATION

Representatives of the OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions and OSCE field operations, representatives of international organizations and representatives of non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors will participate in the Meeting.

The 'partners for co-operation' and the 'Mediterranean partners for co-operation' are invited to attend and contribute with respect to their co-operation and links with the OSCE in the field.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR THE DEBATES

The intention is to develop a free-flowing discussion based on the keynote speeches, introductory remarks, background information and written statements circulated in advance or during the Meeting. To this end, **formal interventions in the form of prepared statements are not envisaged in the course of the Meeting and are discouraged.**

Prepared statements, background documentation, comments or other written materials may be submitted in advance for circulation by the Documents Distribution Centre.

V. ORGANIZATION

The registration form for the Meeting is available on-line at: <http://meetings.odihr.pl>

In case of any questions, please contact Anna Sierant at Anna.Sierant@odihr.pl

In addition, advance registration will be available on Thursday, 15 July, from 10:00 till 15:00 in the Hofburg Congress Centre, in the main entrance hall.

Registration during the Meeting is available at the same place.

VI. OTHER

Side events may be held in the course of the two days. Additional information on the content and objectives of any side event, as well as timing and duration will be made available shortly on the website of the Meeting.

SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN DIMENSION MEETING

“ELECTORAL STANDARDS AND COMMITMENTS”

Vienna, 15-16 July, 2004

To non-governmental organisations

Please find attached the agenda, the annotated agenda and general guidelines relating to the upcoming OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on "Electoral Standards and Commitments" to be held in at the Hofburg Congress Centre, Vienna on 15-16 July 2004.

The main objective of the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting is to discuss universal election principles, existing OSCE commitments and best practices for democratic elections. The discussion will use the 1990 Copenhagen Document, laying down the existing OSCE commitments, as a departure point and will lead into considerations of the need for additional commitments on elections to supplement existing ones.

NGOs whose activities directly relate to the topic of the Meeting and wish to attend are requested to register on-line for this event by 30 June 2004. We encourage NGOs to register on-line at <http://meetings.odihr.pl> if at all possible. **Alternatively, you may return a completed NGO registration form by fax at + 48 22 250 06 03.**

NGOs are invited to forward this information to other relevant actors in the given field. The documents are also available on the ODIHR web-site at <http://www.osce.org/odihr>.

Please note that participants can pick up their passes for the meeting venue in advance on Thursday, 15 March, from 10.00 at the Hofburg Congress Centre in the main entrance hall.

NGOs may display information materials about their organisation on the tables in the lobby of the main meeting room. NGOs may also distribute documents during the Meeting by giving one copy of each document (maximum 3 pages in length) to staff of the Document Distribution Centre. NGOs are encouraged to participate actively in the Working Sessions while limiting their interventions to the specific issues at hand thereby contributing to a genuine discussion.

Unfortunately, the ODIHR is not in a position to provide any financial assistance for NGOs to participate in this Meeting. For your convenience please find attached a list of hotels in Vienna. NGOs are kindly requested to make their own hotel arrangements.

For further information please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Vadim Zhdanovich, ODIHR Election Advisor or Ms. Anna Sierant, Administrative Assistant, tel: +48 22 520 06 00, e-mail: Vadim.Zhdanovich@odihr.pl or Anna.Sierant@odihr.pl or office@odihr.pl

SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN DIMENSION MEETING
on
ELECTORAL STANDARDS AND COMMITMENTS

Vienna, 15 – 16 July 2004

N G O R E G I S T R A T I O N F O R M

(Please note that you are requested to register via internet: <http://meetings.odhr.pl>)

Deadline for registration: Wednesday, 30 June 2004

1. Organization:

2. Surname: 3. First Name (s):

4. Position / Title:

5. Date of birth: 6. Citizenship:

7. Passport No.: Issued by:

8. Sex: Female Male

9. NGO's address:

Phone: Fax:

E-Mail:

Date: Signature:

HOTELS IN VIENNA

Hotel	Address		Tel/Fax (+43-1)

ROYAL	Singerstraße 3	1010 Vienna	Tel: 515 68-96 Fax: 513 96 98
KAISERHOF	Frankenberggasse 10	1040 Vienna	Tel: 505 17 01-81 Fax: 505 88 75 88
TIGRA	Tiefer Graben 14	1010 Vienna	Tel: 533 96 41 Fax: 533 9645
AMADEUS	Wildpretmarkt 5	1010 Vienna	Tel: 533 87 38 Fax: 533 87 38/38
NOVOTEL AIRPORT			Tel: 701 07-2134 Fax: 707 32 39

WANDL	Petersplatz 9	1010 Vienna	Tel: 534 550 Fax: 534 55 77
CARLTON OPERA	Schikanedergasse 4	1040 Vienna	Tel: 587 53 02-0 Fax: 581 25 11
ASTRON Suite Hotel „Mariahilf“	Mariahilferstraße 32-34	1070 Vienna	Tel: 521 72-0 Fax: 521 72-15
ASTRON Suite Hotel „Atterseehaus“	Mariahilferstraße 78	1070 Vienna	Tel: 524 56 00-0 Fax: 524 56 00-15
DREI KRONEN	SchleifmühlgaÙe 25	1040 Vienna	Tel: 587 32 89-0 Fax: 587 32 89-11
AUSTRIA	Wolfengasse 3	1010 Vienna	Tel: 515 23 Fax: 515 23-506
KÄRNTNERHOF	Grashofgasse 4	1011 Vienna	Tel: 512 19 23 Fax: 513 22 28/33
POST	Fleischmarkt 24	1010 Vienna	Tel: 515 83/0 Fax: 515 83/808
SCHWEIZERHOF	Bauernmarkt 22	1010 Vienna	Tel: 533 19 31 Fax: 533 02 14
WIENER STAATSOPER	Krugerstraße 11	1010 Vienna	Tel: 513 12 74 Fax: 513 12 74-15
Pension NOSSEK	Graben 17	1010 Vienna	Tel: 533 70 41 Fax: 535 36 46
CORDIAL	Kostlergasse 5	1060 Vienna	Tel: 0676 403 44 80 Fax: 587 43 72-88
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RATHAUS	Lange Gasse 13	1080 Vienna	Tel: 406 43 02 Fax: 408 42 72