



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on January 17 Presidential Election in Ukraine

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Carol Fuller
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
January 21, 2010

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States congratulates the people of Ukraine on the conduct of the January 17 presidential election. Observers agree that this was generally a well run election. Ukraine has demonstrated its willingness and ability to conduct an election in line with most international commitments. We view this election as a further step in Ukraine's democratic progress.

We welcome the preliminary assessment of the International Election Observation Mission—comprising experts and observers from OSCE/ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly—which noted the first round of the election was of “high quality” and showed “significant progress over previous elections,” while meeting most OSCE and Council of Europe commitments.

We are particularly pleased that the International Election Observation Mission concluded that civil and political rights were respected. We welcome the robust commitment to the observation effort exemplified by the participation of short-term observers from 47 OSCE participating States, as well as domestic non-governmental organizations. In line with the OSCE's Copenhagen document, we urge the Ukrainian authorities to grant formal domestic observer status rather than insisting the NGOs register as journalists.

We note also the concern voiced by the International Election Observation Mission of a lack of a complete and clear legal framework. We urge the Government of Ukraine to adopt a unified election code in compliance with OSCE commitments and international obligations.

We are looking forward to the second round of the presidential election on February 7 and to their being conducted in a similarly successful manner. We intend to renew our contribution to the international observation effort, and we call upon our 46 national partners in that effort to do the same.

We also want to commend the work and cooperation of Mr. Joao Soares, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Head of the OSCE PA delegation and CiO Special Coordinator for the short-term OSCE observer mission; Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, Head of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission; Mr. Matyas Eorsi, Head of the PACE delegation; Mr. Pavel Kowal, Head of the EP delegation; and Mr. Assen Agov, Head of the NATO PA delegation. Their professionalism and dedication and those of their staffs are greatly appreciated.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.