



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Ukraine's Parliamentary Elections

As delivered by Counselor for Public Affairs Christopher Midura
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 1, 2012

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States Government is concerned that the conduct of Sunday's parliamentary elections in Ukraine constituted a step backwards from the progress made during previous parliamentary elections and the 2010 presidential election, elections that had marked important steps forward for Ukraine's democracy.

We share the concerns cited in the preliminary report from the observation missions sent by ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. These concerns include the abuse of government resources to favor ruling party candidates, interference with media access, and harassment of opposition candidates. While election day was peaceful overall and observed by a large number of domestic and international observers, we are troubled by allegations of fraud and falsification in the voting process and by a lack of transparency in some aspects of the vote count. We also reiterate our deep concern that the politically-motivated criminal convictions of opposition leaders, including of former Prime Minister Tymoshenko, prevented them from standing in these elections. We again call on Ukraine to put an immediate end to the selective prosecution of political opponents.

The United States will continue to support the Ukrainian people's aspirations for a prosperous and democratic Ukraine. We regret that flawed parliamentary elections do not advance Ukraine toward this goal, but we remain committed to working with Ukraine, both here at the OSCE and bilaterally, to improve democratic institutions, strengthen the rule of law, and advance essential economic reforms. We continue to look forward to a positive and productive Ukraine Chairmanship and note the necessity of the OSCE Chair not only to uphold the values and commitments of the OSCE, but to be a leading exemplar of them. In closing, Mr. Chair, we thank the OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for their extensive election observation missions and their comprehensive reports. We also thank Canada for its contribution of hundreds of short term election observers.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.