

520th Plenary Meeting

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**DECISION No. 622
ELECTION SUPPORT TEAM TO AFGHANISTAN**

The Permanent Council,

Taking note of the letter by the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, to the Chairman-in-Office, Dr. Solomon Passy, of 6 July 2004, inviting the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the OSCE to be present to observe the upcoming elections in Afghanistan,

Taking note of the OSCE/ODIHR Exploratory Mission to Afghanistan from 11 to 14 July 2004,

Taking into consideration the status of Afghanistan as a Partner for Co-operation of the OSCE, which has an important impact also on neighbouring regions of the OSCE,

Underscoring the importance of democratic elections for fostering democracy and human rights and furthering stability in Afghanistan, and contributing to international efforts to combat terrorism,

Taking into account conditions in Afghanistan, in particular the security situation,

Decides as an extraordinary measure in response to the specific request of the Afghan Government, to send to the Presidential Elections in Afghanistan scheduled for 9 October 2004, an election support team for a limited period of time (not more than 45 days), to be organized and led by the ODIHR and the Secretariat;

Tasks the election support team to analyse aspects of the electoral process, such as voter registration, work of electoral commissions, vote count and tabulation, as well as complaint and appeal procedures;

Also tasks the election support team to prepare, on the basis of this analysis, a set of recommendations to the Afghan government for implementation as appropriate in the post-election period, with a view to enhancing the conduct of future elections and improving Afghanistan's legal framework and procedures;

Requests that the ODIHR closely co-ordinate with other partners in Afghanistan, including the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the European Union;

Tasks the Secretariat together with the ODIHR to conduct consultations with the Afghan government, NATO/ISAF, as well as with the United Nations, in order to spell out clearly in the appropriate form and put in place the necessary security arrangements for the election support team;

Recommends that the size of the election support team should not exceed 50 election experts, to be seconded by OSCE participating States in accordance with the rules and procedures followed by the OSCE/ODIHR. Expenses for the election support team will be covered by extra-budgetary contributions.

This decision does not set a precedent for OSCE activities beyond its geographical area of responsibility.