



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Kyrgyzstan's July 10 Presidential Elections

As delivered by Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 14, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States notes with great satisfaction the successful conduct of the presidential elections on July 10 in Kyrgyzstan. The conduct was smooth, participation was good, and the results were clear.

This really is a case where warm congratulations are due all around. First, and most importantly, we must recognize the people of Kyrgyzstan, who - by casting their votes in large numbers - defied pre-election concerns that participation might be too low to validate the results.

Second, congratulations go to the authorities in Kyrgyzstan who, in close coordination with various international actors, including the OSCE and ODIHR, organized the elections within a very short period.

Third, congratulations go to the elections experts and observers from across the OSCE space and beyond, who provided expertise and assistance prior to the elections, as well as the extra confidence building measure of having an impartial presence there during the voting and during the tabulation to guard against possible attempts at fraud.

We believe that the strong voter turnout bodes well for the future. It demonstrates the population's firm commitment to democratic development and suggests that Kyrgyzstan will enjoy the active participation of the people as it further consolidates democracy.

It is also a credit to the people of Kyrgyzstan that the voting was orderly and without violence. Moreover, the elections marked an important step forward in democratic improvement. The International Election Observation Mission's (IEOM) initial report notes that the elections showed tangible progress on meeting OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections, and represented a marked improvement over the parliamentary vote held in February and March.

No election is perfect, but the problems cited by the IEOM had little effect on the outcome. It is clear that the results fully reflect the will of the people.

We encourage the authorities in Kyrgyzstan to continue their efforts to improve electoral processes and to work closely with ODIHR and the OSCE in this regard. In the meantime, we would like to take the opportunity to again congratulate Kyrgyzstan on a job well done.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.