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Canadian Delegation to the
Organization for Security & Cooperation
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération
en Europe

DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE
INTERVENTION ON GEORGIA
696TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
17 JANUARY 2008

Canadians have been impressed by the sweeping changes Georgia has made in the economic and political spheres since the Rose Revolution. However, they were also concerned when, in November 2007, they saw violent repression of peaceful demonstrations.

Yet, with the peaceful conclusion of your first ever competitive presidential election, Georgians have again taken another democratic step.

The Government of Canada is pleased that the OSCE/ODIHR, the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and Council of Europe were generally positive in their preliminary assessment of this election. We note with satisfaction continued efforts to ensure that legislative and administrative practices meet international standards.

In spite of the strides made in electoral and political reform, we remain concerned about a number of shortcomings identified by the electoral observers. State resources should not favour one candidate over another, legislation and its implementation should be impartial and all voters should be free to express their political preferences without pressure and intimidation. The election also underscored the need for a rigorously impartial administration willing to look into serious allegations of violations. We look forward to the further report to be issued by the OSCE/ODIHR today.

Canada strongly encourages Georgia to continue to move forward with democratic reforms, in particular through addressing these shortcomings.

To this end, Canada invites Georgia to further its already extensive cooperation with ODIHR and the OSCE Mission to Georgia.