

Statement by Romania at the Review Conference 2010, Warsaw

Session 1 - Democratic Institutions (October 1, 2010)

Improving the follow-up to election observation reports' recommendations

Mr. Moderator, Ladies and gentlemen,

At this important juncture for the OSCE, before the Astana Summit and 11 years after the Istanbul Summit, we continue to believe that free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democratic government. Participating States undertook ambitious and far-reaching election-related commitments. ODIHR has played an important role in assisting participating States in implementing the aforementioned commitments, mainly starting from the assessment of its election observation report and the recommendations put forth therein. The participating States have undertaken the commitment to follow-up on ODIHR's recommendations at the previous OSCE Summit in Istanbul .

The review of the implementation of this important commitment of the Istanbul Summit shows that there is room for a more systematic and substantial follow-up to ODIHR's election observation reports' recommendations. Enhanced implementation of recommendations, would, inter alia: improve implementation of commitments; maximize the value of election observation; prevent same problems from recurring repeatedly in successive elections; enhance the peer-review function of the Human Dimension Committee and the Permanent Council; make better use of ODIHR's recognized expertise in assisting participating States in the implementation of election-related commitments; act as a confidence building measure for the domestic political environment and contribute to increasing the confidence of the voters in the electoral process.

Romania, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia and the United States of America have put forth ideas in view of improving the follow-up to election observation reports' recommendations and presented them in the framework of the Corfu Process:

1) Visit of ODIHR in the country where elections had taken place shortly after the publication of ODIHR's final report that could include meetings/round-tables with all relevant stakeholders from the political landscape, government, parliament - representatives of the OSCE PA could be involved in the parliamentary debates on this issue, civil society, mass-media, election administration, etc. The visit is meant to discuss the recommendations, identify priority recommendations and explore concrete measures to implement priority recommendations of election observations of the ODIHR report.

2) Capitalizing on the results of the visit and the domestic input thereof, the participating state

identifies, in close consultation with ODIHR, the list of measures for enhancing the electoral framework and a timeline for their implementation, as well as those areas where assistance is needed (e.g. legal reviews, voter registration systems, etc.). Based on the list of measures, ODIHR undertakes to offer assistance, either alone or in cooperation with other international actors.

3) The participating States in which elections were held could present the follow-up activities to the election observation recommendations in the Human Dimension Committee and/or the Permanent Council.

4) The ODIHR Director, in his/her regular reports to the PC, reports on the measures taken to assist the participating States in complying with their election-related commitments. This would provide the framework for peer-review on the topic of election/related commitments.

Based on this exercise, ODIHR could elaborate a compilation of thematic good practices.

We look forward to more discussions on how to improve implementation of follow-up to election observation reports.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.