



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Recent Elections in Macedonia

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 26, 2009

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

We congratulate the people of Macedonia on the occasion of the country's Presidential first-round and local elections on March 22. The people of Macedonia deserve credit for coming out to vote in large numbers.

We agree with the preliminary joint ODIHR/OSCE Parliamentary Assembly assessment, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament that this year's presidential election "met most OSCE and Council of Europe commitments and standards for democratic elections, as well as most requirements of domestic legislation, although some challenges remain." The U.S. Embassy in Skopje, which also monitored the elections with 25 teams throughout the country, supplemented the OSCE efforts and those of other diplomatic missions.

We note the calm atmosphere in which the election was carried out. We also welcome the important progress noted by our U.S. government observers in improving the conduct of Election Day.

We urge the government and other relevant authorities in Macedonia to sustain their efforts in the coming two weeks to address remaining challenges noted in ODIHR's March 23 preliminary assessment, and to ensure that voting can take place under safe, free, and fair conditions in the second round scheduled for Sunday, April 5.

The United States looks forward to working with the OSCE office in Skopje and the people of Macedonia to strengthen democratic institutions further.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.