



329th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 329, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 407
AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL
MODALITIES OF THE 2001 HUMAN DIMENSION SEMINAR**

“Election Processes”

(Warsaw, 29-31 May 2001)

I. Agenda

1. Opening of the Seminar
2. Opening Plenary: Keynote interventions
3. Discussion in five Working Groups
4. Closing Plenary: Summing up and closure of the Seminar

II. Timetable and other Organizational Modalities

1. The Seminar will open in Warsaw on Tuesday, 29 May 2001, at 3 p.m. It will close on Thursday, 31 May, at 6 p.m.
2. All Plenary and Working Group sessions will be open.
3. The closing Plenary, scheduled for Thursday afternoon, will focus on practical suggestions for addressing the issues discussed during the Working Group sessions.

Working Group 1: Looking back to move ahead

Topics may include:

- A brief review of the 10-year involvement of the OSCE, in particular the Office for Free Elections/ODIHR, in election processes, lessons learned, and improvements required;

- Challenges to democratic election processes throughout the OSCE participating States, best practices, responses, and follow-up to existing efforts.

Working Group 2: Democratic elections, rule of law and good governance

Topics may include:

- The correlation of democratic elections, the rule of law and good governance on the one hand, and economic development on the other, due attention being given to the fact that economic development does not depend on democratic elections and good governance alone, and that challenges to good governance are not limited to developing democracies;
- The benefits of promoting greater public participation and transparency in the election process through candidate and political party financial disclosure and conflict of interest regulations;
- The increased responsiveness of public officials through public information campaigns and investigative journalism, both during and after elections,

Working Group 3: Election processes and stability

Topics may include:

- The impact of electoral events in fostering stability; in this connection, the importance of international standards and timeliness;
- The more effective participation of national minorities in election processes as a whole;
- The experience of OSCE-supervised (organized) elections in South-Eastern Europe and the lessons learned during the past five years.

Working Group 4: Elections and the fundamental freedoms of expression, association, and assembly

Topics may include:

- The impact on election processes of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the freedoms of expression, association and assembly;
- The role, rights and responsibilities of the media during election processes;
- The rights, obligations and role of political parties and ways to strengthen their constructive participation in election processes.

Working Group 5: ODIHR's observation methodology and technical assistance programme

Topics may include:

- Improved follow-up to election observation missions in accordance with the Istanbul Summit Declaration, paragraph 26, and enhanced co-operation with other actors in the field;
 - The establishment of a voluntary fund to make possible increased participation of experts from developing democracies in the ODIHR observation missions;
 - The interaction between international and domestic observers with the participation of some of the leading domestic observation organizations;
 - The role of the parliamentarians, in particular the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in observation missions and follow-up activities;
 - The OSCE Gender Action Plan and recent experience of a more balanced participation of women in electoral activities in some regions, in particular as candidates;
 - A proposal for the ODIHR to review comprehensively the election legislation of all participating States (the ODIHR already reviews the electoral legal framework in participating States where election observation or assessment missions are foreseen);
 - Ways to increase the ODIHR's capacity-building activities, in particular in the areas of training and assisting election management officials, political parties, non-governmental organizations, and media representatives;
 - Ways to improve the capacities of observers by exploring training options together with other organizations.
4. The Plenary and Working Group sessions will take place according to the Work Programme below.
 5. An ODIHR representative will chair the Plenary sessions.
 6. Standard OSCE rules of procedure and working methods will be applied at the Seminar.
 7. Discussions will be interpreted into all six working languages of the OSCE.

Work Programme

Working hours: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
3-6 p.m.

	Tuesday 29 May 2001	Wednesday 30 May 2001	Thursday 31 May 2001
Morning		WG 1 and 4 (parallel)	WG 5
Afternoon	Inaugural Plenary Session	WG 2 and 3 (parallel)	Concluding Plenary Session

WG = Working Group