

PC.DEL/332/11
7 April 2011

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. OLEG BURMISTROV,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 April 2011

On the assessments of the presidential elections in Kazakhstan

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like first of all to sincerely congratulate our Kazakh colleagues on the successful conduct of the elections for the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. In his message of congratulation, our head of State Mr. Dmitry Medvedev noted that Mr. Nazarbayev's convincing victory in the elections confirmed his deserved reputation as the real leader of his people.

We have a few general comments to make about the assessment of these elections.

We have carefully studied the preliminary conclusions on the elections by the observers from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Once again we have to ask ourselves on what basis they position themselves as a mission for "international election monitoring" whereas they present their conclusion as that of "international observers". As far as we know, the decision-making bodies of our Organization have not adopted any decisions conferring this name on ODIHR missions and we therefore recommend a clear designation in future of the format of these observers, who are not representing their countries but only the OSCE structures.

This observation is particularly relevant given the fact that there were a large number of observers in Kazakhstan representing other international organizations and parliamentary bodies. The largest of these, incidentally, was the observer mission from the Commonwealth of Independent States with 425 members. Moreover, it was the first to present its assessments, which stated that "the elections in Kazakhstan were in conformity with the national election legislation and generally recognized democratic norms".

It may be noted that these conclusions for the most part coincided with those of observer missions from other respected international organizations, which unfortunately and

not for the first time contrasted with those of the ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

What is more, there are clear discrepancies in the preliminary conclusions of “this united mission”. For example, it states that observers assessed voting positively in 91 per cent of polling stations visited by them and “serious irregularities” were noted in only 9 per cent. And yet for some reason it is just these irregularities that are emphasized both in the OSCE conclusions and in the statements by the European Union and the United States of America based on them.

We also feel obliged to express puzzlement at the assertion by the OSCE observers regarding the absence of competition and opposition candidates. It is evident that affirmations of this nature do not reflect the real facts and are clearly outside the authority of the monitors.

Nor can we agree with the basic conclusion by the OSCE observers on the need for further reforms in Kazakhstan with a view to “holding genuine democratic elections”. What are these conclusions based on? It is well known that when organizing election campaigns every OSCE participating State is guided in the first instance by its national legislation and should also take account of the commitments set forth in the 1991 CSCE Copenhagen Document. Any other criteria or demands are inappropriate.

We cannot but agree with Kazakhstan about the fact that the ODIHR experts studied all aspects of the election legislation and the practical application of the laws extremely closely and critically while somehow ignoring the arguments and commentaries of the Kazakh Central Election Commission. It is a pity that this kind of discerning approach and, even more important, fundamental conclusions are absent from the final conclusions by ODIHR election observation missions in some countries to the west of Vienna, despite the fact that it is to these very countries, which have established democratic systems, that increased attention should be paid.

These facts once again highlight the need for an objective comparison of the election legislation and practices in all OSCE participating States as a basis for elaborating uniform rules for OSCE election monitoring.

Thank you for your attention.