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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

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE
603RD PLENARY PERMANENT COUNCIL
30 MARCH 2006**

CURRENT ISSUES: ELECTIONS IN UKRAINE

Mr. Chairman,

Canada is pleased to be able to join others in welcoming the preliminary conclusions made by the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission to the Ukraine Parliamentary elections that the 26 March elections were conducted basically in line with OSCE commitments and other international standards.

Canada is especially pleased that respect for fundamental civil and political rights, such as freedom of expression and assembly, along with a vibrant media environment, provided for a genuine competition and equal conditions for candidates. We welcome ODIHR's finding that voters could make informed choices between distinct alternatives and freely and fairly express their will.

Canada congratulates Ukraine's authorities on fulfilling one of the key goals of the 2004 Orange Revolution - a democratic Ukraine marked by free and fair elections.

We look forward to working with the new Ukrainian Parliament and with the Government that emerges from the coalition talks.

Canada was pleased to be able to take part by sponsoring 40 election observers and 3 parliamentarians in the OSCE ODIHR Election Observation Mission. We take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Lubomir Kopaj and his team for their work.