



STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NORWAY,
AMBASSADOR GUTTORM VIK, ON THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN
KAZAKHSTAN

As delivered to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 6, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Norway has followed the recent political developments in Kazakhstan with great interest, and we have carefully studied the preliminary findings and conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) for the Parliamentary Elections in Kazakhstan on 18 August.

Norway welcomes the positive developments observed with regard to the progress in the pre-election process and during the conduct of the vote. We have noted improvements such as the willingness by State authorities to conduct a more democratic election process, the increased ability for political parties to convey their messages, and that the work of the Central Election Commission was conducted in a transparent manner. We are also encouraged by the fact that the voting on the election day was conducted in a calm atmosphere and the generally positive assessments by the observers regarding the conduct of voting.

Norway has, however, also noted the assessment by the International Election Observation Mission that a number of OSCE commitments and international standards were not met. We are, in particular, concerned about the issue that new legal provisions in some instances run counter to OSCE commitments. We are also worried about findings to the effect that the counting of votes was negatively assessed in several polling stations, including the lack of transparency and the wide range of procedural irregularities observed.

The preliminary report, however, also notes that early elections interrupted an ongoing dialogue on election legislation, and we hope that this process will be resumed, as indicated by the authorities.

Norway looks forward to receiving the Final Report of the OSCE/ODIHR on the Parliamentary Elections in Kazakhstan. We call on Kazakhstan to work closely with the OSCE/ODIHR in implementing the recommendations to further improve the overall electoral process.

I thank you.