



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

30 October 2011

OSCE/ODIHR NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION REPORT

13-15 July 2011



Warsaw
22 August 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
II.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	1
III.	FINDINGS.....	3
	A. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT	3
	B. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK	4
	C. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION.....	5
	D. VOTING RIGHTS AND VOTER REGISTRATION	6
	E. REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATES.....	7
	F. CAMPAIGN FINANCING.....	7
	G. ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND MEDIA.....	8
	H. INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC OBSERVERS.....	9
IV.	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	10
	ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS.....	10

**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
30 October 2011**

**OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report
13-15 July 2011**

I. INTRODUCTION

In anticipation of an invitation to observe the upcoming presidential election, scheduled for 30 October 2011, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) undertook a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) to the Kyrgyz Republic from 13 to 15 July 2011. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM included Beata Martin-Rozumilowicz, Head of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Department, Armin Rabitsch, OSCE/ODIHR Senior Election Adviser, Lusine Badalyan, OSCE/ODIHR Election Adviser, and Anna Chernova, Programme Director with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA).

The purpose of the mission was to assess the pre-election environment and the preparations for the presidential election. Based on this assessment, the NAM was to recommend whether to deploy an OSCE/ODIHR election-related activity for the forthcoming election, and if so, what type of activity best meets the identified needs. Meetings were held with representatives of the state authorities, election administration, political parties, media, civil society and international community. A list of meetings is included as an annex to this report.

On 25 July, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of the Kyrgyz Republic invited OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE PA to observe the 30 October presidential election. OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE PA would like to thank the MFA for the invitation and its assistance during the NAM. OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE PA would also like to thank the OSCE Centre in Bishkek for the assistance provided during the NAM. OSCE/ODIHR is grateful to all interlocutors met with during the mission.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic decided on 30 June 2011 that presidential elections would be held on 30 October 2011. These will be the first presidential elections to be held under a new constitution and a new electoral law. The president is elected for a six-term year and the same person cannot be elected president twice. As a result of the June 2010 constitutional referendum, the incumbent president was confirmed in office for a limited term that expires at the end of 2011 and cannot stand in the upcoming election.

Political tensions remain high in the country, with the political discourse focused on distinctions between the northern and southern regions of the country. The discourse is characterized by an increased use of nationalist rhetoric by politicians and media. The lack of public confidence in institutions dealing with elections remains a concern. In particular, there is a marked lack of trust in the judiciary and law enforcement bodies. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors opined that the campaign would be centered on personality, rather than on ideology or party politics. Intentions to introduce constitutional changes that would grant greater powers to the presidency have been voiced by certain potential candidates. The

candidate registration deadline is set for 25 September and on 16 August the Central Election Commission (CEC) announced that 83 individuals had declared their intention to stand.

Elections are regulated by a new electoral legal framework, which consists primarily of the constitution as well as the new laws on national elections and on election commissions. A number of measures in the laws mark progress and some previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations have been considered. However, some concerns remain, including limitations on the right to vote and stand for individuals convicted of crimes regardless of their severity, aspects of complaints and appeals, regulations on campaign financing, and issues related to freedom of expression.

Election commissions operate at three levels: the CEC, 58 Territorial Election Commissions (TECs) and some 2,300 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs). The formation of the current CEC was accompanied by controversies and tensions between parliament and the president. For the first time, TECs and PECs are established on a permanent basis; half of their members are political party representatives and half are elected by local self-government bodies. Some interlocutors raised concerns regarding the capacity of election commissions to conduct the technical preparations for the election professionally and impartially.

A unified system of voter registration, as envisaged by the national election law, should be compiled and maintained by the CEC. However, the law is silent on how the data are to be collected. In a welcome development, election day voter registration has been abolished. The quality of voter lists as well as the challenge of establishing a unified voter list in the short period before the presidential election are of concern to many interlocutors met by the OSCE/ODIHR NAM.

New legislation introduced detailed provisions on campaign financing. The reporting requirements and enforcement mechanisms envisaged appear to lack adequate measures to ensure full transparency in disclosing campaign financing and to sanction possible violations.

Despite a general respect for freedom of expression, there have been developments in the field of media that are of concern and that have also been pointed out by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. Of particular concern are recently adopted provisions that could potentially limit media pluralism. These include the blocking of certain websites, the banning of live campaign broadcasts by foreign media and the nationalization of certain private TV channels. In a welcome development, however, parliament decriminalized libel in late July 2011.

The national election law provides for both domestic and international observation of electoral processes. In a positive step, the law lifts previous prohibitions on international observers expressing opinions on the elections prior to the end of voting.

All interlocutors met with during the OSCE/ODIHR NAM underscored the need to observe the upcoming election. In considering an observation activity, OSCE/ODIHR has taken account of the various findings outlined in this report and the concerns expressed by stakeholders. These include issues related to the implementation of the legal framework, the establishment of voter lists, the role of the media in the election (particularly Kyrgyz language media), the respect for campaign finance provisions, and potential issues in administering the election. On this basis, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of a standard Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the forthcoming presidential election. This

recommendation also takes into account OSCE/ODIHR's previous engagement with the Kyrgyz Republic on electoral issues.

The OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of an EOM by mid-September to ensure adequate observation of all stages of the electoral process. In addition to a core team of experts, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends that 24 long-term observers be seconded by participating States, who will be deployed throughout Kyrgyzstan, and that 350 short-term observers will also be requested of States to ensure a wide and balanced geographic coverage of the country for the observation of election day proceedings. Similar arrangements are envisaged in the event of a second round.

III. FINDINGS

A. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

Political tensions remain high in the country, with the political discourse focused on distinctions between the northern and southern regions of the country. Following the events in June 2010, the situation in the south "appears to be – on the surface – more stable, but this stability is fragile" according to the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.¹ However, some politicians appear to be trying to boost their popularity by invoking nationalist rhetoric, especially in certain Kyrgyz-language media, which is of continued concern. According to the 2009 census, ethnic Uzbeks comprise 14.3 per cent and ethnic Russians comprise 7.8 per cent of the population of the Kyrgyz Republic. National minorities and women continue to be underrepresented in political leadership.

After the 10 October 2010 parliamentary elections, five parties gained seats in parliament.² On 17 December, after a second coalition-building attempt, a coalition was formed between *Respublika*, *Ata-Jurt* and SDPK with key positions distributed among them: SDPK leader Almazbek Atambaev became prime minister, one of the leaders of *Ata-Jurt*, Akhmatbek Keldibekov, was elected speaker of the *Jogorku Kenesh* (parliament), and the leader of *Respublika*, Omurbek Babanov, became first deputy prime minister.

Prior to the arrival of the OSCE/ODIHR NAM, different opinions had been voiced regarding the appropriate date to hold the presidential election. As confirmed during the June 2010 constitutional referendum, it should be held no later than two months prior to the termination of the president's powers on 31 December 2011, which would be 30 October. Some had voiced the opinion that the election should be postponed until November. In the end, parliament on 30 June set the election date for 30 October 2011.

The deadline for candidate nominations was 16 August and 25 September is the deadline for the CEC to register candidates. On 16 August the CEC announced that 83 individuals had declared their intention to stand. Among those, 16 political parties have nominated their candidates. Sixty-seven potential independent candidates have put forward their nominations.

¹ See Statement of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Knut Vollebaek at the 868th Plenary Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/78915>. See also the OSCE/ODIHR Limited Referendum Observation Mission Report at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/70938>.

² *Ata-Jurt*, *Ata Meken*, *Ar Namys*, *Respublika*, and the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (SDPK).

OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors opined that the campaign would be centered on personality, rather than on ideology or party politics. There are varying opinions about the success of the introduced semi-parliamentary system of government and some potential candidates stated that they would aim to change the constitution to increase the powers of the president after the election.

Despite ongoing reforms to restructure the judicial branch, OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors appear to lack confidence and trust in institutions dealing with elections, especially the judiciary and law enforcement bodies. Allegations of electoral malpractices such as vote-buying and intimidation were raised by potential participants of the electoral process. OSCE/ODIHR interlocutors also expressed serious concerns regarding the accuracy of the voter lists.

Since 2000, OSCE/ODIHR has observed eight elections and one referendum in the Kyrgyz Republic, in most cases in co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.³ Most recently, OSCE/ODIHR in its final report on the 2010 parliamentary elections concluded that the elections constituted a further consolidation of the democratic process and were characterized by political pluralism, a vibrant campaign and confidence in the Central Election Commission (CEC). However, the necessity of a profound electoral legal reform was highlighted.

B. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The adoption of the new constitution through a national referendum in 2010 reinforced the need for a comprehensive reform of the electoral legal framework, which was one of the long-standing OSCE/ODIHR recommendations. To comply with the new constitution, key electoral legislation had to be passed as constitutional laws. The parliament, therefore, initiated the drafting of three laws: the constitutional law on presidential and parliamentary elections (hereinafter, national election law), the law on election commissions and the law on local elections. The president then returned the laws to parliament with comments and requests for additions. The laws were finally adopted and signed by the president at the end of June. Consequently, the legal framework regulating the upcoming presidential election primarily includes the 2010 constitution, the newly adopted national election law, and the law on election commissions, other legal acts, as well as CEC instructions and decisions. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM was informed by some of its interlocutors that there are plans to amend the law on political parties.

According to the constitution, the president is elected for a six-term year and the same person cannot be elected president twice. As a result of the June 2010 constitutional referendum, the incumbent president was confirmed in office for a limited term that expires at the end of 2011, and cannot stand in the upcoming election. Any citizen between the ages of 35 and 70, who has resided in the republic for more than 15 years in total, and who has a command of the state language may be elected president. A candidate who gets more than half of the votes cast is considered elected. Compared to previous elections, results will now be calculated against the number of votes cast rather than the number of registered voters, an element that OSCE/ODIHR had previously recommended. There are no turnout requirements. In case no candidate receives the required majority, a runoff election between the two candidates with

³ See all OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission reports and legal reviews on the Kyrgyz Republic at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/kyrgyzstan>.

the most votes takes place. The law does not regulate the latest date for the second round but it stipulates that the second round should not be held earlier than two weeks after the announcement of the first round results.

OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe jointly reviewed the draft laws and indicated that a number of amendments mark progress and some previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations have been considered. However, some concerns remain, including limitations to certain civil and political rights, such as on the right to vote and stand for individuals convicted of crimes regardless of their severity, aspects of complaints and appeals, regulations on campaign financing, and issues related to freedom of expression.⁴

The national election law provides numerous and broad grounds for the cancellation of candidate registration. It also permits cancellation of candidate registration if a candidate is involved in any violation of pre-election campaign rules or in the event that election fraud is committed by his/her representatives. Moreover, the law still preserves the possibility of deregistering a candidate after the election, which runs contrary to OSCE commitments.

The national election law created the option of filing a complaint with either an election commission or a court. OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission noted in their joint opinion that this “would create the possibility to file a complaint in a ‘favourable’ forum and it could also lead to inconsistency in decisions.” Moreover, the law no longer contains an obligation of an election commission to notify the court in the event a complaint was filed in both institutions. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors have expressed a lack of trust in the judiciary which resulted in few complaints reaching election commissions or courts during previous elections.⁵

C. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

The law on election commissions regulates the election administration and provides for a three-level system: the CEC, 58 Territorial Election Commissions (TECs) and some 2,300 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs). The CEC comprises 12 members, appointed for a five-year term. These appointments are made by parliament from among nominees presented by the president, the parliamentary majority and the parliamentary opposition; each proposes one-third of the nominees. No more than 70 per cent of CEC members may be of the same gender. CEC members are required to suspend their party membership during their term.

The formation of the current CEC was accompanied by controversies and tensions between parliament and the president. The parliament appointed parliamentary nominees as a single list, but decided to vote on the presidential nominees individually, approving only two of the four. The president in her letter to the speaker of parliament complained about procedural and legal violations during the formation of the CEC, also referring to the fact that the eight parliament-nominated CEC members were appointed when the law on election commissions was not yet in force. On 4 July, the CEC in its new composition held its first session and elected a chairperson and two deputy chairpersons from amongst themselves.

⁴ OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission Joint Opinion on Draft Law on Presidential and Parliamentary elections, the Draft Law on Elections to Local Governments and the Draft Law on the Formation of Election Commissions of the Kyrgyz Republic, CDL-AD(2011)025, adopted by the Council for Democratic Elections at its 37th meeting on 16 June 2011. See at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/80842>.

⁵ See also OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report on 10 October 2010 Parliamentary elections, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/74649>.

Thus far, the CEC has approved the calendar plan for the preparation and conduct of the election, adopted a number of decisions and approved forms and samples of electoral documents. The formation of the TECs and PECs concluded on 25 July and 1 August, respectively.

TECs and PECs are formed for two-year terms. For the first time, TECs and PECs are established on a permanent basis. Each commission is comprised of one half political party representatives and one half representatives elected by *Keneshes* (local self-government bodies). TECs are formed by the CEC with no less than eleven members, and PECs are formed by the TECs with no less than seven members. The law does not provide for the criteria based on which TEC and PEC members should be selected by the relevant appointing commissions. No political party can have more than one member at each TEC and PEC. In case there are more party nominees than places, the appointing election commission selects members by drawing lots. New in the legislation, all TEC members are to be remunerated for the organization and conduct of elections. At the PEC level, only the chairperson and the secretary are paid for this work.

For the forthcoming presidential election, 29 polling stations will be opened abroad, but only at diplomatic representations of the Kyrgyz Republic. This is a marked change compared with the previous practice of opening polling stations at diverse premises abroad. This was an element that was criticized in the past by OSCE/ODIHR.

Some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed low confidence in the election administration and concerns regarding its professionalism and impartiality. Considering the new legal framework and the greater responsibilities of the CEC, concerns were raised regarding the capacity of the election commissions to conduct the technical preparations for the election.

D. VOTER REGISTRATION

Citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic who are 18 years or older on the day of election have the right to vote. According to the national election law, people serving a prison sentence have no voting rights, irrespective of the gravity of the offence. As mentioned in past OSCE/ODIHR reports, as well as in the recent OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission joint opinion, the denial of suffrage should be proportionate to the crime committed.

Under the current national election law, the CEC bears primary responsibility for the preparation of voter lists. The introduction of a unified system of voter registration is envisaged by the law. However, it does not specify how the data for the unified system is to be collected or maintained. The regulation of this is left to the CEC's discretion. The establishment of a centralized voter register is one of OSCE/ODIHR's long-standing recommendations.

TECs are responsible for the accuracy and timely provision of the voter lists to relevant PECs. In line with OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, the CEC should post the voter lists on its official website, and forward them to PECs no later than 40 days before the election. The voter lists are then posted for public scrutiny and voters can request changes no later than 10 days before election day. It is no longer possible for voters to be entered into voter lists on election day; this change is consistent with a recommendation contained in past OSCE/ODIHR reports. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM was also informed that the CEC plans to

introduce indelible inking on election day as an added security feature to control for attempted multiple voting.

The new law has also introduced the concept of “electoral address”, which allows voters to vote at their actual place of residence regardless of their registered residence.⁶ This concept enjoys support in the Kyrgyz Republic and may enfranchise many voters. However, until a unified voter list is in place and with the existing voter registration problems noted in many OSCE/ODIHR reports, the newly introduced concept could create additional problems.

Most OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concerns regarding the current quality of the voter lists, as well as the prospects for the establishment of a unified voter register before the presidential election. The international community in the Kyrgyz Republic has expressed readiness to support the CEC in its task by providing technical assistance in merging various data sources. Further, assistance in door-to-door checking of voters’ data before the election was discussed by interlocutors during the NAM’s visit.

E. REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATES

Presidential candidates are nominated by political parties or through independent nomination. Candidates’ nominations should be supported by 30,000 signatures, a positive change compared to the previous requirement of 50,000 support signatures and respecting OSCE/ODIHR’s previous recommendation in this regard. According to the law, “either all or part of the submitted signatures selected randomly is subject to checking.” The provision of the law for invalidating support signatures is very broad and does not provide details, but the CEC informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that it will issue a further clarification of this matter. Candidates should also pay an electoral deposit of 100,000 KGS (about 1,600 EUR). The deposit is returned to candidates who received more than 5 per cent of all votes cast. Candidates must also pass a language test in Kyrgyz in order to be registered. OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission raised a concern that the law does not state clear and objective criteria for determining language proficiency; this could lead to subjective assessments of candidates’ language skills.

F. CAMPAIGN FINANCING

The new legislation introduces detailed provisions on campaign financing. Candidates are required to establish electoral funds for the financing of their campaigns, which can include personal funds and donations from political parties, individuals, and legal entities. The legislation provides for donation and campaign expenditure ceilings.⁷ A candidate’s total campaign expenses should not exceed 50 million Kyrgyz *Som* (about EUR 800,000). Cash donations are prohibited and all donations must be made to bank accounts. In-kind donations (such as provision of free services) are also prohibited. In their joint opinion, OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission indicted that such a blanket provision prohibits people from contributing time and labour in support of a candidate.

⁶ See OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission Joint Opinion CDL-AD(2011)025, paragraphs 68 and 69.

⁷ The law sets the following limits for monetary donations for presidential candidates: personal donations of the candidate should not be more than 1.5 million KGS (about 24,000 EUR), donations from political parties – 2.5 million KGS (about 40,000 EUR), private donations from individuals – 5,000 KGS (about 80 EUR) and donations from legal entities - 2.5 million KGS (about 40,000 EUR).

Control over campaign finances is vested with the CEC, which forms a control-revision group to oversee expenses. Banks should provide information to the CEC on incomes and expenditures on candidates' accounts and this information should be posted on the CEC's website. Candidates and political parties are required to submit reports on their incomes and expenditures to the CEC no later than 10 days after the election, but the law does not require these reports to be published.

Most OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concern that candidates do not respect the campaign spending requirements. They attribute this to the lack of a functioning oversight mechanism, a lack of proportionate sanctions, and the absence of a requirement for full disclosure.

G. CAMPAIGN AND MEDIA

Candidates may campaign from the day that candidate registration is finalized (25 September). Campaigning should stop 24 hours before voting starts and opinion polls cannot be published five days before election day. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM was informed that candidates can organize outdoor meetings without advance permission, but should request permission for holding meetings on state premises.

Freedom of expression is guaranteed by the constitution. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors indicated that despite the general freedom of expression, there have been problematic trends. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media expressed concern over laws and resolutions recently adopted by the Kyrgyz parliament that could potentially limit media pluralism. It was particularly noted that these legal initiatives could negatively impact media coverage of important issues. Of particular concern was the blocking of certain internet sites, banning live broadcasting by foreign media during the election campaign, and de-accrediting journalists.⁸

According to OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, the main source of information is electronic media, especially national television and certain Russian channels. The main television stations include the public channel, *KTRK*, as well as others such as *ELTR*, *Channel 5*, *NTS* and *Pyramida*. Recently, parliament nationalized *Channel 5*, which is currently under control of the government's State Property Fund.

According to the national election law public and private TV and radio channels should provide airtime to all candidates on an equal basis. Prices in the public media have to be the same for all candidates and no more expensive than commercial prices six months before election day. Media are obliged to publish their prices for airtime and print space within ten days after the election has been announced.

Candidates are entitled to free airtime and print space in mass media, which are partially or fully financed from state or local budgets. Free airtime should be provided during prime time, defined by law as 20:00 to 24:00 and should not be less than one hour per working day, in total. At least one-third of the free airtime should be used for debates and discussions on the basis of equal access for all candidates.

⁸ See the statement of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media at: <http://www.osce.org/fom/78809>.

Private media is less regulated. The national election law stipulates that the volume and the time of programmes for campaigning are regulated by the election commission through consultations with TV and radio channels.

Media should be accredited with the CEC to cover the campaign. A total of 40 TV and radio stations and 103 print media have been accredited, to date. On 21 July, the CEC issued a decision that it is not within their remit to accredit online news agencies, arguing that Internet media do not fall under the provisions of the media law.⁹ It is the understanding of the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that this decision does not prevent Internet media from covering the election.

The national election law introduces a ban on campaigning by foreign mass media and stipulates that all foreign broadcasts should be recorded before being transmitted. Local media that rebroadcast foreign programmes are responsible for dissemination of any information that discredits the honour, dignity and reputation of a candidate. OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission underscored in the joint opinion that there is no legitimate basis for such a limitation and that it is not in line with OSCE commitments. The CEC is to oversee compliance of media with the electoral rules, but the law currently lacks a regulatory framework for this task.

Recently, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media welcomed a decision to decriminalize libel and expressed the hope that the remaining crimes of 'insult' and 'insult of an official' would not be used to restrict critical speech.¹⁰

H. INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC OBSERVERS

The national election law provides for both domestic and international observation of electoral processes. Candidates, political parties and non-governmental organizations can appoint observers. Several domestic civil society organizations plan to observe the upcoming election.

International observers should be invited by one of the following institutions: the president, the parliament, the government or the CEC. The new law lifted the previous prohibition on international observers expressing their opinions on electoral legislation, or the preparation and conduct of an election prior to the end of voting. However, the CEC issued a decision that it would start accrediting observers 30 days prior to election day. OSCE/ODIHR has sought clarifications and gained assurances from the CEC that if requests for accreditation are received earlier, the CEC will consider those at a session and may accredit observers earlier. OSCE/ODIHR trusts that this provision will not constrain observers from observing important stages of the election, such as the registration of candidates, voter registration, and the start of the campaign. According to the law, observers should have full access to all stages of the organization and conduct of elections.

⁹ See the statement of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media at the Helsinki Commission hearing on Internet Freedom "The Promises We Keep Online: Internet Freedom in the OSCE Region", <http://www.osce.org/fom/81007>. See also OSCE Commitments regarding the flow of information and the Internet, among others the Budapest Summit Document 1994 and the OSCE Permanent Council Decision No. 633 of 2004.

¹⁰ See the statement of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media at: <http://www.osce.org/fom/81026>.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

All interlocutors met with during the OSCE/ODIHR NAM underscored the need to observe the upcoming election. In considering an observation activity, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM has taken account of the various findings outlined in this report and the concerns expressed by stakeholders. These include issues related to the implementation of the legal framework, the establishment of voter lists, the role of the media in the election (particularly Kyrgyz language media), the respect for campaign finance provisions, and potential issues in administering the election. On this basis, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of a standard Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the forthcoming presidential election. This recommendation also takes into account OSCE/ODIHR's previous engagement with the Kyrgyz Republic on electoral issues.

The OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of an EOM by mid-September to ensure adequate observation of all stages of the electoral process. In addition to a core team of experts, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends that 24 long-term observers be seconded by participating States, who will be deployed throughout Kyrgyzstan, and that 350 short-term observers will also be requested of States to ensure a wide and balanced geographic coverage of the country for the observation of election day proceedings. Similar arrangements are envisaged in the event of a second round.

ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS

State and Electoral Authorities

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Asein Isaev, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry
Ulan Djusupov, Director of the Department of International Organizations and Security
Aibek Omokeev, Deputy Director of the International Legal Department
Kairat Tursunkulov, First Secretary of the International Legal Department
Mirbek Karybaev, Attaché of the Department of International Organizations and Security

Presidential Administration

Erkin Mamkulov, First Deputy Head of President's Administration
Orozbek Moldaliev, Head of Department of Strategic Analysis and Monitoring of Development
Erkin Mamyrov, Head of Legal Department

Central Commission for Elections and Referenda

Tuigunaaly Abdraimov, Chairperson
Marat Sultanov, Chief of Staff of the CEC
Akjol Berdiev, Head of the Centre of Voter Technologies
Marat Sydykov, Assistant to the CEC Chair

Ministry of Interior

Usup Kashkaraev, Deputy Head of Department on Public Security

Political Parties¹¹

Ar-Namys

Felix Kulov, Leader of Ar-Namys faction in the parliament

Ak-Shumkar

Temir Sariev, Leader of party

Ata-Meken

Omurbek Tekebaev, Leader of Ata-Meken faction in the parliament

Media

Sabyraly Abdumomunov, Head of *Birinchi* Radio of Public TV Radio Corporation
Myrzakat Tynaliev, Head of Politics and Law Section, Kyrgyz *Tuusuu* newspaper
Tolkun Namatbaeva, Correspondent, France Press
Tattuu Mambetalieva, Civil Initiative on Internet Policy
Adelya Laisheva, Programme Director, Internews

¹¹ OSCE/ODIHR NAM requested meetings with representatives of all parliamentary factions.

Civil Society

Chinara Jakypova, Director General, Institute for Public Policy
Ainura Usupbekova, Executive Director, Association Taza Shailoo
Atyr Abdrakhmatova, Executive Director of Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society
Cholpon Djakupova, Director of Legal Clinic Adilet
Tolekan Ismailova, Director of Human Rights Centre Citizens against Corruption
Aida Baijumanova, Deputy Director-Coordinator, Human Rights Centre Citizens against Corruption

International Community

OSCE Centre in Bishkek

Lilian Darii, Deputy Head of Centre
Fabio Piana, Senior Human Dimension Officer

Embassies

Ambassador Chantal Hebberecht, Head of the European Union Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic
Jibecke Joensson, Political Officer, European Union Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic
Evgeny Terekhin, Minister-Councillor, Embassy of the Russian Federation
Bulat Mubarakshin, Attache, Embassy of the Russian Federation
Kathrin Bauch, Deputy Ambassador Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
Michael Latham, Acting Political Chief, Embassy of the United States of America
Benjamin Witorsch, Political Officer, Embassy of the United States of America

International Organizations and NGOs

Kevin Gash, Democracy Specialist, USAID
Dan Malinovich, Chief Technical Adviser, UNDP Kyrgyzstan Election Support Project
Paul Quinn-Judge, Project Director, Central Asia Adviser, International Crisis Group - ICG
Jason Smart, Resident Country Director, International Republican Institute - IRI
Aida Suiundueva, Civic Program Manager, National Democratic Institute - NDI
Azamat Kerimbaev, Country Director, American Bar Association / Rule of Law Initiative
Nurlan Bakirov, Staff Attorney, American Bar Association/Rule of Law Initiative - ABA/ROLI
Dmitry Shevkun, Chief of Party, International Foundation of Electoral Systems – IFES
Evgeny Grechko, Senior Program Officer, IFES
Alexander Orekhov, Senior Program Coordinator, IFES
Fiona Frazer, Deputy Regional Representative, Regional Office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) for Central Asia
Zarona Ismailova, Representative in Kyrgyzstan, Club de Madrid