



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

4 October 2015

OSCE/ODIHR NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION REPORT

3-6 August 2015



Warsaw
13 August 2015

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**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS
4 October 2015**

OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report

I. INTRODUCTION

In anticipation of an invitation from the authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic to observe the 4 October 2015 parliamentary elections, and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) undertook a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) from 3 to 6 August 2015.¹ The NAM included Mr. Steven Martin, OSCE/ODIHR Senior Adviser on New Voting Technologies, Mr. Alexey Gromov, OSCE/ODIHR Election Adviser, and Ms. Maria Chepurina, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Programme Officer.

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

The OSCE/ODIHR would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the OSCE Centre in Bishkek for their assistance in organizing the visit. The OSCE/ODIHR would also like to thank all of its interlocutors for taking the time to meet with the NAM and share their views.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The president called the parliamentary elections for 4 October 2015. The unicameral 120-seat parliament (*Jogorku Kenesh*) is elected for a 5-year term under a closed-list proportional system. To qualify for seat allocation, a party must surpass a national 7 per cent threshold of votes cast and a 0.7 per cent threshold in every region. The OSCE/ODIHR has previously negatively commented on the separate regional threshold.

The upcoming elections will be conducted under a legal framework consisting primarily of the Constitution and laws on parliamentary elections and election commissions; both laws were amended in 2015. The amendments were generally supported by the parliamentary parties and partially address a number of previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, including establishing a centralized voter register, amending the electoral threshold, and providing more clarity in the electoral dispute resolution system. However, a number of recommendations remain unaddressed, including provisions restricting active and passive suffrage rights, existing multiple electoral thresholds, broad grounds for the deregistration of candidates, and a lack of provisions for ensuring campaign finance transparency and accountability.

Elections are administered by the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda (CEC), 54 Territorial Election Commissions, and some 2,350 Precinct Election Commissions. The majority of OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors did not take issue with the impartiality and transparency of election commissions, referring to their balanced composition. However, concerns were raised over

¹ On 11 August, the OSCE/ODIHR received an official invitation to observe the elections.

the capacity of election commissions to undertake technical preparations, including their role in introducing a new voter registration system and ballot scanning technology for these elections, in particular on election day.

The right to vote is granted to citizens who reach 18 years of age by election day, except for those serving a prison sentence or declared incapacitated. For these elections, the voter registration process was considerably changed with the aim to improve the overall quality and accuracy of the voter register and to further enhance the overall conduct of the elections. Voter registration is passive and voter lists are extracted from the newly established Unified Population Register, which includes only those citizens who register their personal and biometric data. While most stakeholders support the concept of biometric identification, significant concerns were noted over the challenge of completing all aspects of such a complex process in time for the elections.

The political parties are entitled to nominate candidates and 34 parties declared their intention to stand for the elections. Independent candidates are not permitted to stand for the elections, which has also been negatively commented upon by OSCE/ODIHR in the past. The law sets special measures to enhance the participation of women, young people, national minorities, and persons with disabilities on party lists. Although the deposit for parties increased tenfold, the majority OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors considered this as a positive step in facilitating the consolidation of political parties and did not deem it excessive. No concerns were expressed related to the registration procedures.

The election campaign starts on 4 September, although it was noted that some campaigning already began several months ago. While OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors did not raise issues with the ability to campaign freely, the campaign is expected to be intense and focus on personalities, rather than on party platforms. Some concerns were also expressed about possible pressure on voters, misuse of state administrative resources, and vote-buying.

Political parties can fund their campaigns from their own resources and candidate funds and donations from individuals and legal entities. In 2015, the limits of these contributions were considerably increased. Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted a lack of transparency related to campaign finance of many parties and the limited effectiveness of CEC oversight.

The Constitution provides for freedoms of expression, speech, press, and information. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors did not express concerns over potential restrictions on the freedom of expression and the media's ability to cover campaign, but some anticipate possible pressure from government and business interests on media outlets, including the public broadcaster, KTRK. Contestants are entitled to free and paid airtime on an equal basis. The CEC and media interlocutors informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that no media monitoring will be undertaken to oversee compliance with requirements for unbiased coverage.

The 2015 amendments removed the dual jurisdiction of election commissions and courts over handling electoral disputes. The majority of complaints are considered by election commissions from lower to upper levels. CEC decisions are appealed in court. Complaints can be filed by all electoral stakeholders, but election results can only be appealed by contestants and observers. Although judicial procedures for violations of electoral rights are generally provided for by the law, several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted a lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the redress system.

The law provides for both citizen and international election observation. Political parties and several citizen organizations declared their intention to field observers on election day to increase the

transparency of the electoral process. Some civil society organizations also intend to observe voter registration, the campaign and campaign finance, as well as the voting rights of some categories of voters. The CEC issued a decision that it would start accrediting international observers for these elections only 30 days prior to election day, although they assured the OSCE/ODIHR NAM of prompt accreditation of observers to facilitate observation of all stages of the electoral process.

Interlocutors of the OSCE/ODIHR NAM underscored the need to observe the upcoming elections with a large presence, both during the campaign and on election day. Many expressed specific concerns with regard to the implementation of the amended legal framework, functioning of the new voter registration system, and election day procedures. A number of aspects could merit specific attention by an OSCE/ODIHR election observation activity, including campaign, campaign finance, and access to media. Representatives of official bodies emphasized that the electoral process would be transparent and demonstrate the continued consolidation of the democratic process, and also noted the value-added of an OSCE/ODIHR observation mission. They also welcomed any recommendations for potential improvement of the process.

Based on the findings of this report, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of an Election Observation Mission for the 4 October parliamentary elections. In addition to a core team of experts, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the secondment of 24 long-term observers from OSCE participating States to follow the election process countrywide, and 350 short-term observers to follow election day proceedings. In line with OSCE/ODIHR's standard methodology, the mission would include a media monitoring element.

III. FINDINGS

A. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

On 25 July, the president called the parliamentary elections for 4 October. The Constitution provides a semi-parliamentary system of government with legislative powers vested in the 120-member unicameral parliament (*Jogorku Kenesh*). As a result of the 2010 parliamentary elections, five parties gained representation in the parliament.² In March 2014, a new governing coalition "For Statehood's Reinforcement" (the fourth since the 2010 elections) was created comprising *Ata Meken*, *Ar Namys*, and the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan.

In 2013, the president called to optimize electoral practices to ensure fair and transparent elections, which would be directly linked to the country's security and stability.³ In particular, the concepts of biometric population registration, a unified voter register and the use of ballot scanning technology were proposed as part of a strategy to decrease potential manipulation and improve electoral processes.

Political tensions remain in the country, with some political discourse focused on distinctions between the northern and southern regions. These elections will be the second parliamentary elections since the political transition and adoption of a new constitution in 2010. Authorities noted the importance of ensuring credible elections as a key aspect of the democratic process.

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

³ See the [National Sustainable Development Strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic](#).

The OSCE/ODIHR has previously observed eight elections and one referendum in the Kyrgyz Republic.⁴ The most recent OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission deployed for the 2011 presidential election concluded that “election was conducted in a peaceful manner, but shortcomings underscored that the integrity of the electoral process should be improved to consolidate democratic practice in line with international commitments. Candidate registration was inclusive, giving voters a wide choice, and the electoral campaign was open and respected fundamental freedoms. This was overshadowed by significant irregularities on election day, especially during the counting and tabulation of votes. Measures should be taken to improve voter lists, to amend electoral legislation and strengthen the polling process.”

B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The legal framework regulating parliamentary elections primarily includes the 2010 Constitution, Constitutional Law on Presidential and Parliamentary Elections (amended in April 2015; hereinafter Electoral Law) and the Law on Election Commissions to Conduct Elections and Referenda (amended in June 2015), provisions of the Code of Administrative Procedures and Criminal Code, as well as instructions and decisions of the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda (CEC). Secondary legislation governs the activities of media, non-governmental organizations, and political parties.

The Electoral Law was significantly amended in 2011 and 2015, following inclusive discussions among political parties, state institutions, and civil society. The amendments were supported overall by the parliamentary parties and partially addressed a number of previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, including establishing a centralized voter register, amending the electoral threshold, and providing more clarity in the electoral dispute resolution system. The amendments also provided other changes to the voter registration system, to election day procedures and campaign finance rules, as well as abolished early voting. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM was informed by certain political parties that some amendments to the electoral legislation ahead of the elections could still be considered.⁵

Some previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed, including limitations to certain civil and political rights, such as right to stand for independent candidates, the right to vote and stand for individuals convicted of crimes regardless of their severity, existing double electoral thresholds, broad grounds for deregistration of candidates, extending gender distribution requirements for candidate lists, and the lack of effective provisions for transparency and accountability of campaign finance.⁶

For these elections, the CEC has already passed several decisions clarifying aspects of the electoral process, including on the campaign and campaign coverage in media, campaign financing and reporting, complaints and appeals, and the activities of election observers.

Members of parliament (MP) are elected for a five-year term through a closed-list proportional system within a single nationwide constituency. To qualify for seat allocation, a party must surpass a 7 per cent threshold of votes cast nationwide and at least a 0.7 per cent in each of the seven

⁴ See all previous [OSCE/ODIHR reports on Kyrgyzstan](#).

⁵ Section II.2.b of the 2002 Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters of the European Commission For Democracy Through Law (Venice Commission) recommends that fundamental elements of electoral law should not be amended within the last 12 months before an election.

⁶ See also the OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission [Joint Opinion on Draft Electoral Law of the Kyrgyz Republic](#), 16 June 2014.

regions and Bishkek and Osh cities.⁷ To avoid the dominance of any one party in parliament, the Constitution limits the number of seats that a single party can win to 65 regardless of the number of votes received. Both the regional threshold and the limit on seats have been criticized by OSCE/ODIHR in the past.

C. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Parliamentary elections are administered by a three-level structure: the CEC, 54 Territorial Election Commissions (TECs) and some 2,350 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs). Some 28 polling stations will be established at embassies and consulate offices to facilitate out-of-country voting.

The CEC is elected by parliament for a 5-year term and consists of 12 members. The president, parliamentary majority, and parliamentary opposition each nominate four members. The CEC chairperson and two deputies are elected from among its members. There are four female CEC members, including one deputy. After the registration of candidate lists, parties are entitled to each nominate a non-voting representative to the CEC.

The CEC is responsible for the conduct of the elections, including appointing TECs, registering candidate lists, establishing polling stations, and reviewing complaints against decisions of lower-level commissions. The CEC informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that it received international support for a number of projects aimed at contributing to the efficiency of the election administration and enhancing public confidence in the process, including on training, voter education, and new voting technologies.

TECs and PECs are formed for two-year terms and comprise representatives of political parties and local self-governing bodies. TECs are formed with no less than 11 members, and PECs are formed by the TECs with no less than 7 members. The law does not provide for gender requirements and criteria based on which TEC and PEC members should be selected by the relevant appointing commissions.

For the first time, all polling stations will be provided with ballot scanning technology. Although the law provides for automatic counting of votes, only the results of a parallel manual count will be legally binding.⁸

The majority of OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors did not take issue with the impartiality and transparency of the election administration, particularly referring to their balanced composition. However, concerns were raised over the capacity of election commissions to conduct technical preparations, including their role to introduce a new voter registration system and ballot scanning technology for these elections, in particular on election day.

D. VOTER REGISTRATION

The right to vote is granted to citizens who reach 18 years of age by election day. Citizens serving a prison sentence, irrespective of the severity of the crime committed, and those who are declared

⁷ Before the 2011 amendments, a party had to receive more than five per cent of the vote nationwide and at least a 0.5 per cent of the vote in each of the regions; both thresholds were calculated against the number of registered voters.

⁸ On 17 May, during local elections, the CEC piloted the use of the new technology at 49 polling stations. Besides some technical issues, the need for comprehensive voter education and training of polling staff was reported by the CEC.

incapacitated have no right to vote, despite previous OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission recommendations.

For these elections, a number of significant changes were introduced to the voter registration process with the aim of improving the overall quality and accuracy of the voter register and to further enhance the overall conduct of the elections. Voter registration is passive. Voter lists no longer fall under the auspices of the CEC, but are extracted from the newly established Unified Population Register (UPR), managed by the State Registry Service (SRS). The UPR includes citizens based on personal and biometric data (photo and fingerprints), which could eliminate the possibility of multiple entries and inclusion of deceased citizens.⁹

The initiation of the UPR began in October 2014, and legal amendments prescribe that enrolment, including submission of biometric data, is compulsory to be able to vote. While SRS efforts, heavily supported by the international community, work to ensure an inclusive process, including mobile registration, many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted that public information on the process was insufficient. The SRS reported to the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that, based on existing voter lists compiled by the CEC, approximately 2,400,000 voters have been included in the UPR, representing over 90 per cent of eligible voters.¹⁰ Ongoing efforts aim to capture remaining citizens not yet included in the UPR as well as to conduct testing of biometric data recognition for election day.¹¹ As a result of SRS efforts to address inconsistencies with polling district boundaries, some 250,000 voters were reallocated to different polling stations.

While most stakeholders support the concept of biometric identification (ID), concerns were noted over the challenge of completing such a complex process in time for the elections, including the division of responsibilities between the CEC and SRS. In addition, some groups voiced objection to the mandatory submission of biometric data and its required use in order to vote, resulting in at least two cases being filed with the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court, which have yet to be considered.¹² A number of OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, including some authorities, expressed concerns with deficiencies in the current framework to adequately govern the use and protection of personal data.

From 15 August (50 days before election day), the SRS should compile voter lists and submit them to the CEC. From 20 August until 19 September, voters can confirm their data on posted lists at PECs, online or via a telephone hotline. During this time, voters may request to vote at their electoral address (temporary residence), or in case of omission, register their biometric data with the local authorities for inclusion in the UPR and voter list. The SRS noted that correcting voter information should not be necessary given the accuracy of the data on which the UPR was based.

Amendments reduced the permitted forms of voter ID for election day to either a biometric ID card or passport; other forms such as military or pensioner cards, are no longer accepted. Voters, including those who vote abroad and via mobile ballot box, will confirm their identity on election

⁹ The UPR is based on compiling and crosschecking information from four components: civil status registry, address register, passport registry, and biometric data.

¹⁰ The MFA estimates that approximately 20 per cent of previously registered voters abroad have thus far enrolled in the UPR, although estimates of their total number varies significantly.

¹¹ Pilot tests took place on 17 May with samples of voters in selected polling districts; countrywide testing is expected from 12 August. While largely functional, testing showed a considerable time was required for the system to verify a voter's fingerprints and some four per cent of prints could not be recognized.

¹² In May 2015, a Supreme Court judge who was reviewing whether the legislation on biometric data collection was constitutional was removed from the case and later dismissed.

day on the voter list through fingerprint matching, a process to be managed by SRS staff. The inking of voters, an important safeguard against multiple voting, has been abolished.

E. CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

Within the legal deadline, 34 political parties declared their intention to stand for elections and these parties can submit their candidate lists to the CEC until 25 August. Parties are entitled to submit lists with between 120 and 200 candidates and many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors mentioned perceived links between business ties of candidates and their position in the list. Candidates are required to possess voting rights and be above 21 years of age. Citizens are denied candidacy rights if they have criminal convictions that have not been cleared. Independent candidates are not permitted to contest parliamentary elections, which has also been negatively commented upon by OSCE/ODIHR in the past.¹³

Special legislative measures aim to promote participation of underrepresented groups. A gender quota stipulates that no more than 70 per cent of candidates can be of the same gender with the list alternating at least every fourth name. At least 15 per cent of candidates on each list must be younger than 35, at least 15 per cent must belong to different national minorities, and every list should include at least two candidates with disabilities. These quotas apply to candidate lists rather than to the actual distribution of seats, and in case of resignation of an MP, the quotas may not be respected.

To register a candidate list, a party must pay a deposit of KGS five million.¹⁴ The amount of the deposit was increased tenfold compared to the previous elections. Despite being a potential obstacle for the participation of smaller parties, the majority OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors consider this increase as a positive step facilitating the consolidation of political parties and providing more distinct choice for voters. The deposit is returned to those parties that receive more than five per cent of all votes cast.

The Electoral Law provides numerous and broad grounds for the cancellation of registration of candidates and candidate lists, including for campaign finance violations or in the event that campaign rules are not followed or election fraud is committed by candidates or party representatives. Despite disproportionate reasons for deregistration of candidates, previously criticized by OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors did not express concerns related to the registration procedures or practices.

F. CAMPAIGN AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE

The official electoral campaign starts on 4 September and ends 24 hours before election day. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM was informed that some campaigning already began several months ago. While political parties did not raise issues with the ability to campaign freely, including in minority languages, some concerns were expressed to the OSCE/ODIHR NAM about a perceived selective approach of the CEC to address early campaigning by some contestants, potential pressure on voters, as well as a possible misuse of state administrative resources and vote-buying. Campaigning in public institutions is prohibited and campaign posters can only be displayed in public places designated by mayors. TECs are responsible for ensuring equal campaign conditions for parties.

¹³ Paragraph 7.5 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document states: “[The participating States will] respect the right of citizens to seek political or public office, individually or as representatives of political parties or organizations, without discrimination”.

¹⁴ Equal to some EUR 72,500 (1 EUR equals approximately 69 Kyrgyz Som, KGS).

The campaign is expected to focus on issues related to economic development, corruption, judicial reform, stability, and migration. Many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors opined that the campaign is expected to be intense and focus on personalities, rather than party platforms and noted that party offices in the regions were usually functional only during the campaign. Parties plan to centre campaign efforts around billboards, banners, rallies, door-to-door gatherings as well as advertisements in the media. A number of parties noted that they will use social media for campaign purposes. Although none of the interlocutors met with by the OSCE/ODIHR NAM anticipate obstacles with organizing campaign activities, some expressed concerns over potential biased coverage of the campaign by foreign media outlets.

There is no direct public financing of political parties. Parties can fund their campaigns from their own resources and those of their candidates, and donations from individuals and legal entities. The 2015 amendments considerably increased the limits on these contributions.¹⁵ Foreign, state-owned or anonymous sources, as well as from religious and charitable organizations are prohibited. The campaign spending limit for a party was increased fivefold to KGS 500 million. Cash donations are prohibited and all campaign funds must be channelled through designated bank accounts, opened for the elections.

Control over campaign finances is vested with the CEC. Banks should regularly provide information to the CEC on party income and expenditures, which should be posted on the CEC's website, including before election day. Political parties are required to submit financial reports to the CEC no later than 10 days after the elections; however, the law does not require the reports to be published nor does it stipulate applicable sanctions if a party fails to submit them. Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted the increasing importance of finances in the organizing of campaigns and in elections in general, and it was assumed that only a limited amount of campaign income and expenditures were actually reported by the majority of contestants.

G. MEDIA

Broadcast media are the main source of information, with public television and several Russian channels being the only ones providing nationwide coverage. Less than 200 newspapers are reportedly circulated, with the majority published once or twice a week. While the number of Internet users is still relatively low and confined to urban areas, the role of web-based news sources and social media as platforms for exchange of views is increasing.

The Constitution provides for freedoms of expression, speech, press, and information. The Constitution explicitly prohibits criminalizing defamation and insult was decriminalized in 2015. Despite the recent criminalization of false reporting of criminal acts, OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors did not express concerns over potential restrictions of freedom of expression or of media's ability to cover important issues in the campaign.¹⁶ However, some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors anticipate possible pressure and influence over editorial policies from government and business interests, including on the public broadcaster, KTRK. A low level of analytical reporting from journalists and concentration of media ownership of private broadcasters were also mentioned as media-related issues.

¹⁵ While individuals and legal entities can donate to a party fund up to KGS 200,000 and KGS 3 million, respectively, a candidate can contribute up to KGS 1.5 million, and a party up to KGS 100 million.

¹⁶ See [Report by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media](#) from 19 June 2014, which noted concerns with certain provisions with the amendments.

According to the Electoral Law, public and private media are required to provide paid airtime and printed space to contestants on an equal basis. Parties standing for the elections are also entitled to free airtime and print space in state-funded media. Free airtime should be provided during primetime and should not be less than one hour per working day, per organization. At least one-third of free airtime should be used for debates and discussions on the basis of equal access for all contesting parties.¹⁷

The CEC has established a working group on media to facilitate its legal obligation to oversee media compliance during the elections. The CEC and media interlocutors informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that no media monitoring will be undertaken, but that election commissions will respond to any media-related issues based on complaints filed. While various initiatives are being considered, OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted the general lack of an adequate framework for media oversight.

H. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

The 2015 amendments dispense with the previous dual jurisdiction of election commissions and courts over electoral disputes. Campaign and campaign finance violations may be appealed to election commissions, and all decisions of lower-level election commissions are appealed to superior election commissions. All CEC decisions can be appealed to a district court in Bishkek and then further appealed to the Supreme Court. According to some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, media-related disputes and complaints related to voter registration could be filed to first instance courts, although there was some uncertainty as to the jurisdiction over these issues.

Complaints and appeals can be filed by voters, political parties and candidates, their proxies, civil society organizations and observers. Voters and civil organization cannot appeal election results. Complaints can be filed within two days after a violation, while complaints against the election results and all appeals against the decisions can be filed within three days. The election commissions and first instance courts have to decide on complaints and appeals within three days or, if additional investigation is required, within five days. The Supreme Court considers all cases within five days and its decisions are final. If a complaint or appeal is filed less than two days before election day, it should be considered immediately.

The Supreme Court informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM about ongoing trainings provided to judges and election commissioners with regards to the amended legislation. Although judicial procedures for violations of electoral rights are generally provided for by the law, several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted a lack confidence in the effectiveness of the redress system, in particular given the central role played by election commissions.

I. ELECTION OBSERVATION

The law provides for both citizen and international observation of elections. Political parties declared to the OSCE/ODIHR NAM their intention to field observers to polling stations on election day to increase the transparency of the electoral process. Several citizen observer groups also intend to observe election day procedures as well as other aspects of the process, including voter registration, the campaign and campaign finance provisions, as well as the voting rights of some categories of voters.

¹⁷ The KTRK informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM, that it will allocate airtime for debates, which will be repeated next morning in the Russian language.

The CEC issued a decision that it would start accrediting international observers only 30 days prior to election day. However, the CEC and MFA assured the OSCE/ODIHR NAM of prompt accreditation of OSCE/ODIHR observers to facilitate observation of all stages of the electoral process if and when a mission was deployed.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Interlocutors met with by the OSCE/ODIHR NAM underscored the need to observe the upcoming elections with a large presence, both during the campaign and on election day. Many expressed specific concerns with regard to the implementation of the amended legal framework, functioning of the new voter registration system, and election day procedures. A number of aspects could merit specific attention by an OSCE/ODIHR election observation activity, including campaign, campaign finance, and access to media. Representatives of official bodies emphasized that the electoral process would be transparent and demonstrate the continued consolidation of the democratic process, and also noted the value-added of an OSCE/ODIHR observation mission and welcomed any recommendations for potential improvement of the process.

Based on the findings of this report, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of an Election Observation Mission for the 4 October parliamentary elections. In addition to a core team of experts, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the secondment of 24 long-term observers from OSCE participating States to follow the electoral process countrywide, and 350 short-term observers to follow election day proceedings. In line with OSCE/ODIHR's standard methodology, the EOM would include a media monitoring element.

ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Daniyar Sydykov, Executive Secretary

Daniyar Mukashev, Director of the Department of International Organizations and Security

Nazik Moldotasheva, Attaché of the Department of International Organizations and Security

Parliamentary Committee of Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation and State Structure

Natalya Nikitenko, Head

Presidential Administration

Anarbek Ismailov, Head of Legal Department

Maksat Sazykulov, Deputy head of the Department of State and Territorial Management

Central Commission for Elections and Referenda

Gulnar Dzhurabaeva, Vice-Chairperson

Dzharkyn Bapanova, Member

Aziz Dzhabiev, Head of the Department of Information Politics and International Cooperation

Liudmila Kutueva, Head of Section for International Cooperation

Supreme Court

Gulbara Kalieva, Deputy Chairperson

Dilara Arstanbaeva, judge

Ulanbek Tumanbaev, Cholpon Kasymbekova, International department

Ainura Toktosheva, press-secretary

State Registration Service

Dastan Dogoev, Deputy Chairperson

Nazik Shatmanova, Head of International Cooperation Department

Political Parties¹⁸

Bolot Otumbaev, Head of Campaign, Social-Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan

Felix Kulov, MP, *Ar-Namys*

Ruslan Kazakbaev, Head of Campaign, *Resbulika-Ata-Jurt*

Nurlan Shakhiev, Deputy Head of Campaign, *Resbulika-Ata-Jurt*

Kanat Midin Uulu, Leader of Youth Branch, *Resbulika-Ata-Jurt*

Media

Ilim Krypbekov, Director General, Public Broadcasting Corporation

Zarema Kolkombaeva, External Relations Officer, Public Broadcasting Corporation

Adelya Laisheva, Debate Programme Co-Ordinator, Public Broadcasting Corporation

Shirin Asanakunova, correspondent, Public Broadcasting Corporation

Zhyldyzbek Ibraliyev, correspondent, Interfax

Civil Society

Bektur Osmonbaev, Senior Lawyer, Legal Clinic “*Adilet*”

Tolekan Ismailova, Head, Human Rights Movement “*Bir Duino-Kyrgyzstan*”

Cholpon Omurkanova, Public Fund “*Eagl*”

Cholpon Abjanarova, Head of Public Fund “*Eagl*”

¹⁸ OSCE/ODIHR NAM requested meetings with representatives of all parliamentary factions.

Dinara Oshurakhunova, Head of Coalition “For Democracy and Civil Society”

Zamir Djooshev, Lawyer, “Precedent”

Ainura Usupbekova, Executive Director, Association “*Taza Shailoo*”

International Community

Sergey Kapinos, Head, OSCE Centre in Bishkek

Sintija Šmite, Acting Senior Human Dimension Officer, OSCE Centre in Bishkek

Artem Aznaurian, Senior Political Officer, OSCE Centre in Bishkek

Andrey Krutko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of the Russian Federation

Anders Lundgren, Deputy Ambassador, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany

Richard Dewell, Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy

Aida Akmatalieva, Head of Department of International Development, British Embassy

Danielle Meuwly Montelone, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Switzerland

Bakyt Makhmutov, Senior Adviser, Embassy of Switzerland

Ognyan Champoev, Head of the Political, Press and Information Section, EU Delegation

Claudia Hock, Attache, Project Manager Operations Section, EU Delegation

Alexander Orekhov, Senior Program Coordinator, IFES

Ann Hopper, Democracy & Governance Office Director, USAID

Nazgul Akisheva, USAID

John DiPirro, Country Director, International Republican Institute

Deguchi Katsuyuki, Representative of Japan International Cooperation Agency

Burul Ibraeva, Program Officer, Japan International Cooperation Agency

Corina Cepoi, Country Director, Internews

Liliana Vitu, Project Director, Internews