

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

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE  
STATEMENT ON THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS  
IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA,  
UNDER “CURRENT ISSUES”  
715<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
5 JUNE 2008**

Canada has followed the June 1 parliamentary elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) with interest. We have taken note of the statement of preliminary findings and conclusions issued by the International Election Observation Mission, formed by OSCE/ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and PACE (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe).

Canada is disappointed that, according to the preliminary findings, key OSCE and other commitments were not met. Some positive elements were noted by the monitoring mission: the election was said to have been well administered procedurally, voters could choose from a wide variety of parties, the State Election Commission acted in a professional manner and gender balance in candidate lists and election administration improved.

However, Canada is concerned by the organized violence and intimidation that prevailed in some ethnic Albanian areas before and during voting day, and which resulted in the death of one person. This has led international election observers to conclude that in many places it was impossible for voters to express freely their will. Other problems identified included the selective enforcement of the law, ballot box stuffing and serious irregularities during vote counting.

Mr. Chairman,

The international election observation mission has indicated that its overall assessment will depend on whether government authorities will investigate thoroughly the serious violations of the law and take remedial steps. In this context, Canada hopes that a re-run of the vote in areas where irregularities took place will demonstrate the government's capacity and will to conduct elections that meet international standards and further the country's EU and NATO aspirations.

The expectations for this election were high, given the FYROM's perspective for greater Euro-Atlantic integration. As a friend of that country, and a supporter of its aspirations, Canada urges the authorities to take immediate measures to address the concerns raised by international observers and others, to bring those responsible for acts of violence and other violations to account, and to implement effectively OSCE/ODIHR recommendations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.