

Distinguished Chairperson and participants,

I welcome you all to today's forum. Thank you for this opportunity to say a few words.

The question before the Forum is "what the people of Kyrgyzstan expect from Parliament". I shall be brief, because it is what you have to say that is important, not OSCE. OSCE is here to listen, consider your comments, and respond by translating the best of them into practical action !

But to start the discussion, I asked a member of my staff to conduct a snap, random poll in the street. The issues began to emerge.

For example, one young man said he was pleased that Parliament had formed a Government and he expects Parliament to improve living standards and stability. Other respondents highlighted stability, the punishment of those guilty of the tragic events, pensions, price controls on basic commodities, legislation that will work, and economic development. Interestingly the most optimistic were elderly people. They sought prosperity and peace. From last week's Migration conference in Bishkek, we could add concern about migration and improved use of migrant remittances.

And yet, unfortunately, the majority of respondents answered negatively, saying they expect nothing from Parliament, or refused to answer. It is this negativism that, I would suggest, Parliament needs to pay attention to.

Public scepticism or fatalism towards Parliaments globally is a problem. We can say it is a "disconnect" between Parliament and People. But it is precisely in this area that OSCE wishes to support Parliament. To win people's respect through hard work, integrity, good oversight of behaviour and budgets through the Parliamentary Commissions, and a proactive approach to developing good legislation. Parliament should consider how it can be geographically and ethnically more inclusive. Do Deputies travel enough inside the country ? And do they hold enough public consultation meetings.

Of course, Parliament in any democratic country is the main legislative body. The OSCE Centre knows there is a long list of potential legislation before Parliament. We also have the list. As before, the OSCE is ready to offer expertise on the Speaker's request in legislation : for example regarding media, political parties, gender equality, human rights, anti-corruption strategy, the strategy of ethnic relations, and many other areas. In this, the OSCE will coordinate closely with the UN, the European Union and other international partners.

This Parliament and many of its deputies are new. With this in mind, the OSCE is also ready to facilitate peer-support from other parliamentarians, notably the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. We will be pleased to hear today, your suggestions and recommendations in this regard.

I wish the Forum, as well as the new Parliament, success in winning the trust of the people of Kyrgyzstan and in meeting the country's needs !

Thank you for your attention!