

# The Europe and Eurasia Report



MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

February 2001

## TAJIKISTAN POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

As part of its ongoing political party development project in Tajikistan, IFES has finalized plans for an all-political party conference in Dushanbe early April. The event, entitled “Political Parties One Year After the *Majlisi Oli* Elections: Expanding Participation of Youth and Women,” will bring together representatives of both registered and unregistered political parties to discuss outreach strategies and how to increase the effectiveness of women’s and youth programming and participation in the political sphere.

IFES began its political party development project in Tajikistan in 1998. In August of 1999, IFES cooperated with the George C. Marshall Center and the OSCE to conduct a pre-election political party conference focusing on election strategies. In May of 2000, IFES again worked with the Marshall Center and the OSCE to hold a conference on political party development in the post-election environment. The May event brought together representatives of eleven political parties and political movements to discuss ways that parties can better function in the post-election environment. While this meant effective governance for the parties who had placed representatives in the *Majlisi Oli*, for the others it meant developing strategies for staying engaged in the political process from the outside.

Three types of political parties emerged in the aftermath of the February 2000 parliamentary elections: those who had candidates elected or placed by party list (the People’s Democracy Party, the Islamic Renaissance Party, and the Communist Party); those who fielded candidates in the election but did not win any seats (the Democratic Party, Socialist Party, and Party of Justice); and those who were not allowed to compete in the elections due to registration issues (Lali Badakhshan, the Labor Party, and many others).

The event produced an agreement in concept for the parties to meet on a regular basis and represented an important step in the ongoing process of national reconciliation and consolidation of multi-partyism in Tajikistan. A group of representatives from the “third tier” of political parties formed a new political movement called “For the Promotion of Democracy” after the May event. The parties comprising this coalition of interests included the Party of Justice and Unity, the National

Movement of Tajikistan, and the Congress of Popular Unity. The trio hoped to have the new alliance formally registered as political party by the Ministry of Justice in 2001. Since this conference, IFES has sponsored a succession of political party round table developmental discussions held in regional locations such as Kurghan-Teppa and Dusti, with IFES planning multiple theme-based conferences and training sessions throughout 2001.

The April 2001 political party conference event will seek to create a working agenda for political parties to establish women’s and youth taskforces to improve outreach. IFES has confirmed the participation of Ms. Liliya Grigorovich, a deputy of the Supreme Rada of Ukraine, to take part in the conference. Ms. Grigorovich, who has been a leader in promoting the role of women in the political process of Ukraine, will work with the participants in formulating different strategies to integrate gender issues into party politics and in discussing the role of women emerging democracies.

Ms. Grigorovich’s participation will be complimented by Tajikistani political representatives, NGO leaders and social scientists addressing strategies for promoting the integration of gender issues into politics and setting an agenda for women’s activism. Following the opening presentations, all of the at-

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*Attendees at last year’s political party development conference in Dushanbe.*

*Elections*

*Governance*

*Civil Society*

*Rule of Law*

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### EUROPE

#### **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

##### Civic Education Activities

##### Retreat and Training in Jahorina

During the second week of February, IFES held a three-day retreat and training session in the Hotel Bistrica on Jahorina in the opchina of Pale in the Republika Srpska. The retreat focused on a thorough discussion of the GAINS civic initiatives, which analyzed them both by categories and by ways of implementation. This discussion was useful, not only for new staff but for the veterans as well with examples of new, creative approaches. Another important topic covered was the new municipal guides.

There were also a number of speakers who contributed to the retreat. Vladimir Milan, USAID's privatization expert in the RS, made a presentation and answered numerous questions on privatization in the RS. OSCE Deputy Governance Coordinator Darko Stancic and OSCE Civil Society Program Manager Zineta Rasavac spoke about the OSCE's Democratization Department programs. Zlatan Ohranovic, Director of CCI, spoke about CCIs program activities, which focus on three areas: Raising Public Awareness, Local Advocacy Development, and Coalition Advocacy Development.

##### New GAINS

Throughout January and February, IFES trainers went out in the field in pursuit of new GAINS. Most teams have established ten new GAINS, bringing the total number of IFES civic initiatives in BiH since October 1998 to over 500.

Dragan and Ljubinko completed their first GAIN under this contract. Representatives of the Finnish government and Finland SFOR approved 45,000 KM as a donation for reconstruction of a school in Ljeskove Vode, Dobo municipality.



*On the outskirts of Zenica, Nino and Hamza are working with the community assembly of Lukovo Polje. As shown here, six of the eight members were present at a recent meeting. After counseling the group on how to proceed, the assembly considered four items: sewage pipes, streetlights, sidewalks, and the need for a community building. After an hour and a half discussion, they decided to ask the municipality for streetlights and prepared the request.*

In Razljevo in Brcko district, Panto and Zoran are working on a GAIN for the reconstruction of a school gym. Snjeza and Neso are working with a group in Kalender-ovci in the Dobojski area of responsibility to attract investment for the development of agriculture. Hika and Miro are assisting the citizens of Topcic Polje in Zenica petition the Ombudsman regarding their lack of adequate electricity. These are but a few examples of new GAINs being pursued.

#### *Citizens' Municipal Guides*

The first draft of the Citizens' Guide to Zenica Municipality has been completed. It is expected that this document will be finalized and sent to the printer by the first of March. This will serve as a prototype for the other municipal citizens' guides.

These Citizens' Guides will be handbooks for residents in each municipality in which we are working, outlining the functions of the various departments and agencies. They will enable people to know who is responsible for what function, thereby enabling the people to realize what their government is doing, or supposed to be doing, for them and who should be held accountable for what function.

#### IFES/AEOBiH Activities

IFES Sarajevo welcomed a new Executive Director, Irena Hadziabdic, on 2 January. Ms. Hadziabdic formerly served as the Election Officer in the OSCE field office in Travnik.

#### *Provisional Election Commission Decision Overturned*

During the Presidency meeting of AEOBiH, held on 27 January, decisions were discussed that were made by the Provisional Election Commission (PEC) on 12 December 2000, related to the sanctions issued to fourteen MECs due to irregularities that occurred during the November 2000 Elections. No proper investigation of these cases was made before sanctions were imposed. MEC members involved in these sanctions had not received adequate opportunity to give their explanation although several of the dismissed MEC members had appealed these decisions.

The AEOBiH Presidency sent a letter to the PEC and the Election Appeals Sub Commission (EASC) on 1 February, stating that the Presidency of the AEOBiH would be grateful if the PEC would reconsider and fully investigate all appeals lodged and pay full attention to each particular case.

Subsequently, the PEC issued a decision overturning their previous dismissal of the MECs who had appealed their cases. Executive Director Irena Hadziabdic informed the Secretariat that the AEOBiH Presidency's letter had contributed to the overturning of the dismissal of seven MECs and censure of another six commissions. As a result of this initiative, the MECs were not dismissed.

#### *AEOBiH Legal Council is Established*

The Legal Council of the Association of Election Officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina (AEOBiH) was established in February 2001. The Legal Council consists of twelve experienced lawyers and judges, all of whom are AEOBiH members. They represent all three ethnic groups and both BiH entities as well as Brcko District.

The Council's role is advisory with its focus on the draft election law and its sub-provisions. Beneficiaries of the work conducted by the Council will be state institutions, political parties, and nongovernmental organizations.

At their first meeting, held in February, the group identified its first tasks and activities. In the coming period, until the Election Law is adopted, the Legal Council will focus on detailed analysis of the draft Election Law; meetings organized with representatives from OHR, OSCE, and PEC in order to obtain relevant information about the draft Election Law from the persons directly involved in its creation and procedure of adoption; meetings arranged with the newly constituted BiH authorities, both at the state and the entity level, to advance suggestions for improvements in the draft Election Law and to catalyze the adoption process; and professional development in media skills and public presentation through Media Skills and Presentation seminars as well as in the domain of comparative electoral systems and international elections standards through the AEOBiH Elections Course.

The long-term goal is to turn the Legal Council into an expert group capable of providing advice to election commissions at all levels. The Legal Council will not deal with political issues concerning draft Election Law but rather focus on technical issues. Currently there is no similar body in BiH.

#### *AEOBiH Technical Series: A New Publication*

The purpose of the first edition of the new AEOBiH Technical Series publication is to provide an overview of recent election results in BiH and to describe and explain recent changes in the Rules and Regulations for elections in BiH. The first publication will feature the 1998 election results in comparison with the 2000 election results in pie charts and diagrams, explained and connected to other relevant information concerning voter turn-out, out of country voting and absentee data, and the use of tendered ballots. A text discussing the current status of the draft election law will also be included. The text will be apolitical, but will inspect the current challenges in the adoption process as explained by OSCE, OHR and BiH politicians.

The overall purpose of these publications is to promote AEOBiH to other organizations involved in elections, to involve AEOBiH members in election research, and to inform AEOBiH members about various technical issues regarding the election process in BiH. The complete text of the AEOBiH

Technical Series publications will be available in hard copy as well as on our website: <http://www.aeobih.com.ba> .

#### *Update on the Adoption of the BiH Election Law*

The BiH Parliament has yet to approve and adopt the election law of BiH. The Entity Constitutions are undergoing a revision in light of a recent decision taken by the BiH Constitutional Court. The revision of the Entity Constitutions is bound to have an important impact on the draft election law, which is why it remains difficult to forecast the exact date for the adoption of the election law.

An election law providing solid and dependable guidance to election officials in Bosnia is of crucial importance. The past years' elections have been managed by OSCE, but now is the time when the national authorities will take on this task with full responsibility. It is, however, difficult to take charge as long as the legal foundation for the elections administration remains subject to discussion and disagreements in the parliament. Political unity and agreements behind the election law are needed before responsibilities can be fully transferred to national authorities.

OSCE and OHR presented to the public and political parties on 10 February 2001 a new Draft Election Law. There are no significant alterations to the text and principles guiding the electoral system in comparison with the previous draft. A number of chapters dealing with the Federation House of Peoples, the President and Vice-President of the Federation and the President and the Vice-President of the Republika Srpska have not been included as the final drafting of these awaits the implementation of BiH Constitutional Court decision on "constituent people."

#### *Impact Summary*

IFES/AEOBiH's legitimacy in BiH was raised by its success in appealing to the PEC for the reconsideration of the MECs' cases. This success further solidifies the association's position in BiH elections as a legitimate and influential organization. In February, the Civic Education project reached an important marker by having most teams develop ten new GAINS. The retreat at Jahorina allowed the teams to share experiences and methods used in all of their activities; thus, it contributed to the overall level at which the teams operate.

## **ALBANIA**

#### *Overview of IFES Initiatives*

The primary initiative of IFES/Albania continues to be the finalization of a revised national list of voters for the parliamentary elections in June of this year. IFES has also agreed to participate, with the Council of Europe and the Constitutional Court, in a training/seminar program for judges dealing with election disputes. The third IFES initiative is the provision of advice and assistance to the Central Election Commission (CEC) for the upcoming national elections.

#### *CEC Approves Voter Registration Project*

In late February, the CEC approved the voter registration project proposed by IFES. At the same time, the CEC appointed its representatives to the Management Board and the Technical Working Group. With these two decisions, IFES began to finalize a strategic work plan for consideration by the Management Board and the CEC in early March. These decisions are also important for securing project funds from other international donors. This effort is lead by OSCE Albania. A final recommendation on the distribution of voter id cards has not been made by the CEC and should be forthcoming in early March. A decision to eliminate the ID card component of the project will require an amendment to the Electoral Code prior to the national elections.

#### *Judicial Seminar*

IFES, at the request of the Constitutional Court, had agreed to assist the Council of Europe in the organization of an election dispute seminar for Constitutional Court judges. The seminar has been scheduled for 6-9 April. In late February, the Ministry of Justice suggested that the seminar be expanded to include a one-week 'school of instruction' for all judges through the magistrates school. IFES has agreed to participate in the new concept.

#### *CEC Election Preparations*

The CEC has concentrated its efforts to date on the 'clean-up' of required decisions resulting from the local government elections of October 2000 and the voter registration project. Much needs to be done in the next few months to prepare for the upcoming elections. These activities include preparing an election budget, appointing and training local election officials, and establishing a distribution system for election supplies and communication linkages with local election offices. In addition, IFES will encourage the CEC to undertake a more structured process of consultation with political parties in the pre-election and election periods. IFES communicates directly with the CEC on these matters and meets weekly with officials of the US Embassy and OSCE on election readiness issues.

During the last week of February, the National Assembly approved the boundaries for 100 new Electoral Zones for the upcoming elections. It also established an all-party committee to review election issues and prepare guidelines on ethical conduct of parties during the election. These two decisions of the National Assembly will have a direct impact on the work of the CEC.

#### *Impact Statement*

IFES/Albania has a direct and important role in the election process on behalf of USAID and the international community. This is reflected in the lead position IFES has for the Voter Registration Project and the dependence of the international community on IFES to provide advice on election

preparations and processes. IFES maintains a strong and cooperative working relationship with the CEC, OSCE, US Embassy and USAID as well as the Albanian diplomatic community as represented through the Friends of Albania.

## MACEDONIA

### *Working Group on Electoral Reform Convenes*

On 8 February, Minister of Justice Xhevdet Nasufi convened the first meeting of the Ministry of Justice Working Group on Electoral Reform. A second meeting was held on 22 February.

The Working Group, consisting of academics and public servants, has begun a review of current electoral legislation as well as proposals to change its electoral system recently introduced in its national legislature, the Sobranie. The mandate of the Working Group is broad. Over the course of the next several months, the Working Group will continue its review of relevant laws, draft proposed legislation and issue a report and recommendations to the Ministry of Justice. The Working Group plans to initiate a series of public discussions with the political parties and other organizations before issuing its report. It is expected that the report and recommendations, after submission to the government, will be presented to the Sobranie for legislative action. In addition to its review and drafting of proposed legislation, the Working Group has begun testing the integrity of the voters' list database.

### *New Office Space*

At the end of February, IFES/Macedonia obtained new office space to accommodate its growing staff and members of the Working Group.

### *Impact Statement*

IFES, under agreement with the Ministry of Justice, is providing assistance to the Working Group. In late February, IFES began testing the voters' list database in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice and the Bureau of Statistics. It has also begun bringing in experts on electoral law and administration, and providing translations of foreign laws and related materials. The new office space, as well as computer equipment and other resources, will be made available for use of the members of the Working Group until its work is finished.

## MOLDOVA

### *IFES & the CEC*

This month, IFES/Moldova and the CEC turned full attention to the 25 February parliamentary elections. Training seminars for poll workers were jointly organized in each of Moldova's judets. Participants were instructed as to the financial, security, and administrative responsibilities of electoral bodies at all levels and the role of observers on election

day. Approximately 570 poll workers from all over the country were issued a brochure including all relevant CEC resolutions, a brochure including bios of the electoral contestants, a poster explaining voting procedures and a sample ballot.

To ensure better informed electorate, IFES/Moldova produced a motivational and technical TV and radio spots aired on national TV and radio and private NIT TV company and ANTENNA C radio station. IFES also produced a poster (3,000 copies) explaining voting procedure, later on distributed and posted in each polling station of the Republic. In addition, 6,000 copies of technical and motivational fliers were distributed to young people throughout the country, via a NGO network and universities and institutions.

### *Electoral Disputes Seminars*

IFES/Moldova, in conjunction with the Supreme Court of Justice and the CEC, conducted two seminars focused on electoral disputes this month. The first seminar, entitled "*Adjudication of the Electoral Disputes by Courts*," was attended by 400 judges, 100 of which will be involved in the settling electoral disputes. Among the guests were the Chairman of the Supreme Court of Justice, the Minister of Justice, and the Chairman of the CEC. The second seminar, entitled "*2001 Parliamentary Elections: Electoral Disputes and Observing Electoral Law*," was held on 9 February. The event was attended by 350 public prosecutors.

### *Election Observation*

IFES/Moldova, with the assistance of LADOM, mobilized over 200 domestic and 11 international observers throughout Moldova on 25 February. All observers received training and instruction on the role of the observer, their duties on election day and the completion and delivery of the observer forms.

On the day of the elections, IFES organized five teams with two or three international observers in each team. IFES observers were joined by Elise Loukas and Pamela Summers of ABA-CEELI, and Lenka Andryskova of the Helsinki Committee. 43 polling stations were visited in the North, South and Central regions. The teams were as follows:

Team 1—Chisinau  
Igor Botan and Cornell Gurin

Team 2—A.T.U. Gagauzia  
Charles Lasham, Elise Loukas and Vlad Gurin

Team 3—South  
Paul De Gregorio and Margareta Mamaliga

Team 4—North  
Tamara Chitoroaga and Ina Gutium

Team 5—Special  
Pam Summers and Lenka Koutnakova-Andrysek



*Moldovan voters go to the polls on 25 February*

On Tuesday, Charles Lasham, Igor Botan, Gabriel Mumjiev and LADOM representatives gave an IFES/LADOM press conference and issued a statement on the conduct of the polling. The conference was well attended, and Mr. Lasham was interviewed by two television news stations.

#### *IFES Domestic Observer Training*

IFES/Moldova, in conjunction with LADOM, held five training seminars (3 in Chisinau, 1 in Balti and 1 in Cahul) to instruct domestic observers for the 25 February elections. 210 domestic observers were instructed on the role of the domestic observer, the electoral process, filling out observer forms and observer questionnaires, and the role of international observers. Observers representing political parties, electoral blocs and independent candidates also joined the seminars. Paul DeGregorio, IFES Election Administration Expert assisted in delivering the training. Television, radio and news agencies were on-hand for the seminars.

#### *IFES Political Party Support*

IFES/Moldova provided expertise and training to observers and representatives of political parties running in the 25 February parliamentary elections. Parties who will have their observers present in the polling stations were also provided copies of the *Observer Guide*. IFES/Moldova's resource center was also open to use by political parties.

#### *Supporting NGOs*

IFES/Moldova and the Certification Commission continued to

provide assistance to NGOs seeking public benefit status. On 6 February, a training seminar entitled "Public Benefit Certification" was held at the Nationalities and Language Department. 50 organizations representing all ethnic minorities were guided through the certification process. NGO Program Coordinator Ina Gutium gave a presentation on partnership building with public administration bodies and coalition building within the NGO sector. Participants praised the organizers for the provision of expertise and materials, requesting similar training in the future.

In anticipation of future collaboration, NGO Program Coordinator Ina Gutium and Public Administration Coordinator Margareta Mamaliga met with representatives of the Social Investment Fund. The parties discussed possible cooperation on a community

mentoring project, for which CDDP and the Romanian Association for Community Development received a grant from UK Charity Know How.

#### *IFES & International Organizations*

IFES/Moldova assisted this month in preparing international observers for the 25 February elections. In addition to providing translations of CEC regulations, Project Director Charles Lasham and Senior Program Coordinator Igor Botan conducted a briefing for OSCE observers. The briefing covered the electoral system, the electoral code, election day procedures, the counting of the votes and the allocation of seats.

#### *IFES Media Activities*

IFES/Moldova media activities were significantly more active during the campaign period. On the eve of elections, IFES/Moldova's website ([www.ifes.md](http://www.ifes.md)) received over 11,000 visitors. Various TV and radios stations requested IFES' expertise and commentaries on the electoral campaign, including an Austrian radio station and "1+1", a Ukrainian television. Apart from elections-related media activities, National Radio reported on the seminar "Public Benefit Certification" held by IFES/Moldova and the Certification Commission.

#### *Civic Voice*

Beginning on 31 January and running through the election period, ANTENNA C Radio Station aired two editions of Civic Voice radio each week. The shows were produced by IFES/Moldova in cooperation with LADOM, and featured

citizens' electoral rights and the role of the CEC in elections. Other issues covered included observer activity, campaign financing, electoral symbols, ballot design, voter rolls, and poll worker responsibilities. The recently released *2000 NGO Sustainability Index For Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia*, developed by USAID, mentions Civic Voice as "one of the most visible publications in Moldova covering the NGO community, which is distributed free of charge to NGOs, public administration bodies and political parties...."

#### *Electoral School*

In February, IFES/Moldova continued to organize the Electoral School for young members of Moldovan political parties. Four lectures were held on the issues of electoral disputes, the 25 February parliamentary elections, electioneering and the role of observers.

#### *Impact Summary*

With the parliamentary campaign in full swing, IFES programming in Moldova was especially active this month. IFES' work with the CEC focused on preparing pollworkers, judges and citizens for their electoral responsibilities. IFES pollworker training helps to improve the administrative process on election day, thereby increasing both the transparency and efficiency of elections. IFES citizen education efforts, which included the production of informative posters and media clips, as well as additional Civic Voice radio broadcasts, are aimed at empowering citizens with reliable information on both the process and politics of the electoral cycle.

IFES' seminar on electoral disputes, which received joint sponsorship from the CEC and Supreme Court of Justice, gave judges at the local and regional levels a preview of what they might expect during the campaign. A better-informed and efficient judiciary is an important tool in the administration of elections and the protection of citizen and candidate rights.

Finally this month, IFES undertook observation and observer training activities. In cooperation with LADOM, IFES observation activities are aimed at establishing a permanent observer presence in Moldova and ensuring that international observers are appropriately informed of their rights and re-



*Training of OSCE observers in Chisinau*

sponsibilities.

#### **ROMANIA**

##### *IFES Sponsors Roundtable on Establishing a Romanian Permanent Election Commission*

On 26 February, with funding from USAID, IFES sponsored a roundtable on the importance of establishing a permanent electoral authority in Romania. IFES' local partners, CENTRAS and PDA, took the initiative to organize this discussion based on the belief that the 2000 electoral year experience would be useful in drawing viable improvements concerning the electoral system in Romania. The roundtable brought together prominent figures in Romania including the President of the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court of Justice judges, Political Analysts, Members of Parliament, and representatives of NGOs and the media.

The roundtable provided a forum for policy leaders to exchange ideas and engage in dialogue on the importance of petitioning the government to pass legislation creating a permanent election authority in Romania. Discussion and presentations focused primarily on:

- Developing the functions of a permanent electoral bureau;
- Creating permanent territorial electoral bureaus and establishing their competencies;

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### UPCOMING EVENTS IN EUROPE AND EURASIA

29/30 March	Student Olympiad Location: Almaty, Kazakhstan Contact: Bradley Austin, Project Manager (bradley@ifes.almaty.kz)
3/4 April	Political Party Development Conference: "Gender and Political Parties: One Year after Majlisi Oli Elections" Location: Dushanbe, Tajikistan Contact: Phillip Griffin, Pol. Party Dev. Consultant (pgriffin@ifes.tajik.net)
April	Student Local Government Day Location: Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and Dushanbe, Tajikistan Contact: <i>Bishkek</i> - Chedomir Flego, Project Manager (ched@ifes.elcat.kg) <i>Dushanbe</i> - Gregory Stephenson, Civ. Ed. Consultant (greg@ifes.tajik.net)

workforce whose post-academic needs must be met. With such a large percentage of youth passing into early adulthood, the government must look at ways to prepare young people to be full and active citizens in the new Tajikistan, lest their hopes be stymied by a lack of sufficient preparation and opportunities. Tajikistan cannot afford to alienate a growing segment of the population through an inability to provide education and opportunities for young people to participate in decision-making.

Addressing this issue, Dr. Asherboi Imomov of Tajik State University and Dr. Abdughani Mamadazimov of the National Association of Political Scientists of Tajikistan will commence this

#### "Tajikistan Conference" from page 1

tendees will participate in a series of small group exercises aimed at developing a plan to recruit women members and candidates. The conclusion of the day will entail an open discussion on the proposal to create a women's taskforce in Tajikistan.

The second part of the conference will focus on youth outreach strategies. The youth outreach agenda uniquely combines the IFES programmatic objectives of political party development and secondary and tertiary level civic education. Since Autumn 2000, IFES has been working on a civic education project to provide information on civics and democracy to secondary school students across the country. Based on results of a series of Focus Groups conducted with secondary school students and teachers in May 2000, IFES initiated a project to create a civics textbook and course that addresses Tajikistan's democratic development and challenges students to become active citizens in their country. In December 2000, IFES created a Student Advisory Board and Curriculum Development Committee to oversee preparation of the textbook and implementation of other school-based student outreach initiatives. The integration of youth into political life has been an issue of great significance to political parties, and the conference will serve as a conduit within which to pursue strategies for youth involvement and youth-oriented task forces among all parties.

As of February 2000, 54% of the population of Tajikistan was age 19 and younger, while 63% was 24 or younger. Fifty-two percent of the entire population was female. Statistics indicate that roughly 60% of younger persons ages 18-24 voted in the presidential and parliamentary elections, though the observed incidence of youth voter participation was much lower. What these statistics clearly suggest is that there is a large constituency of first-time voters and young citizens entering the

part of the conference with presentations on the role of youth in the building of democracy in Tajikistan. IFES Civic Education consultant Gregory Stephenson and Senior Program Officer Anthony C. Bowyer will continue with an overview of youth outreach and civic education programs that IFES is undertaking in Tajikistani schools. Ms. Grigorovich will then present a broader view of strategies that have been proven effective in promoting youth activism, based on her personal experience in Ukraine.

Following the presentations, the participants will engage in a series of discussions and exercises focusing on setting an agenda within political parties for youth issues. Several representatives from the IFES/Washington, D.C. office, including the Director of the Europe and Eurasia division, Scott Lansell, Senior Program Officer Anthony C. Bowyer, and Senior Program Assistant Maggie McDonough, will be attending the conference and contributing to various aspects of the agenda.

The issue of youth and women's outreach has been discussed as particularly significant to the development of broad-based sustainability and growth of political parties, which traditionally have been dominated by older men. The IFES conference will contribute to further consideration and discussion of this particularly relevant and critical issue. As seen prior to the elections and in the period after elections were completed, political parties have a long way to go to become sensitive to youth and gender issues in their work. Outside of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), there appear to be relatively few women in positions of leadership or even serving as members of the other political parties. Political parties would be well-advised to consider programs to tap the resource pool of potential members and encourage activism among what is already, in terms of numbers, the dominant segment of the population.



*“Romania” from page 7*

- Creating an ideal structure of central and territorial permanent electoral bureaus;
- Granting independence and neutrality to permanent electoral bureaus;
- Establishing procedures for recruiting and appointing members of a permanent body; and
- Developing the necessary steps for adopting the necessary legal framework.

Additional material and arguments presented at the roundtable included comparative investigation of the ways similar bodies function worldwide, as well applying examples from other countries to the context in Romania. Discussion further touched upon organizing a subsequent lobbying campaign to introduce the law to Parliament by spring.

The increased transparency of the election process through a permanent body was the main argument presented for the necessity of establishing a permanent election authority in Romania. A permanent election authority could also work to solve technical issues related to administering elections and problems associated with the voters' list, monitor election processes, issue voter identification cards, monitor the political campaign, serve as a complaints and appeals bureau, and provide voter education before and during election cycles.

At the conclusion of the roundtable, it was recommended that a working group, under the aegis of CENTRAS and PDA, be formed to finalize the legal framework and organize a public information campaign to educate MPs and community members about the new draft law. A copy of the roundtable proceedings will be made available to the public in early April.

*Impact Summary*

The participation of electoral experts and administrators at the Bucharest conference and the subsequent working group will increase support of a draft law for Parliamentary review by early spring. With a parallel public outreach campaign geared at educating community members and MPs on the importance of a permanent authority, prospects for adoption of new legislation on a permanent election authority in 2001 remain optimistic.

**YUGOSLAVIA (KOSOVO)***Electoral Administration Conference*

With funding from USAID, IFES/Pristina, with cooperation from OSCE, sponsored a conference entitled “The Electoral Process in Kosovo: Next Steps” in early February at the



*PDA President Cristian Pirvulescu, and Dorin Tudoran and Dana Beegun of IFES/DC moderate roundtable proceedings on establishing a permanent election authority*

Grand Hotel in Pristina. Participants included members of the MEC, political party representatives, independent candidates, and NGO representatives, as well as representatives from the OSCE, the Council of Europe, and KACI. There were over 140 participants who attended the three days of the conference. Most MEC members attended, with the exception of those Serbs from the three northern municipalities. In addition to the MEC members, there were approximately twenty NGO representatives and fifteen political party representatives.

The conference followed a post-election survey that IFES administered. The conference provided the MEC members the opportunity to meet with their counterparts from municipalities across the province. It enabled officials to recognize possible shortcomings in logistical and technical preparations for the Municipal Elections and identify possible solutions to be able to correct these mistakes before the next elections. This included outlining priorities and next steps for professional development and institutionalization of election administration.

The conference was set up to allow for larger presentations to the plenary group on the October elections, international standards, and the nationalization of an electoral structure as well as smaller group discussions on these topics and ideas for improvement of the administration of elections in Kosovo.

The conference featured speakers such as Ambassador Daan Everts, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo; Owen Mas-



*The small discussion groups at the IFES/Kosovo conference developed many ideas for the improvement of electoral administration.*

ters, Deputy Head of the Council of Europe Observation Mission; and Istvan Zsuffa, Association of Central and Eastern European Election Officials. The MEC members also seemed quite interested in the case study of Bosnia presented by IFES/AEOBiH Field Representative/Training Advisor Beverly Hagerdon-Thakur and Program Manager Emin Novalic as well as the presentations by Rafael Lopez-Pintor, elections expert and author of *Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance*.

The small discussion groups each met twice during the three-day conference. The first discussion groups addressed the administration of the October elections and the roles of both the international and local administrators in this process. During their second meetings, the groups were each given a specific theme on which to focus: women's participation in elections, transparency, accountability, equity, equality, and integrity. Participants had been given background papers on these topics in order to increase the efficacy of the discussions. The working groups were indeed productive in their identification of both problems in the October elections and their possible solutions. The recurring possible solutions named were the alphabetization of the voter's lists, increase in the number of polling stations, better training for polling station committees and international supervisors, and an attempt to deal with appeals and complaints at the municipal level first.

General reactions to the conference from the OSCE Department of Elections Operations field staff, the members of the MEC, and IFES/Pristina's lessons learned meeting have been positive. This is true particularly in reference to the topics, speakers, and attendance. IFES is in the process of drafting a

final conference report that will summarize the main presentations and the outcome of the three-day event. IFES also plans to provide a full list of those who participated in the event. The conference report will officially be released in Kosovo and will be made available on the IFES web page in late March.

#### *MEC Training Seminars*

Based on the conclusions drawn from both the post-election survey and the conference, IFES has begun seminars to provide the MECs with the technical training and professional development that they have repeatedly stated as necessary. The daylong seminars are held in each of the five regions. The seminar format included a lecture, a question-and-answer period, and small group discussions of case studies. A package of text has been selected from public sources as OSCE, ACE, IDEA websites, and documents and is handed out to the participants on each topic so that they can collect them into a training handbook as the program continues.

This first seminar on the topic of International Standards was given on Wednesday, 21 February, in Peja. All eighteen MEC members were present. IFES had the same good reception in Prizren. The members of the commission were very receptive and contributed with comments and questions; eighteen of the twenty-one members attended there. On Saturday, 24 February, the seminar was held in Pristina, with seventeen of the twenty-seven members present. Those who participated were as active as their colleagues from the other regions. The Gjilan seminar was postponed one week due to Serbian protests after the deaths of two Serbs in Mitrovica. However, when it was held, one Serbian and two Turkish MEC members attended this seminar.

During the second week of March, Berit Linderman will present the seminar on Legal Frameworks. Ms. Linderman has been the legal expert of the Core Staff of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission to Moldova and to Azerbaijan. George Smith, a representative of the Association of Electoral Administrators, will present the topic of Voter Education in the third seminar in late March.

#### *Impact Summary*

IFES/Kosovo has taken significant first steps towards building local capacity through its survey, the conference, and MEC seminars. The seminars will allow the MECs to eventually fulfill their wish of nationalizing the Kosovo elections. The MECs have shown much enthusiasm and support for the IFES program throughout these activities. This is quite encouraging at the beginning of a process that seeks to provide them with the tools they need to administer elections on their own.

## CAUCASUS/CENTRAL ASIA

### ARMENIA

#### *IFES Civic Activity Begins with Women's Republican Council-Led NGO Roundtable*

On 6 February, the Women's Republican Council (WRC), IFES's civic partner, held a roundtable meeting to discuss women's issues in Armenia and present information regarding the 8 March International Women's Day activities. Among the women's NGOs that actively participated in the roundtable were, the Armenian Relief Fund, Mothers & Children, Women's Consumer Association, Armenian Women International Association, Civic Society Development Center, Center for Women's Rights, Union for Protection of Women's and Children's Rights, Golden Hands (a craft organization), Mothers of Slain Soldiers, and the Businesswomen's NGO. Representatives of the Georgian, Ukrainian, Jewish, and Kurdish minorities groups also took part in the roundtable.

The agenda, which was designed by WRC Chairwoman Nora Hakopian in consultations with IFES, included remarks by Hranush Hakopian – parliamentary deputy and former Social Security Minister, and Deputy Minister of Culture Alicia Adanian. The forum was covered by Promethius television station and resulted in a subsequent radio interview of Nora Hakopian by the Voice of America. Anais Troadec of World Learning also attended and gave remarks. Nora Hakopian spoke about her work in the Prime Minister's Committee on Women's Issues and proposed that NGO representation on the committee be designated on a rotating basis.

#### *WRC Begins Radio Campaign*

On 16 February, a 12-minute interview with Nora Hakopian ran for the first time on National Radio. The interview, in which the WRC Chairwoman discussed her relationship with IFES and her plans for 8 March was replayed on 19 February. The last part of the interview, where an announcement was made addressing women parliamentarians to call WRC to register for an IFES-sponsored 27 March Conference, was repeated several times that week.

On 16 February, a few minutes after this interview ran for the first time, WRC received its first call from a former parliamentarian. Within a few hours, four more had called. It is hoped that the 27 March conference will serve as a gathering



*Women's Republican Council/IFES press conference announcing International Women's Day events and IFES' Citizen's Awareness Project*

of women who had held some degree of power in the past in a country where women's political participation has dropped dramatically since independence. The IFES project seeks to improve women's civil society empowerment through a multi-media education campaign.

#### *Women's Day Calendar*

IFES and WRC volunteers are distributing 10,000 calendars with an International Women's Day message. The calendar is a landscape 22 by 16 inches full color glossy poster with a 2001 calendar occupying the bottom margin. The graphic includes the face of a modern Armenian woman, along with the faces of several Armenian women spanning the past century. The text on the calendar outlines the historical development of International Women's Day and provides contact information for the WRC.

The purpose of the calendar is to raise awareness levels of women's issues and the opportunities available for women in public life through the celebration of International Women's Day. The calendars will be distributed throughout Armenia at a series of eight "women's fairs" organized by IFES and the WRC to commemorate International Women's Day.

#### *WRC Institutional Assessment Completed*

Shoushanik Markarian, IFES Project Assistant, has completed a detailed assessment of the Women's Republican Council. The main purpose of the assessment is to determine the WRC's institutional development status. Due to the large number of WRC chapters, the assessment team targeted

seven chapters: Yerevan Headquarters of WRC, regional chapters in Abovyan (Kotayk marz/region), Ashtarak (Aragatsotn marz), Armavir (Armavir marz), Echmiadzin (Armavir marz), Kapan (Syunik), and Sevan (Gegharkunik).

The assessment was guided by the World Learning methodology for NGO assessment, which defines the development of the organization in six functional areas:

- *Governance*: Board of Directors/Governing Body, Mission, Legal Status, Constituency, Leadership
- *Operations and Management Systems*: Management of Information, Administration, Planning, Communication, Program Development and Implementation
- *Human Resources*: Staff Roles, Task Management, Performance Management and Staff Development, Salary Administration, Team Development and Conflict Resolution
- *Financial Resources*: Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Controls, Audit/External Financial Review, Resource Base
- *Service Delivery*: Sectoral Expertise, Community Ownership, Impact Assessment
- *External Relations and Advocacy*: Public Relations, Government Collaboration, NGO Collaboration, Advocacy, Mobilization of Resources

The organization may be in different stages of its institutional development in any of these areas. Therefore, the assessment instrument provides four stages of development for each of these six areas: *Start-up, Developing, Consolidating, and Mature*. The assessment will be shared shortly with the WRC as part of the IFES efforts to build the indigenous NGO's capacity.

#### *IFES-Armenia Welcomes New Chief Civic Trainer*

Albert Decie joined IFES Armenia on 24 February as Chief Civic Trainer for the Citizens Awareness and Participation project. As the Chief Civic Trainer, Decie is responsible for the development and implementation of the direct citizen's awareness and participation activities. Specifically, he will oversee the training and development of sixteen Civic Educators who will engage citizens across the country in dialogue groups in year one. Thereafter, he will conduct follow-on training and on going mentoring of trainers to ensure high quality citizens' participation and awareness activities.

Prior to joining IFES, Decie worked for five years as the executive director for the U.S. non-profit Educated Choices Heighten Opportunities, Inc. (ECHO) in Russia. While working for ECHO, he was involved in developing and conducting a wide range of innovative grassroots civil society and community development projects, including the Siberian Civic Initiatives Support Center (SCISC). SCISC was the first network of NGO support centers in Russia with affiliates in eleven cities over 2,500 miles apart and has been instrumental in the creation of the non-profit movement in Siberia.

#### *IFES Represented at OSCE Forum on Election Code Amendments*

On 9 February, Jeffrey Swedberg represented IFES at a day-long forum on the election code sponsored by the Office of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Deputy OSCE Director Branamir Radev chaired the roundtable meeting, held at the National Academy of Sciences. Also attending were Central Election Commission Chairman Artak Sahradian and three other CEC members, State and Legal Issues Chairman Viktor Dallakian, Constitutional Court Member Felix Tokhian, WRC Chairwoman Nora Hakopian, Its Your Choice legal specialist Khachik Voskanian, and members of various minor political parties and NGOs.

OSCE has taken the lead among international organizations in working on the electoral code. Amendments to the electoral code, especially with regard to voter lists, are among the conditions imposed upon Armenia by the Council of Europe. In 2000, the National Assembly passed two amendments; providing the right of refugees to vote in local elections; and changing, as of 2003, the current ratio of 75 majoritarian and 56 proportional seats to 94 proportional seats and 37 single mandate seats.

The forum highlighted two recent reports on the election code: one prepared by the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe and another written by OSCE's Office of Democracy and International Human Rights (ODIHR).

#### *Venice Commission Report*

The Venice Commission Report, written by Bernard Owen and Maria Rodriguez on 12 December 2000, was presented at the forum by Mr. Owen. The report stressed the following points:

- The current code requirement to check the lists twice a year is unnecessary.
- The ban against outside employment by parliamentary deputies is counterproductive.
- Voting and counting procedures are too complicated.
- Local observers should not have special appeal rights.
- The judicial appeal section should be rewritten to make it clearer.

#### *OSCE/ODIHR Report*

The 10 January 2001 ODIHR report was written by Andrew Bruce and Joseph Middleton. IFES/Armenia Project Manager Jeff Swedberg had an opportunity to brief this group in Autumn 2000 during their fact-finding trip to Yerevan. According to this report:

- Nominating bodies should not enjoy the power to withdraw their nominees from electoral commissions (there is strong support also from the CEC for this recommendation).

- Registration of a candidate or a list should not be revoked except for serious breaches of the Code.
- Mechanisms should be put in place to allow voting by those unable to vote for practical reasons.
- Superior electoral commissions should be required to publish summary tables of the results of all lower electoral commissions.
- The procedures and criteria for verifying signatures in support of the candidates should be laid out in the code.

### *Impact Summary*

Since signing a sub-grant agreement in January, IFES and the Women's Republican Council have intensified their cooperative activities in pursuit of increased women's political participation. The roundtable of civil society organizations, radio campaign, and International Women's Day print products provided citizen groups and NGOs accurate information regarding women's issues and opportunities available for women in public life. At the same time, IFES, in cooperation with World Learning, has turned an objective and critical eye on the organization so as to assess its strengths and weaknesses in the context of future program implementation. Meanwhile, IFES continues to stay active in the field of electoral reform in cooperation with other international organizations.

## **AZERBAIJAN**

### *Newly-Elected Milli Majlis Seated*

On 1 February, the full membership of the Milli Majlis was verified and seated. Of the 124 deputies in the legislative body, 61 represent the New Azerbaijan Party, 29 are non-partisan, 3 represent the Azerbaijan Popular Front Party, 2 represent the Motherland party, and one each are from the Azerbaijan National Independence Party, Yurddash, Alliance for the Sake of Azerbaijan, and Social Welfare Party.

Following certification of final results from the 5 November 2000 Milli Majlis elections, the first session of the new Milli Majlis was held in mid-December. However, due to polling irregularities in eleven constituencies re-voting was held on 7 January to fill those vacant seats. With certification of the January election results, the membership of the new Milli Majlis was complete.

During the past month with the cooperation of both the Central Election Commission (CEC) and the Milli Majlis, IFES collected information about the newly elected deputies and their party affiliations. In addition to this information, IFES also amassed information about the Parliamentary leadership and the membership of the Milli Majlis permanent committees. This information was provided to all Embassies in Baku and the Office for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

### *Municipal Leaders Visit IFES*

On 15 February, IFES hosted a delegation of Azerbaijani municipal leaders visiting the United States on a four-week U.S. State Department-funded International Visitors Program. The eight-member delegation was led by Professor Doctor Zahid Garalov, deputy of the Milli Majlis (Parliament) and Head of the Commission on Regional Affairs. Other members of the delegation included: Ilgar Aliyev, Yasamal Municipality; Sevinche Askerova, Ahmadly Municipality; Nizami Azizov, Rasulzada Municipality; Jumshud Hajiyev, Ismayilly Municipality; Javad Hashimov, Masally Municipality; Vugar Mustafayev, Khatai Municipality; and Mehdi Salim-Zadeh, CEC member and an authority on municipal governance.

IFES President Richard W. Soudriette welcomed the Azeri delegation and provided the group with an overview of IFES technical assistance efforts in Azerbaijan over the past three years. Soudriette then discussed IFES' intent to contribute to the development of local democracy through future programming. IFES Vice President for Programs Juliana G. Pilon and Director of Europe and Eurasia Division Scott Lansell also took part in the discussion.

The featured guest speaker during the delegation's visit to IFES was Russell A. Smith, Chief of Staff of the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority and former Chief of Staff to the D.C. Council Chair Dave Clark. Smith's presentation highlighted the variety of systems of local governments that exist across the U.S. and also included an analysis of the specific issues facing the D.C. government. In his remarks, Smith placed particular emphasis on public accountability, including citizen satisfaction surveys, public hearings, and public notices.

The program content of the International Visitors Program was arranged by the Meridian International Center in Washington, DC, and included site visits and briefings in Arizona, Connecticut, and Illinois. IFES/Azerbaijan Project Manager Elsie Chang participated in selection of candidates in Azerbaijan and made recommendations on the program themes.

### *IFES Provides Recommendations for U.S. Visitors Program*

During the past month, the Public Diplomacy and Political Sections of the U.S. Embassy asked IFES to recommend candidates for a three-week International Visitors Program to send officials from the Caucasus countries to the United States to learn about ethics in government and transparency issues. Three officials of the Azerbaijani government will participate in the program which is scheduled for the end of March through mid-April.

The major themes of the international visit are to:

- provide a general overview of the system of governance in the USA;
- show the relationship and interaction between the executive, legislative and judicial branches of

- power;
- demonstrate the transparency and accountability of elected and appointed government officials;
- emphasize the necessity of having legal frameworks and independent legal systems that allow citizens to challenge illegal and/or arbitrary government actions;
- reveal the role of government oversight organizations; and
- model mechanisms for citizen participation in governmental decision-making and legislation drafting.

#### *Forthcoming Municipal Elections*

According to sources at the CEC, IFES has learned that municipal by-elections are expected this spring to fill vacant seats on municipal councils. Such limited municipal elections will be held for 298 vacant seats which have become available due to resignations, deaths, and attrition. A tentative date for these elections has been set for 27 April.

In December 1999, municipal elections were first held in Azerbaijan with 21,087 councilors elected to fill seats on 2665 municipal councils. The term of offices for these positions is five years according to Azerbaijani Law.

#### *IFES Moves to New Office Premise in Baku*

IFES/Azerbaijan has recently upgraded its presence in Azerbaijan by re-locating from an apartment building premise to a business center with Western standard electricity, communications cabling, and security. The new office is centrally located in downtown Baku and offers a more appropriate venue for meetings and an easily accessible site for visitors to use the IFES Resource Center. Local telephone numbers for the new office are 97-89-23 and 97-89-24; and email addresses are ifesaz@azeronline.com (general correspondence) and ifesaz2@azeronline.com (Project Manager).

#### *Impact Summary*

In February, IFES continued to encourage greater transparency and accountability in the electoral reform process in Azerbaijan by maintaining close contacts with the CEC and the newly elected Milli Majlis, and through the gathering and dissemination of relevant information on governance and elections. IFES/Washington provided a briefing for a delegation of municipal officials visiting the United States in which public accountability and elected officials' responsibility to their constituents was stressed. IFES also made recommendations for participants in a three-week U.S. visit for an Ethics in Government regional program expected to take place in March and April. Likewise, IFES further increased the availability of objective information about the Government of Azerbaijan by disseminating information to embassies in Baku about the newly elected Parliament and the deputies' committee assignments. Lastly, IFES distributed information about the forthcoming 27 April limited municipal elections.

## **GEORGIA**

#### *Election Code Development Underway*

IFES continues to advise a wide variety of election stakeholders regarding the reform of the legislation relevant to elections. During the month of February, IFES continued to meet with both a non-governmental organization coalition (NGOC), comprised of representatives of four respected local organizations, and with Gigi Tseriteli, Chairman of the Parliamentary Working Group (PWG) on the Election Code. The meetings were aimed at establishing a process for consultation with all interested parties.

IFES is further supporting the drafting process through the funding of five Georgian lawyers charged with drafting the new unified election code. In order to facilitate access and exchange of ideas, the NGOC and PWG agreed that the lawyers would work from the offices of the NGOC partners at least two days a week and the Parliament for the remaining days. A meeting of all parties will take place at least once a week to review the progress of the project, the process IFES is following and to reach consensus on issues where different viewpoints are held.

As called for in amendments to the Law on Parliamentary Elections, adopted during the Summer of 2000, the Parliament of Georgia is obligated to create a unified election code to regulate local, parliamentary, and presidential elections. The legislation is due by the end of the Spring 2001 Parliamentary session. The legislative session is expected to conclude in early June and elections for local councils (Sakrebulo) are anticipated later this fall, according to the Constitution

#### *Election Code Conference Held*

On 10-11 February, IFES hosted a conference in Bakuriani, Georgia to support continued reform of election legislation. Attending the conference were members of the PWG, the Central Election Commission (CEC) and representatives of the NGO community. International expertise was provided by IFES and the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. Also attending were representatives of NDI, IRI, and Urban Institute, who are working with the NGO community and Parliament to reform the Local Self Governance Law. Representatives of USAID were also on hand. The conference was conducted in the format of a roundtable discussion together with workshop style discussions.

The election law conference brought together representatives of the NGO community, members of the CEC, and parliamentarians tasked with developing a unified election code for Georgia. Topics of discussion during the two-day event included the composition, role, and responsibilities of the Election Commissions; voters' lists and voter registration; regis-



*Maya Gogladze, IFES/Georgia Civic Education Coordinator, presents discussion group summaries.*

tration and nomination system of candidates and parties; election campaigning and funding; election day processes; and monitoring and observation of elections. Although views and ideas varied, discussions were undertaken in a very frank and open manner, providing a range of ideas for the lawyers to work with and a starting point for further discussion in subsequent meetings of the working group.

The conference also sought to establish a collaborative process between the Inter Faction Parliamentary Working Group and the NGO community for the development of the draft election code. It is hoped that the collaborative approach will allow the process of drafting and promulgation of the new law to be completed by June 2001. This will provide sufficient time for the new law to be implemented prior to the Sakrebulo elections, which are scheduled for the end of this year.

#### *Press Conference Highlights Conference Success*

On 20 February, a press conference took place in Parliament to publicize the successful outcome of the IFES-sponsored Election Code Conference. In this 45-minute press event, Chairman of the PWG, Gigi Tsereteli, NGOC representative, Nugzar Ivanidze, and IFES Legal Adviser Giorgi Baratashvili spoke to members of the mass media regarding the outcome of the conference and future joint activities.

In his remarks to journalists, Tsereteli emphasized the need for the Parliament to work cooperatively with the NGO coalition and international organizations, such as IFES and OSCE/ODIHR, in order to achieve an amended election law. All three representatives spoke optimistically about the expected signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the PWG, NGOC, and IFES that will outline areas of cooperation in drafting a new election code in the coming months.

#### *IFES Participates in Tskaltubo Seminar: Democratic Institutions and Civil Society*

On 18, 19, and 20 February, the Tbilisi School of Political Studies held a three-day seminar in Tskaltubo to discuss issues related to democratic institutions and civil society. The event was sponsored by the Council of Europe, USAID, and the Academy for Educational Development and was attended by over 50 participants including U.S. Ambassador Kenneth Yalowitz, and Dieter Boden, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the UN to Georgia. IFES/Georgia Technical Assistance Liaison Shalva Kipshidze and IFES/Washington Program Assistant Sonia Pastuhov-Pastein represented IFES at the event.

As requested by organizers of the seminar, Ms. Pastuhov-Pastein gave a talk on "Issues Arising out of the US Presidential Elections." This presentation highlighted shortcomings of the U.S. election process while emphasizing that final election results were accepted as lawful under existing rules. Ms. Pastuhov-Pastein also stressed that all U.S. states have systems in place for conducting post-election reviews and that such reviews are currently being undertaken in a structured and orderly fashion. Such review processes, it was noted, will result in valuable 'lessons learned' which will contribute to future reform—an ever-present and important aspect of democracies both old and new.

#### *Impact Summary*

During the month of February, IFES continued to support further reform of the system of elections in Georgia and to encourage increased awareness of democracy and democratic governance among the citizenry. IFES continued to encourage and facilitate dialogue between the Parliamentary working group on the election code and a coalition of democracy and governance NGOs in order to focus on common concerns and to encourage a constructive and realistic approach to legislative development. Together with the CEC, IFES also worked to improve the transparency of the election administration authority by developing a plan to ensure that publicly available information on elections and election-related developments is timely and relevant.

## **KAZAKHSTAN**

#### *Civic Education Activities Continue in Kazakhstani Secondary Schools*

One of the highlights of IFES' February activities was attending Student Action Committee (SAC) group presentations in gymnasium # 46 in Almaty. At this event, six groups of 11<sup>th</sup> graders gave presentations about various problems facing Kazakhstani society. The topics for their presentations included financial solvency for the city of Almaty, city improvement, the unemployment problem, teenage crime, the AIDS epidemic, and issues facing Kazakhstani youth. Each group presentation provided information about the relevance of

each particular societal issue with students giving statistical and empirical information which reinforced the severity of each problem. In addition, the groups presented different approaches and action plans to address each problem. Many of the students listed particular NGOs and government institutions, as well as individuals with whom they would need to work to effectively address the community problems presented.

Each group outlined their final recommendations for solutions to the previously identified problems. Two groups even used video to make their presentations, which included taped interviews with local citizens. IFES noted that the students displayed strong analytic and public speaking skills. At the conclusion of the event, each student was awarded a Certification of Participation. The IFES draft manual on "How to Organize Student Action Committees" had been used earlier to train the teacher-mentors in guiding the students through the project. The manual will be finalized and used as part of teacher training next August for the democracy and civics course.

IFES was informed that additional schools expressed an interest in the IFES civic education textbook/course. IFES plans to include these schools in the expanded IFES textbook project. IFES Project Manager Bradley Austin and Country Coordinator Marat Bigaliev visited three schools in Astana that are part of the IFES pilot network. All schools had conducted the mock student election exercise, which is one of the key student group activities featured in the course. Austin and Bigaliev received an overview of how the mock election project proceeded and discussed with teachers and students how they might improve the process of future mock elections in the future.

#### *Student Olympiad on Civic Education*

IFES continued preparations for the Student Olympiad event planned for March, which will bring together top students from each of the IFES textbook pilot schools. During the month of February, IFES finalized arrangements with the Kargalinsky Sanatorium as the venue for the event. The agenda and rules for the Olympiad were also drafted, with IFES finalizing regulations for the Student Olympiad and Teachers' Seminar. The Ministry of Education assisted IFES in organizing city and oblast schools to hold preliminary student competitions, the winners of which will be invited to participate in the March event. During the first day of the Olympiad, Bradley Austin, Marat Bigaliev, and IFES Senior Program Officer Anthony Bowyer will lead a teachers' discussion on analyzing and improving the democracy and civics course and textbook for future use. Marat Bigaliev has worked with the Ministry and individual schools to coordinate the Olympiad and teacher's sessions. Invitations were sent to several guests to attend the events, including five judges, Ministry of Education officials, representatives of local colleges, foreign embassies, USAID, and the U.S. Em-

bassy. The Indian Embassy agreed to help sponsor creative activities for students during free time.

#### *Impact Summary*

In February, IFES/Kazakhstan continued to solidify its Civic Education program by conducting spot visits to pilot schools and commencing with the Student Action Committee project. The growing interest of schools, active support of NGOs, continuing partnership with the Ministry of Education, and constructive dialogue with the business community highlighted not only the need for this kind of program but also various sources of support that can be utilized by IFES in addressing civic education issues. As a result, engaging these resources, IFES continued to develop plans for the upcoming Olympiad and future student-based programs such as the Student Government Day program and additional Student Action Committees in Pavlodar and Atyrau.

## **KYRGYSTAN**

#### *Secondary and Tertiary-Level Education Projects*

After numerous meetings and discussions during the month of February, final edits to the draft secondary school civic education textbook were approved by IFES and its local authors. The edits were made to prepare the book for a limited pilot testing in the months of March and April in eleven schools in and around Bishkek and one school in Issyk-Kul Oblast. This second edition is expected to better address the educational curriculum needs of secondary schools in Kyrgyzstan and be stronger in terms of content and consistency. The teacher's manual for the training of teachers participating in the piloting of the textbook was also upgraded and completed in final draft form. In order to solidify partnership with the Ministry of Education, IFES plans to meet with the Minister of Education, Ms. Kamila Sharshekeeva, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding and to nominate a project manager, within the Ministry of Education, to oversee the piloting of the project.

Continuing to make progress in the tertiary education project, IFES/Kyrgyzstan selected representatives of five universities who will comprise a committee charged with researching and writing a tertiary civic education course. A draft proposal will be considered next month. The proposal will evaluate the viability of the course, its applicability in several faculties and universities, and its ability to address the needs of first year students, the legal faculty, and the Pedagogical University. In addition, the committee is already considering a web design project using the current structure set in a number of themes and modules. IFES/Kyrgyzstan Project Manager Ched Flego is working jointly to develop a joint strategy and draft structure for the course.

#### *Student Elections and Education Issues*

As a result of meetings and close interactions with university students, IFES has determined that the most topical issues for



students tend to be the systemic problems of the national education system in Kyrgyzstan. Students indicated to IFES Project Manager Ched Flego that they would like the opportunity to address this issue by conducting a seminar on problems of corruption in education to make recommendations for further changes to the Minister of Education. Another option that was given by students was to conduct democratic student elections for student council representatives in universities throughout Kyrgyzstan. Students of the American University of Kyrgyzstan requested IFES' assistance in preparing for these elections. Furthermore, students and the deputy director of the Kyrgyz Russian Slavonic University proposed that IFES conduct information and training sessions before new university elections take place in September, which coincides with the beginning of the new school year. Several members of the faculty extended their full support of this idea. IFES has been involved in actively promoting student elections since 2000, when several university students participated in an IFES-sponsored Democracy Camp in Issyk-Kul and were later recruited and trained to serve as domestic election observers during the October presidential election.

#### *Local Government Elections in Kyrgyzstan*

During February, IFES had an opportunity to meet with the Chairman of the Central Election Commission, Mr. Sulayman Imanbayev, to discuss CEC preparations for the conduct of pilot government elections at the local level. Addressing IFES concerns with the restrictions placed on candidates wishing to stand for the elections, Mr. Imanbayev indicated that the review of the provisions, following the piloting, is likely to moderate or reduce these restrictions. Furthermore, he stated that these "first ever" local Akim elections demand a new chapter in the existing Elections Code, and invited IFES to comment on the draft law after the initial pilot elections. The draft has been prepared by lawyers working with the CEC and has been debated within the parliament.

Local government pilot elections were also discussed during Ched Flego's meeting with the Minister of Local Self-Management and Regional Development, Mr. Tolobek E. Omuraliev. Addressing the issue of restrictions, Flego learned from Omuraliev that it was necessary for the government to place certain restrictions on candidates, since the government "could not afford" conflicts between the heads of local self-government and the governors with whom they have to work. In addition, Minister Omuraliev indicated that considering Kyrgyzstan's immediate neighbors, its current election initiative is "progressive" and invited IFES and other international organizations to observe the elections and assist with the new draft of election laws. IFES discussed the issue of providing election assistance with USAID, and it was agreed that any decisions on possible IFES participation in the elections (either as observers or in terms of providing technical assistance) will be made jointly relative to the sensitive political situation in the country.

#### *Website Update*

Progress was made in preparing the new IFES/Central Asia website, which will be based in Bishkek. Web designers worked with staff from four IFES offices to include project information that will describe IFES' work in the various republics as well as provide political and factual information. It is expected the site will officially be launched in March.

#### *Impact Summary*

Prioritizing the importance of maintaining a high standard for the textbook and ensuring that it meets the educational requirements of the Ministry of Education and the Institute of Education, IFES continued to work on the second edition of the Democracy textbook. IFES/Kyrgyzstan concluded an agreement with the Institute of Education to pilot the second edition and anticipates the textbook to be ready for piloting in selected schools by mid-March.

A group of academics and professors prepared a draft structure and began to identify appropriate persons to research the tertiary-level civic education project. IFES staff believes that this project will need several months of research and writing. IFES plans to trial selected aspects of the course in several universities during the upcoming year. The course has received the endorsement of four major universities in Kyrgyzstan and representatives agree that such a course has been lacking in the current system. The goal of this course is to allow students to study civics on an advanced level, and ideally contribute to producing the next generation of private voluntary activists, teachers, and progressive government officials in the country.

With pilot government elections at the local level being one of the most topical issues in February, IFES had an opportunity to discuss the elections with the Chairman of the CEC, Mr. Sulayman Imanbayev, and the Minister of Local Self-Management and Regional Development, Mr. Tolobek E. Omuraliev. Both officials provided insights into the elections and their provisions. During these exchanges, IFES was invited to observe the elections and to assist with the drafting of a new elections law for local self-government following the pilot elections. Should the process prove to be part of a concerted effort to move the elections process forward, IFES, with guidance from USAID and the U.S. Embassy, will consider options for contributing to the local elections process. The promotion of continued dialogue with the CEC is important in order to gain information on local government issues and evaluate opportunities for targeted support.

Once the website is launched in March, it is expected to provide updated IFES project information in the republics of Central Asia as well as information on political issues, NGOs, and government institutions. The site will be available in both English and Russian, with plans to include other language options in the future.

## TAJIKISTAN

### *Curriculum Development*

IFES Civic Education Consultant Gregory Stephenson and Project Assistant Moukim Mallaev traveled to Kurghon-Teppa to inform key local government officials of the Student-Local Government Day (SLGD) and Student Action Committee (SAC) projects. Officials expressed their enthusiasm for the projects and assured their support. The local officials in Kurghon-Teppa remarked that students should use every opportunity to gain "practical experience," and they considered the approach of including them in outreach activities with members of local government to be creative.

Stephenson and Mallaev also discussed the SAC project with Mr. Safarov of the Dushanbe City Education Commission. During this meeting IFES learned that many of the teachers in Dushanbe already have experience with the Soviet-era forerunners of SACs. Mr. Safarov indicated that although these organizations were not exactly Student Action Committees in the same sense that IFES has proposed (that is, active school-based student "self initiative" councils), there were similarities, which might help with launching the idea. Safarov indicated that he is willing to assemble the teacher-mentors for training when the SAC Instructional Handbook is developed by IFES and reviewed by his staff. Development of this Handbook commenced in February, based upon models developed by IFES for other countries in the region.

### *Cooperation With International Partners*

Gregory Stephenson and Moukim Mallaev met with Takako Yasukawa of the Asian Development Bank and Jura Latifov of World Bank-PIU to inquire about any possible collaboration with their ongoing education projects. Since ADB will be conducting teacher-training sessions in May-June 2001, Yasukawa suggested that IFES/Tajikistan would be able to attend this event to examine teacher training methodologies in preparation for its own teacher training initiative in late summer. IFES has undertaken efforts to promote cross-organizational cooperation in civic education, and thus far has been well-received. Soros and the World Bank have offered to recommend secondary schools in Dushanbe in which to pilot test the textbook next fall.

### *Political Party Development*

Philip Griffin, IFES Political Party Development Consultant, met with Bernie Ryan, ABA Parliamentary consultant, and Hristo Hristov, UNTOP Political Officer, to discuss an upcoming conference on "The Effects of Regionalism in Tajikistan." Griffin, Ryan and Hristov discussed the possibility of jointly conducting the event. The conference would include participation of deputies from the Majlisi Oli as well as local scholars and academics. The issue of regionalism has been an increasingly important topic for IFES and other assistance organizations in their activities; for IFES, the topic has

emerged during its regional, televised interview series with members of political parties and local legislators. IFES is keenly sensitive to regional differences in Tajikistan, particularly concerning political parties in the country. Prior to the last elections in February 2000, discussions with representatives of smaller parties were held to develop national outreach strategies. Many of the parties were regionally based, and thus were not able to appeal to the population as a whole. Six parties eventually were registered to compete for seats in the Majlisi Namoyandagon, including the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Party of Justice "Adolatkoh," the Communist Party, the Democratic Party, the Socialist Party, and the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP). Only the PDP, Communist Party, and IRP were able to win single mandate or party list seats (there were some independent candidates who won via single mandate). The Party of Justice was subsequently de-registered due to alleged inconsistencies with its official documentation.

### *Television Series Gains Momentum*

In February, IFES and its local NGO partners "Law & Democracy Center" and "Mediopolis" conducted an additional televised episode of its "Law, Society & Democracy" series. The latest episode was filmed in Khojand and included interviews with members of the local Majlisi and local branches of political parties. Among the "hot topics" discussed was the prospect of security concerns prompted by the presence of armed fighters from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which allegedly has forces based in Sugd Oblast (formerly Leninabad Oblast). It is believed that the IMU may have links to a banned political party based in Sugd, the Hizb-ut-Tahrir party, which has advocated the violent overthrow of the Tajik government. Both organizations are believed to have ties to the Taliban forces in Afghanistan.

The American Bar Association expressed interest in expanding the IFES TV series to include ten episodes specifically featuring members of the national parliament. Considering that IFES focuses primarily on political parties and ABA works with the parliament, Griffin and ABA representative Bernard Ryan discussed ways of expanding the scope of the TV series. IFES has planned to conduct six additional political party-themed episodes in regional locations with ABA proposing ten episodes with the Majlisi Namoyandagon, the first to focus on discussion of the proposed tax code.

Kenneth de Figueiredo, OSCE Field Officer in Kurghon-Teppa, indicated his wish to receive additional information on the IFES TV series, because the Norwegian government, through the OSCE, wants to support the setting up of an independent TV station in Kurghon-Teppa. Philip provided De Figueiredo with copies of the first twelve episodes and outlines corresponding to these programs. De Figueiredo indicated that after the review, OSCE might consider using the IFES TV concept as part of OSCE efforts to provide political

programming in Kurghon-Teppa. IFES has emphasized that the series provides a voice for all parties wishing to engage in open discussion of democracy and national reconciliation.

#### *Gender and Youth Conference Planned for Early April*

IFES advanced plans to hold one of its theme-based political party development events in early April. The conference, tentatively titled "Political Parties One Year After the Majlisi Oli Elections: Expanding Participation of Youth and Women," will bring together representatives of registered and unregistered political parties alike to discuss how to increase effectiveness of women's and youth programming and participation in the political sphere. This issue was discussed as one particularly significant to the development of broad-based sustainability and growth of parties, which traditionally have been dominated by older men. The event will seek to create a working agenda for political parties to establish women's and youth taskforces.

#### *Impact Summary*

As a result of productive interactions with representatives of the educational sector in the month of February, including establishment of a working partnership with the Ministry of Education, IFES received support to commence with the Student Action Committee and Student Local Government Day projects that are an integral part of its civic education program. The Student Local Government Day activity will take place in three regions located throughout Tajikistan: Khujand, Dushanbe, and Kurghon-Teppa. Training for the Government Day project will begin in March, with the actual event taking place in April. The Student Action Committees will take place in and around Dushanbe, with training beginning in March, activities commencing in April, and an evaluation conducted in May.

The IFES Political Party Development Program has continued through televised informational programs and preparations for ongoing training on women's and youth issues. A joint IFES/OSCE event will be held in March in Sugd Oblast and another event, held in Dushanbe, will focus on gender and youth issues. Additionally, work continued on the highly successful and acclaimed television program "Society, Law and Democracy." After being introduced to the program by IFES/Tajikistan, ABA has committed to sponsoring ten additional episodes featuring the Majlisi Namoyandagon and including participation of political party activists recommended by the parties and IFES.

## **UZBEKISTAN**

#### *IFES Prepares for Introduction of Student Action Committees*

During the month of February, IFES made preparations for the initiation of Student Action Committees (SACs) in eight pilot schools in Fergana Oblast. IFES/Uzbekistan Project Coordinator Jeffrey Carlson and Project Assistant Dmitry

Shevkun held an organizational meeting with three trainers, three deputy school directors, and the Director of the Tarakkiyot Education Center, who is coordinating IFES activities in Fergana. Despite some initial start-up difficulties, teachers and school directors were committed to taking on the project and promoting greater student activism overall. Jeffrey Carlson discussed the elements of the Student Action Committee project, and based on the kinds of questions that arose, worked with Dmitry Shevkun to modify the SAC Teacher's Handbook, which will serve as a reference guide for the teachers in this project. In addition to completing the manual after the initial organizational meetings, IFES made preparations to conduct teacher training sessions on SAC activities, and train a core group of teacher trainers to assist IFES in expanding the SAC network. All teacher participants agreed that SACs are a timely, up-to-date idea for the region. IFES was able to gain strong support from school directors who participated in ACCELS training in the United States. These directors appeared eager to implement a variety of civic education activities in Fergana, a region in need of student education initiatives.

IFES, together with the Tashkent Public Education Center, worked to identify the following eight schools in which to pilot the Student Action Committee program in Fergana: "Parvoz" Gymnasium school, "Shodlik" Gymnasium school, School #3, School #10, School #13, School #15, School #21, and School #22.

#### *IFES Receives Backing of Education Ministry*

IFES received a written letter of support from the Ministry of Higher Specialized Secondary Education to develop civic education modules for university students in Uzbekistan. Jeffrey Carlson met on numerous occasions with Minister Bekdulla Rasulev to discuss details of the project, with Rasulev ultimately issuing written permission to begin developing the components of the civics manual for university students. IFES was evaluating this project at the close of February in light of a shift of priorities by USAID.

#### *Impact Summary*

Civic education continues to represent the focus of IFES programming in Uzbekistan. The Student Action Committee project in Fergana got off to a promising start with the holding of an organizational meeting. The Committee work in the eight pilot schools is expected to take place in March and April, preceded by the completion of a Teacher's Handbook and training for teachers. The project will mark IFES's first programmatic foray in the Fergana Valley region of Uzbekistan, the most populous area of the country. The university civics module project gained critical written support from the Minister of Higher and Specialized Secondary Education, and it is expected that preparation of key components of the modules can be developed beginning in March.



**MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK**

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*IFES provides technical assistance in the promotion of democracy worldwide and serves as a clearinghouse for information about democratic development and elections. Since its inception in 1987, the Foundation has worked in more than 100 countries. IFES activities are made possible, in part, by the U.S. Agency for International Development.*

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