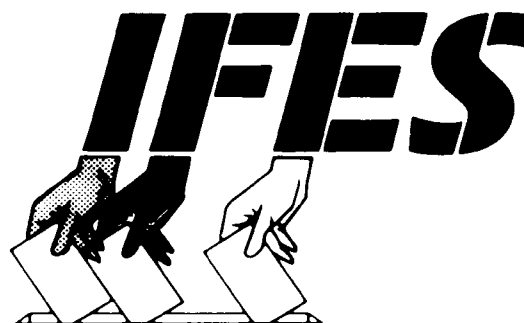


Europe and Asia Report



February 1999

IFES Implements New Initiatives in Indonesia

In February 1999 specific IFES project activities in Indonesia included several new and continuing initiatives: (1) continued support of the development of the election laws and regulations, with special attention given to the adjudication of disputes process; (2) support of election administration technical assistance to the transitional election authorities, with particular focus on providing the KPU with the necessary equipment to operate the national election office; (3) further progress on the field work for the national survey of the Indonesian electorate; (4) continuation of the design and planning of IFES' voter education effort; (5) an initial assessment of and planning for IFES' party agent (election monitor) training; and (6) the initiation of coordinating efforts in regards to poll worker training.

Election Laws and Regulations



Members of the IFES/Indonesia field office staff and technical consultants during the run up to the June 7, 1999 elections.

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Bob Dahl, IFES' election law specialist, continued to work with members of the transitional election authorities into the month of February on the development of draft language for the adjudication of disputes procedures. On his return to the U.S. at mid-month, Mr. Dahl briefed the Indonesian community in Washington at the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia on the development and passage of the new election laws. At the end of the month, Mr. Dahl returned to Jakarta to begin his review of the draft regulations and procedures which will help to codify the new election laws. Mr. Dahl's analysis of the Indonesian election laws will be available in March.

Election Administration

Theo Noel, IFES' election administration specialist and acting project manager, worked on the following activities during the course of the month: completion of draft regulations on the registration of political parties and electors, and the accreditation of party agents and observers/monitors; (Continued on page 18)

EUROPE

ALBANIA

Fall of Communism Commemorated in Tirana

Thousands of citizens marched down the main Tirana boulevard on Saturday, 20 February to commemorate the fall of the communist dictatorship eight years ago on the Scanderbeg square. The DP Secretary Fatos Beja said Albanians were now aware that in order to facilitate both peace and economic development, the remaining remnants of the former communists in the Albania government should leave. The demonstration's scope then changed as participants made strong appeals to international powers to stop the bloodshed in Kosovo.

Ministry of Education Orders Study of International Organizations

Instructions have been sent to Albanian rural primary schools by the Ministry of Education that the children are to be taught basic knowledge on the Council of Europe (CoE), the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the role of other such non-governmental and multinational organizations. The curriculum is designed to instruct Albania students on the policies, mandates and history of these organizations.

Second NGO Union Established in Albania

A recent press release announced that a second NGO union, including 47 NGOs, was set up in Albania about two months ago. Even though no names of these members were mentioned, the purpose of the Union was made clear. The President of this second NGO Union, Petrit Shehu, made serious accusations against the Forum of Albanian NGOs claiming embezzlement of donor funds.

Creation of an IFES Resource Center Continues

In February, IFES/Albania staff continued the translation of numerous files, documents, and laws that were collected and organized as the first phase of establishing the Resource Center. In coming months, efforts will be made to add additional materials from the F. Clifton White Resource Center in Washington, D.C. as well as other sources.

Civil/Voter Registry Project

Penny Martin, IFES Voter Registration Specialist, continued technical assistance to the ODIHR Civil/Voter Registry Project. The regional pilot projects were initiated in October 1997 in a joint effort between OSCE/ODIHR and the Albanian government where six locations were selected to test the computerization of a national civil registry. The six pilot projects were established in Gjergjan, Koder-Thumane, Lurë, Kavajë, Dhiver and Vlorë. A training session was held from 8-12 February to instruct local civil registrars on voter registry procedures. The course included a basic computer orientation, an introduction to Windows 95, and an in-depth review of ODIHR Civil/Voter Registry software. In addition, interactive exercises and debates on related issues filled

the week-long seminar. The computer equipment and software was delivered and installed in all six locations by the end of February.

IFES Continues work in Albania

IFES will continue post-referendum assistance to Albania. Beginning next month, IFES will continue in its next phase of the project, focusing on election administration, legal reform and voter information and education.

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

International Community Dissatisfied with Poplasen

On 18 February, the six-nation Contact Group issued a statement criticizing Bosnian Serb President Nicola Poplasen for allowing Belgrade to interfere in Republika Srpska's internal affairs. The group said it would support "strong action" by High Representative Carlos Westendorp if Poplasen did not appoint an acceptable prime minister. Poplasen's third candidate, parliamentary speaker Petar Djokic, was nominated on 3 February and has yet to be accepted by the parliament.

During his recent visit to BiH, US special envoy for the Balkans Robert Gelbard accused Poplasen of doing more damage to the RS with his recent actions than any other person thus far. In an interview with a Sarajevo weekly, Gelbard also stated that the communist mentality still prevails throughout BiH, explaining that several American companies wanting to invest in BiH have not been able to break through the bureaucratic red-tape, the archaic communist mentality and corruption. (*Croatian Radio Herceg-Bosna*). Gelbard said that the US government is against holding a new Donor's Conference in BiH until the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) have been successfully implemented.

Database Program Development Branch Redesigns Voter Registration Database

The Database and Program Development (DPD) Branch, under the direction of IFES Senior Technician Mike Yard, completed its restructuring of the Voter Registration Database which it had undertaken over the past several months. This effort accomplished the following: (1) redesigning all sets of data into a simplified, single, integrated database, (2) establishing a form of communication which will facilitate the synchronization of the central database with copies in the field, (3) expanding the security model in order to give different levels of database access to different users and (4) creating a simplified common "user view" of the data with standardized definitions in terms familiar to elections staff. The new format eliminated inconsistencies between the questions asked on the 1997 and 1998 registration forms. It also deleted any fields which are no longer in use. After the DPD Branch completed the redesign of the Voter Registration database structure, it was reviewed and tested by developers before a full conversion was undertaken.

In the meantime, the DPD Branch also completed its Local Access

project after being tested by the Voter Registration Branch during January and February, in collaboration with four field offices. The project will be distributed to all 32 OSCE field offices in the near future. This software will make the voter registration database accessible to these field offices and allow them to modify selected voter data and to synchronize their changes back with the central database via E-mail, Internet data transmission, or physical media such as floppy disk.

The candidate database is also being updated by Mike Yard, in cooperation with the Provisional Election Commission (PEC) and Political Party Services. They have been updating the candidate databases and producing letters for all political parties, mayors, and local election commissions, indicating candidates who resigned and their replacements.

The DPD Branch has produced reports on the Election Results History, showing the results of all elections between 1996 and 1998. It has also placed the Financial Disclosures database online, and is nearing completion on a list of terminology and definitions which will give a consistent picture of all elections databases. This compilation of terminology and definitions will standardize the way data is presented in future queries and reports.

Permanent Election Law Support

In February, IFES Legal Specialist Jessie Pilgrim began assisting the OSCE in its efforts to aid OHR in the development of alternative election system models for Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has also been assisting the OSCE in efforts to aid OHR in the development of the Permanent Election Law. Alternative voting systems being considered are: the open list party registration system, the alternative vote system, and a mixed system combining single-member constituencies with a national party registration system.

Election Information and Civic Education Branch Begins Activities

IFES has been assisting the OSCE Elections Department, headed by IFES Election Administration Specialist Linda Edgeworth, as it establishes a new branch of operation, the Election Information and Civic Education (EICE) Branch. IFES has deployed Public Information Specialist Elise Shoux to Sarajevo, where she will serve as the Director of OSCE's new branch. Ms. Shoux, has initiated coordination with the Out of Country Voting Branch and with the Democratization Department on information campaigns.

During the next several months, the EICE Branch will also be conducting a voter and civic education campaign on the draft election law, upon its completion, and encouraging public discussion. The materials will include brochures, newspaper ads, videos, and radio spots. In coordination with the Mission's Counsel, the EICE has been preparing timelines, product guides, and a budget for the permanent election law information campaign.

Ms. Shoux's highest priority this month has been the design and conduct of a baseline poll of citizens' attitudes toward elections and

electoral reform. The results of this poll will be used by the EICE as it prepares for the public information campaign. The survey is currently being designed, and is scheduled to be conducted in mid-March. The survey will be conducted in cooperation with a local BiH firm.

Association of Election Officials in BiH

The Association of Election Officials in BiH is off to a strong start. Attendance was high at the first task force meeting of the association, which was held in Banja Luka, with all but two members attending. The group reached several agreements on the Association's Charter, including the number of posts within the association, the composition of the membership, and voting rights. The task force also initiated plans for its Inaugural General Assembly meeting in late April.

Civic Activist Groups

With the help of IFES' Civic Education Initiative, headed by Project Director Ed Morgan, more Citizens Activists' Groups (GAINs) continue to make an impact.

In the Zenica region, the GAINs of Vukotici, Starina and Seoci, with the help of IFES civic education trainers, have achieved their objective. As of 1 February 1999, all of the students in the Zenica municipality pay only 30 DM for bus transportation to their schools instead of 66 DM. A second success was achieved in Zenica, by the two Displaced Person (DP) Camp GAINs in Arnauti and Babino Polje. In both cases, DPs meeting certain criteria were attempting to secure social benefits denied to them by the Zenica Municipality. These benefits will be now be honored.

GAINs working with IFES/ Doboje, under the supervision of Project Manager Velko Mileov, have also seen results from their efforts. One such success is an elementary school in Cerovica, Doboje. Only twelve children in grades one through four attend this poorly equipped school which is badly in need of repair. After successful lobbying, the municipal officials put this school on the priority list presented to SFOR. The Danish unit agreed to sponsor the repairs after a drawing contest was conducted to raise awareness about the poor school conditions.

Also in the Doboje region this month, IFES and the OSCE conducted a roundtable discussion on the newly proposed Republika Srpska (RS) law on self-government. Ten of the eleven opstinas in the Doboje region sent 29 officials including, the presidents of Derventa and Samac, 13 deputy presidents and municipal secretaries, and 14 other experts. Representatives from all ten municipalities expressed their views on the proposal. Since these officials represented all elements of the RS political spectrum, no political viewpoint was overlooked. A universal consensus from this session was concern over the lack of opportunity for citizens' participation in the self-government process, and the omission of provisions for the local community structure. Official conclusions from this roundtable are being prepared and will be reviewed by the participants before the final comments are transmitted to the RS government in Banja Luka.

The event was covered by several radio and television stations.

Reaction to the roundtable has been positive. At the opening of his opstina's public meeting on the RS proposal, the Derventa Municipal Council President pointed out that two days earlier he had participated in the IFES-OSCE Roundtable on this legislation and told the Derventa meeting, "Well, as a matter of fact there were some reasons to be cautious about what the international community is up to, but I was there at the round table and can tell you, there is really nothing to worry about". This type of IFES activities are well received by communities, and enable IFES to earn respect and cooperation with the possibility of success in an otherwise distrusting environment.

The IFES Civic Education Initiative is also cooperating with the RS Association of Towns and Local Communities to conduct a survey on the proposed Self-governing law. Timely surveys are sounding out the public opinion on elections, as well as questioning RS officials on the proposed Self-governing law. Survey forms were mailed or personally handed to officials of all 64 RS opstinas. Results of this poll will be available shortly.

Impact Summary

IFES technical advisors continue to assist the OSCE and BiH nationals in their efforts to implement the Peace Implementation Council's December 1998 conclusions. The redesign of the voter registration database and the local access software will ensure improved maintenance of voter information and increased involvement of local election officials in that effort. Careful consideration of alternative voting systems will allow the Provisional Election Commission to devise the most appropriate election law for BiH. A comprehensive public information campaign is being put into place to educate BiH citizens on this forthcoming law and to involve them in the process.

IFES Civic Education trainers continue to assist citizen activist groups to work with local authorities to make positive changes in their communities. IFES efforts are also encouraging local citizens and authorities to take part in public debate on RS entity-wide laws which will directly affect their local government structure.

MOLDOVA

Poll Worker Guide for Local Elections Completed

Development of the *Poll Worker Guide* required a great deal of attention during February. Contents of the publication were coordinated through a series of meetings with Dumitru Nidelcu, Chairman of the CEC, and Anatol Puica, Secretary of the CEC. It was agreed that the guide shall provide practical examples on how to implement the Election Code, namely: establishing the number of mandates for the local council; establishing whether the elections are valid based on the percentage of the population which participated in the election (turn out thresholds); and awarding mandates through the sequential division of the number of valid

votes cast for each party, socio-political organization or electoral bloc (in turn by 1,2,3,4... etc..) up to the total number of mandates established for the respective electoral district. As a follow-on to these proposals, IFES presented samples for establishing the number of mandates for the local council based upon population size, as well as examples in awarding councilor mandates. In view of recently passed amendments to the Election Code, IFES suggested that it would be appropriate to include those changes in the *Poll Worker Guide*.

By month's end, IFES completed the final version of the *Poll Worker Guide*, and provided ten copies for the expertise of the Central Electoral Commission. The Guide is scheduled to be printed in March.

Party Registration at Issue

Another problem under consideration during the meetings between IFES and the CEC was the Law on Political Parties and the potential conflicts which may arise between political parties and the Commission. The electoral campaign was officially launched on 19 February upon confirmation of the date of local elections as 23 May. Only those parties which managed to register by February are eligible to run in these local elections. It has yet to be determined whether those political parties which failed to register by 19 February due to the inability of the Ministry of Justice to process the incredible number of signatures requiring verification, will be permitted to run in the upcoming May local elections. Natalia Izdebski, Chair of the Political Parties and NGO Registration Department informed IFES that only 14 political parties have been registered in accordance to the requirements of the amendments to the Law on Political Parties. Ms. Izdebski noted that the large number of signatures to be verified has severely taxed the Ministry's resources.

Parliament Renews Interest in Amending the Election Code

In February much attention turned toward amending the Election Code. IFES met with Alexandru Cobzaru, Legal Consultant of the Legal Commission of the Parliament, to consider the proposals of several deputies to amend the Election Code. Proposed amendments included an eligibility requirement for candidates to be fluent in the state language, as well as ensuring 30% representation of women on candidate lists.

On February 4, 1999 the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova passed amendments to the Election Code. Amendments submitted by the CEC, IFES, and the Juridic Direction were approved, whereas the above mentioned amendments failed to garner sufficient support.

Reform of Public Administration Remains a Priority

This month IFES met with members of the Juridic Direction of the Parliament to consider prospects of future cooperation in view of implementing the Law on Local Public Administration. The Juridic Direction praised IFES's contribution to developing the draft laws on local patrimony, public finances, and the draft law on business disputes falling within the competence of administrative courts.

IFES' efforts to strengthen public administration in Moldova have been acknowledged through letters of gratitude received from the Parliamentary Commission for Control and Petitions and the Legal Commission for Appointments and Petitions.

This month the Law on Local Public Administration took center stage. IFES and the Juridic Direction of the Parliament hosted a roundtable as a follow-up to the Presidential initiative to amend the Law on Local Public Administration and the Constitution. President Lucinschi proposed that the prefects appointed by the government should not resign upon the government's resignation, but rather serve out the appointed term of office. This problem arises due to the fact that on the one hand the prefect is the representative of the government observing the implementation of the government's prerogatives in the territories, but on the other hand he is a public officer who oversees the decentralized services of the ministries in the territories. For the sake of continuity and preservation of institutional knowledge, specific terms of appointment are preferred to the uncertain tenure of government's. It was suggested that the Law on Local Public Administration should be amended by stipulating the prefect's rights.

The appeal submitted to the Constitutional Court from MP Victor Cegan regarding the constitutionality of several provisions of the Law on Local Public Administration also came under consideration. Mr. Cegan feels that the provisions referring to second level administrative-territorial units, county and municipality, and the first level administrative-territorial units, the communes, to contradict the Constitution since these units are not mentioned. Participants of the roundtable agreed that it should be pointed out in the Juridic Commission's notification to the Constitutional Court that the administrative territorial units which are not provided for in the Constitution are defined by other related terms used in the Constitution, thus providing a constitutional framework for administrative-territorial reform.

In Support of NGOs

This month IFES reviewed prospects of cooperation with its partners. League for Human Rights of Moldova (LADOM) and IFES met to consider the possibility of extraordinary parliamentary elections. Methods to promote civic education and familiarize citizens with their electoral rights were among the central issues considered during the meeting. It was agreed that the best way to achieve these goals and to cover a more substantial audience is via radio programs. These programs would focus on civic and voter education, observing elections, and the role of poll workers in free and fair elections. Recently, LADOM presented IFES with a project on training 200 domestic observers in view of upcoming local elections, as well as a "*Citizen's Electoral Rights*" project.

IFES and the Viitorul Foundation met to consider the possibility of cooperation in the field of public administration. IFES and the Viitorul Foundation plan to conduct several seminars on implementing the Law on Local Public Administration and on the upcoming local elections. The seminars will be held in the newly established counties and will enable organizers to assess the opinions of local public administrations concerning the new

reforms.

In preparation for local elections IFES and the NGO Club intend to create a special site on the World Wide Web. The site will house official legislation, newspaper articles, statistical information, and instructional materials referring to the different aspects of Electoral Code applicable to these elections. In the future it may be possible to create a chat room for the visitors to the site.

MP Ilya Trombitski met with IFES staff to consider the amendments to the Law on Foundations (developed by IFES), which is scheduled for a second reading in Parliament. Several organizations insist that a ceiling of \$10,000 statutory capital be required for the establishment of a foundation. Mr. Trombitski claims that this ceiling is too high for the Republic of Moldova, and serves to prevent the creation of new foundations desperately needed in a developing democracy. Mr. Trombitski has also briefed IFES that Charity Know How accepted a proposal to finance the training of the NGO Public Service Certification Commission in the UK. The training is scheduled for 2 - 16 April.

Mass Media Looking for Access

The study on access to information of public interest, developed by the Committee for the Freedom of Press (CPLM) and IFES, captured the attention of the mass media in Moldova in February. Alexandru Cantir, Chairman of the CPLM, informed IFES that the Parliamentary Commission on Mass Media was generally pleased with the draft law on access to information of public interest. Mr. Cantir shared his thoughts on the possibility of extraordinary parliamentary elections in light of Parliament's failure to certify the new cabinet. Discussions also touched upon the proposals made by several MPs to amend the Law on Audiovisual Materials. The prospects of creating a Radio Press Club were also considered.

New Issue of Civic Voice

On February 10, Alexandru Cantir, Chairman of the CPLM, offered an interview to the *Civic Voice* Newsletter. The interview was dedicated to the activities of the IFES/CPLM Mass Media Working Group in the study of access to information of public interest and development of a draft on this issue. Mr. Cantir stressed the importance of these efforts since the state still maintains control over access to a great deal of beneficial information. Mr. Cantir stressed the need for citizens to realize the importance of free access to information of public interest in a truly independent state.

The recently completed # 22 issue of the *Civic Voice* Newsletter also includes an interview with Congressman Jim Talent in addition to articles covering local public administration and access to information of public interest.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Impasse in Election Law Reform May Break

The deadlock between the Presidential Administration and the

State Duma on election law reform looks likely to be broken. Recently, Russia’s Security Council, under the guidance of Prime Minister Primakov, issued a draft “political pact” (the full text of which is available from IFES) which proposes extraordinary measures in an effort to preserve stability. In addition to *de facto* shifting the balance of power between the various branches of government, the draft agreement also addresses criminal participation in elections, improving campaign finance laws, strengthening regional election authorities, and proceeding with electoral reform.

While the “political pact” has yet to be endorsed by the Duma, it has helped to move forward the pending legal reforms to the Voting Rights Act and the Duma Election Law. Discussions have been re-initiated between Duma representatives and the Presidential Administration on specifics of the amendments to the Voting Rights Act and the parliamentary election law. On the latter, one of the main obstacles remains the proposed changes to the representation system for the Duma - with the *status quo* being the preferred option of the deputies.

IFES works with the State Duma Committee on Legislation and Judicial Reform to increase the level of informed decision making through papers comparing worldwide experience on specific election-related problems and commentary on legislative proposals. Currently, IFES is targeting campaign finance, corruption and organized crime in the political process, and ballot access. IFES’ commitment to supporting this process goes beyond producing informational materials to employing its cadre of local and international experts to conduct events and on-site consultations.

Russian Parliamentary Delegation Witnesses U.S. Election Process

In February, a three member parliamentary delegation witnessed the U.S. election process in action and met with other election experts and practitioners in Washington, DC and Georgia. The trip, funded by USIA, allowed State Duma Deputies Viktor Sheynis and Aleksandr Saliy, and expert advisor Oleg Kayunov, all representing the State Duma Committee for Legislation and

Judicial Reform, to observe all aspects of recent by-elections for the seat vacated by ex-Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich. IFES used this unique opportunity to welcome our partners in the electoral development process to Washington, DC by organizing key meetings and events with election experts from the area. Honored at a dinner of IFES’ Board of Directors, Deputy Sheynis highlighted the importance of working together to solve common problems.

IFES teamed the delegation with election experts and practitioners for a roundtable discussion on campaign finance. The delegation met with Robert Dahl, IFES Elections Expert; Frederick Herrmann, Executive Director of the New Jersey State Election Law Enforcement Commission; and Paul Hendrie, Communications Director at the Center for Responsive Politics to discuss ways to promote transparency through disclosure mechanisms, the critical role of NGOs and media in the electoral process, and a host of other relevant issues. Other meetings included political leaders, government agencies, and members of the judiciary. Overall, the delegation’s meetings and observations focussed on the precise mechanisms used to target specific problems in the election process. A visit to the F. Clifton White Resource Center increased their knowledge of the resources available to them from around the world.

Each member of the delegation came away with new insights and ideas to apply to the difficult task of election law reform back in Russia. They also returned to Russia with new contacts and strengthened relationships with their colleagues in the United States. During a final meeting with IFES, the delegation showed great interest in

participating as experts in IFES programs in other countries. In this way, IFES’ successes in Russia can be easily applied to other countries in the region.

New CEC Takes Shape as State Duma and Federation Council Make Appointments

The Central Election Commission (CEC) of the Russian Federation consists of by fifteen members appointed to a four year term. The State Duma, the Federation Council, and the President each

<i>Current Nominees to the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation</i>	
State Duma Nominees	Federation Council Nominees
Elena Dubrovina (Yabloko)	Sergei Bolshakov (Deputy Chairman, Sverdlovsk SEC)
Yevgeniy Ishenko* (LDPR)	Sergei Danilenko (Chairman, Krasnodar SEC)
Yevgeniy Kolyushin* (KPRF)	Nina Kuliashova (Secretary, Mordovia SEC)
Genadiy Ponomarev (Power to the People)	Viacheslav Uvarov (Chairman of the Lawyers Association of Khabarovsk Krai)
Alexander Veshnyakov* (Agrarian Party)	Olga Volkova*
*Denotes a current CEC member.	

appoint five members, who in turn elect the Chairman of the Commission. The current CEC members' term expires on March 21, 1999. Four of the ten nominees are current members of the CEC, while another four are drawn from the regional Subject Election Commissions (SECs). The President is expected to announce his nominees later in March.

Institute For Election Systems Development (IESD)

Recognizing that local issues are best addressed by local organizations, IFES is committed to supporting the development of the Institute for Election Systems Development (IESD). IESD's local Russian transition team is finalizing the Institute's Charter, recruiting Board Members, and continuing to develop an action plan for this important election year. IESD is pleased that State Duma Deputy Viktor Sheynis accepted the challenge to be a Board Member of the IESD. Deputy Sheynis, representing Yabloko in the Committee for Legislation and Judicial Reform, is considered by many as "the Thomas Jefferson" of electoral laws in Russia. His input will undoubtedly be very valuable to the Institute.

In February, the IFES and IESD staff and core advisors also participated in a training session on accounting, taxes, and grants in Russia. The session is the last of an initial series given by the Charities Aid Foundation as the staff prepares to launch their own organization. Sessions such as this one are being followed by individual consultations throughout the year.

IFES Addresses Voter Education

Encouraging active voter participation in Russia's upcoming 1999/2000 federal elections will be a challenge. In February, IFES addressed this issue with other NGOs and government officials at a conference titled "Youth and Elections - Having your Say," hosted by the New Perspectives Foundation with the help of the British Know-How Fund. The Conference grouped over 100 young leaders from 52 cities across Russia and neighboring countries, as well as representatives from the State Duma, the Presidential Administration, and the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation. New Perspectives designed the conference to achieve the overall aim of creating an on-going council of experts to inform and empower youth. IFES/Russia On-Site Project Director Christian Nadeau led a seminar on voter education and targeting youth participation in the 1999 elections to the State Duma. The discussion demonstrated cultural differences within Russia's regions and identified a series of practical actions



Participants at the conference "Youth and Elections - Having your Say" hosted by the New Perspectives Foundation.

which each leader could undertake in their community to encourage youth participation in the election process.

The New Perspectives Foundation, a Russian-based NGO with a regional network of 50 affiliates, promotes the rights and participation of young voters in the democratic process. New Perspectives, bolstered by its fundraising efforts, is now well placed to be an important actor in raising youth issues during the 1999-2000 election cycle.

SLOVAKIA

Government Pursues NATO, EU Accession

Slovakia continues to keep NATO and EU Accession as its top priority. The international community is cautiously offering its support of Slovakia's membership in these organizations. On 19 February, EU Commissioner for Industry, Telecoms and Information Technology Martin Bangemann stated that if "Slovakia progresses rapidly and in such a determined way, it is quite possible that it will become a member of the first group of EU applicant countries. (Reuters, 2/19/99) Slovak Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda has stated that he hopes the EU will bring Slovakia back into the first group at its Helsinki summit in December. Early NATO entry, however, will not be possible for Slovakia. US Secretary of State Madeline Albright has expressed interest in including Slovakia once greater democratic reform has been accomplished.

Party of Civic Understanding Chairman Favored in Poll on Presidential Candidates

In a poll conducted by the Slovak firm Nazory more than 31 percent of those polled said they would vote for Rudolf Schuster, chairman of the Party of Civic Understanding (SOP). (Slovak Press Agency, 2/25/99). Twelve percent favored former Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), 9.4 percent said they would vote for Chairman of the Constitutional Court, Milan Cic, 8.7 percent were in favor of

Going Places

IFES is pleased to announce that IFES/Russia electoral development intern Andre Tolkachev has been selected to participate in the USIA-sponsored Presidential Management Training Initiative program. Mr. Tolkachev, originally from Bryansk, Russia, will be in the United States for a six-week period starting in April 1999 to learn more about democratic and business practices.

Magda Vasaryova, head of Slovakia's Foreign Policy Institute, and 6.2 percent would vote for former president Michal Kovac. MP Julius Binder was favored by 5.8 percent, while 3.5 percent said they would support MP Juraj Svec; 21.5 percent of those polled said they were undecided.

In that same poll, 49.1 percent of respondents expressed confidence that the current government will hold office during its entire four-year term. Supporters of the Slovak Democratic Coalition and the Hungarian Coalition Party were given the majority of the positive responses with 84.1 percent and 70 percent respectively.

IFES Discusses Cooperation with Slovak Parliament's Extraordinary Constitutional Committee

From 6 through 22 February, IFES conducted a two-week assessment visit in Slovakia to determine the scope of the work-plan for Phase II of IFES's on-site technical assistance effort.. During this assessment visit, IFES Election Law Specialist Carol Conragan met with various government officials within the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), members of the Slovak parliament, and representatives within the domestic and international NGO community. Together, they discussed Slovakia's current and future election-related projects and how they would like IFES to assist them in the coming three to six months.

The results of the assessment visit were extremely positive. Throughout the discussions, government officials consistently mentioned two urgent and important areas of election work: 1) the presidential election (scheduled for this May); and 2) election law reform. Officials within the MOI and the Parliament invited IFES to assist them during the presidential election, which will be the first direct election of the President of the Slovak Republic. Members of the Election Department within the MOI would like IFES's assistance in the production of voter education materials. They also asked that IFES assist them in observing and documenting the presidential election process. This was especially important, they said, since international observers may not be invited to observe this year's election. Members of parliament welcomed IFES' assistance in establishing the rules of procedure for a televised presidential debate and in establishing informal campaign procedures. In addition, they asked that IFES work with the Slovak media to inform them of these rules of procedure.

Regarding election law reform, officials within the MOI and parliament saw a clear and effective role for IFES. Since both branches of government will be working to amend the parliamentary and municipal election laws, they welcomed IFES's participation in their working meetings. In fact, the parliament recently formed the Extraordinary Constitutional Commission (ECC) specifically to address election law and constitutional law reform. The ECC has already begun to address these issues and will be actively working in the coming months to provide solutions to the controversial parliamentary election laws. Prominent members of this commission have welcomed the possibility of IFES participation. IFES would lend its extensive international

experience and expertise to help them find the principles and language most fitting to Slovakia's needs.

Impact Summary

The assessment visit was productive on several fronts: 1) IFES better understands the current and future election issues within the MOI and Parliament, thereby allowing it to tailor Phase II as a project that election officials will welcome and find useful; 2) With this understanding, IFES can put its expertise and resources to best use; and 3) government officials could see that IFES's commitment to Slovakia remains strong. Upon approval, IFES will immediately initiate Phase II of its assistance effort.

UKRAINE

Adjudication of Disputes Conference

In February, IFES/Ukraine continued to work with the Central Election Commission (CEC), the Supreme Court of Ukraine, and the Rule of Law Consortium to prepare for the upcoming adjudication of disputes conference. The conference "Adjudication of Electoral Disputes by the Courts of Ukraine" will take place March 18-19 in Kyiv at the Session Hall for Plenums of the Supreme Court of Ukraine.

The conference will be a unique opportunity for judges from throughout Ukraine to meet with parliamentarians and international experts to discuss issues dealing with Ukraine's process of resolving electoral disputes. The 1998 parliamentary elections demonstrated some of the problems Ukrainian Courts face when attempting to resolve election disputes, including: poorly delineated jurisdictions; a lack of punitive measures at the Court's disposal to discourage election fraud; and unclear administrative procedures for contesting election results.

IFES Senior Advisor Judge Bohdan Futey of the US Court of Federal Claims will participate in the conference to share the U.S. experience of dispute resolution. Topics of discussion at the Conference include: legal aspects of electoral disputes adjudication by the courts; enforcement of constitutional principals in elections by the CEC; the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in electoral dispute resolution; and the adjudication of election disputes from the plaintiff's perspective.

It is hoped that participants will leave the conference with a better understanding of the process of resolving electoral disputes and aware of the areas in Ukrainian law on the subject that might require revision. Approximately 70 judges from the Supreme Court, and Oblast and Military Courts will be participating in the conference. Participants will be asked to identify additional training needs of judges in resolving election-related disputes.

Still No Presidential Election Law

On 15 February, President Kuchma returned the law submitted by Parliament "On Election of the President of Ukraine," in effect vetoing the legislation. The President declared he could not sign the law as it was written and returned the law with proposed revisions. Presidential elections are scheduled for October of this

year. Once a law is returned to Parliament from the President, the legislative body may decide to make the proposed changes to the law, submit a new law, or override the President by passing the law with a two-thirds majority vote. If the Parliament does muster the two-thirds vote to pass the law over the President's veto, it would go into effect 15 days after its ratification.

Some of the changes proposed by the President's office seem to be intended to bring the law into compliance with the Constitution and clarify the meaning of the law. Critics, however, have pointed to some of the proposed changes as an attempt by the presidency to manipulate the law to take advantage of the President's incumbency such as the proposal to shorten the election cycle from 180 to 120 days. They argue that the President could use his position as head of state to campaign informally before the election cycle officially begins, while his opponents would be bound by law to wait until the election cycle's official start before commencing a campaign. Another proposed change that has been met with criticism is the President's proposal to allow Ukrainian Public Organizations, as well as political parties, to nominate candidates for the presidency. Some critics argue that the President is hoping to dilute votes against him among many candidates, to ensure his ascension to the second round of elections. Under the Constitution, Ukraine's president must be elected by a majority of the votes cast. If no candidate secures a majority in the first round of balloting, a second round election is held between the two candidates who received the most votes in the first round.

As the presidential elections are to be held within 7 months, many are anxious to see the passage of the law, most especially election officials. IFES/Ukraine will assist the CEC in the training of poll workers and the drafting of a manual for use in polling stations. Substantial work on these projects cannot begin, however, until a law has been passed. A training seminar with election officials is scheduled for June 1999. The new election law will form the basis of the training seminar. The CEC has indicated that if a new law is passed in early March, there would still be adequate time to prepare for the October elections.

Citizens of Constituencies 221 and 78 Still Without Representation

There is still no word on when repeat elections will be held for Constituencies 221 (Kyiv) and 78 (Zaporizhni). Both constituencies have been unable to seat a representative in Parliament since the March 1998 elections despite a series of repeat elections. The repeat elections in Constituency 221 have been particularly contentious with both of the main candidates Yuriy Orobets and Andriy Aloschin charging the other with wide-scale voter fraud. As the anniversary date of the 1998 parliamentary elections approaches, repeat elections for Constituency 221 alone have cost Ukraine more than 763,000 Hryvna (approximately \$206,000) according to CEC estimates. Before another round of repeat elections may be held in either constituency, Parliament must allocate funds through a line item in this year's budget. In an attempt to secure representation at the national level, the local government of Zaporizhni has declared its

intention to stage and finance a repeat election. However, this act appears to be at odds with Ukraine's election laws.

In response to the controversies surrounding elections in both of these constituencies, People's Deputies Yuliy Ioffe and Roman Bezsmertnyi introduced a proposal in Parliament to toughen the passages of the criminal code dealing with election fraud. In addition to lengthening the prison sentence for obstructing the voters' access to polling stations and attempting to buy votes, the changes proposed would also make it easier for the courts to punish those who ordered such activity. The proposed changes to the criminal code have not yet been debated in Parliament.

Post-Conference Publication

The CEC is in the final stages of preparing its post-conference publication *Elections '98, Experiences, Lessons and Perspectives*. The conference, held in November of 1998, was a joint IFES-CEC venture and marked the one-year anniversary of the CEC as an independent government body. The publication will feature the papers presented at the conference as well as articles submitted by experts unable to attend. IFES is assisting the CEC in releasing the publication which will be distributed to universities, libraries, Parliament, and other interested parties. IFES/Ukraine will also distribute copies of the publication through its Resource Center.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA - KOSOVO

Peace Talks Held on Solution to Kosovo Crisis

In spite of the agreement reached in Washington in October, violence and bloodshed have continued to plague Kosovo. 2,000 people have died and about 300,000 have been driven from their homes in a year of fighting. In another attempt to put an end to this crisis, the Contact Group for Yugoslavia proposed a new strategy. The Kosovars and the Yugoslav government in Belgrade were given the opportunity to each send a delegation to Rambouillet, France to participate in negotiations that would lead to a settlement. The Contact Group developed a detailed plan to present to the sides at the negotiations, that would give Kosovo its own internal government and police force, and would allow for free elections. The province's status would be reviewed after three years. As part of the new strategy, the Western diplomats offered the Serbs the choice of granting autonomy to Kosovo or facing NATO air strikes, while allowing Kosovars to choose between accepting something less than independence or risk losing Western support.

The negotiations opened on 6 February, but little progress was made by either side. The Contact Group finally announced on 14 February that the sides would have to reach an agreement by 20 February. If they would not sign, the Serbs faced NATO airstrikes and the Kosovars faced the loss of foreign support. In order to reach an agreement, the ethnic Albanians would have to drop their demand for a referendum on the status of Kosovo at the end of the three-year interim period, and the Serbs would have to agree to a NATO-led peacekeeping force on their soil.

In spite of intense pressure from the international community,

neither side was prepared to sign the agreement by the deadline. The conference ended on 23 February without an agreement. The Contact Group decided to suspend the talks until 15 March, to give both sides time to consider their options and to consult with their constituencies. Both Albanians and Serbs have committed themselves to participating in the follow-up conference.

IFES Team Begins Activities in Kosovo

In February, IFES dispatched a team of election experts to Kosovo, to work within the OSCE's Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), preparing the OSCE and the election officials of Kosovo to hold elections, after the agreement is signed. Dan Blessington, Bruce Hatch, and John Landry arrived in Pristina, Kosovo on 16 February. John Landry is serving as Director of Elections, Dan Blessington as Electoral Laws and Regulation Advisor, and Bruce Hatch as Election Operations Coordinator. Thus far, the IFES team has been cooperating with the OSCE on developing the organizational structure of an Elections Unit within the OSCE, as well as analyzing existing electoral laws and procedures functioning in Kosovo and assisting in defining and reviewing voter eligibility criteria and voter registration parameters.

Dan Blessington and IFES electoral systems specialist Jessie Pilgrim were invited to contribute their expertise at a conference on Kosovo, hosted by ODIHR. At the conference, participants brainstormed about broad electoral issues facing the KVM under various likely settlement scenarios. They discussed possible election formulas for the members of the Kosovo Assembly and communal assemblies, as well as the nuts and bolts of administration of the elections, including procedures for registration of voters, parties, and candidates, eligibility of voters, the structure of election commissions, certification of results, ballot design, structure, and security, ethnicity requirements for lists, and voter education.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA - MONTENEGRO

Montenegro Offers NATO Troop Support

President Milo Djukanovic offered the use of airports and coastal facilities to NATO in support of any potential military activities against Serbia if and when they become necessary. RFE/RL reported on 9 February, "that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright telephoned Montenegrin President Milo Djukanovic 'to thank him for his government's continued support for our efforts to resolve' the Kosova dispute." (RFE/RL Newline, Southeastern Europe Report, 9 February 1999).

IFES Presentation of Model Law Package

The formal presentation of the model laws was made on Monday, 8 February, at the Hotel Cma Gora in Podgorica. The theme of the presentation will be *Building an Electoral System that all Montenegrins Can Trust*. One hundred four people from government institutions, political parties and NGOs participated in the event. Vladan Djuranovic, Secretary to the Minister of Justice,

served as moderator. Minister of Justice Dragan Soc opened the presentation, speaking briefly about the overall reform program in Montenegro and IFES Chief of Party Tom Parkins made a brief presentation on IFES programming in Montenegro.

Panel Chairman Vesko Pavicevic then presented highlights of the model laws. This was followed by a hearing where conference participants came forward and commented on the laws. These comments will be used by a multiparty parliamentary working group which will consider electoral reform in the immediate future.

Participants at the panel presentation included government representatives from the Supreme Court; the Constitutional Court; the Ministry of Justice; the Office of the Secretary of Information; the Office of the Secretary of Development; the Republic Election Commission; and Municipal Election Commissions.

Parties represented at the presentation were: Democratic Party of Socialists; People's Party; Social Democratic Party; Liberal Alliance; Socialist People's Party; Democratic Union of Albanians; Democratic League in Montenegro; Movement for Democratic Action; Serbian People's Party; Party of Money Savings; Party of Foreign Money Saving; and Party of Natural Law.

International and domestic NGOs which participated included: NDI; OSCE; Montenegrin Helsinki Committee; CEDEM; Commission for Real Property Claims; as well as IFES, which was represented by Tom Parkins, Ana Drakic and Vesna Radunovic. Representatives from the media were also present. In all, more than 100 people took part in the event.

Also in February, published model laws were distributed to all Members of Parliament, members of the REC, members of the MECs, mayors, major political parties, NGOs, Ministry and Government officials and courts.

Multiparty Working Groups Proposed to Facilitate Implementation of Model Laws

During February, IFES/Montenegro staff met with Chairman of the Advisory Panel on Election Law Reform Veselin Pavicevic, Djordje Blizic and Brano Radulovic, Local Government Reform Panel Members, to discuss the model election laws. The reform panel members presented a number of useful technical and conceptual proposals which will be considered by the multiparty working group formed by the Ministry of Justice to finalize election reform legislation.

Pavicevic later indicated that he spoke with Minister of Justice Dragan Soc, who said that a proposal would be forwarded to the parliament to form a multiparty working group for the purpose of considering model laws presented on February 8. Proposals that were submitted at the presentation will be translated by IFES staff and submitted to the multiparty working group.

Depending on the continuation of IFES' presence in Montenegro, IFES hopes to advise the working group and ensure that the key

principles in the model legislation - provisions empowering the Republican Election Commission with broad regulatory authority over the administration of the electoral process; provisions allowing the Commission to be a truly permanent body through permanent staff, allowing the Commission to fulfill its duties, including passing regulations to ensure the accuracy of the voter registry; and maximum transparency is adhered to in all aspects of the law - are included.

CAUCASUS/CENTRAL ASIA

ARMENIA

National Assembly Passes Universal Election Code

Following months of often times heated debate, the National Assembly passed Armenia's first Universal Election Code (UEC) on February 5. The law, which aims to consolidate Armenia's various election laws into one comprehensive election code, introduces significant changes to the elections to the National Assembly. According to the new code, 75 of the National Assembly's 135 seats will be allocated to single-mandate constituencies, while the remainder of the seats will be filled on a proportional basis with voters choosing from party lists.

Passage of the legislation, originally proposed by the Parliament's majority faction, Yerkrapah, was greeted with relief and dismay. Even as the UEC was approved, opposition parties maintained their objection to the law's provision that allows for current local officials to stand for election to the National Assembly, as well as to the requirement that 30,000 signatures of support be submitted in order to appoint members to electoral commissions. Moreover, great differences of opinion remain among various Parliamentary groups with regards to the appropriate distribution of National Assembly seats by majoritarian and proportional systems.

In the months prior to the final vote on the UEC, IFES participated in a working group organized by the Central Election Commission (CEC.) The group's aim was to provide the National Assembly with thoughtful recommendations for improving the proposed legislation. IFES recommendations, many of which were reflected in the final version of the UEC, are intended to assist in the development of a sustainable structure of election administration and help to ensure greater accountability in Armenia's electoral system. These include: removal of the coupons in the balloting process; presence of international and domestic observers during the voting process; voter lists compiled by citizens' address; reduction of government appointees to the CEC from 5 to 3 of the total 13.

Parliamentary Elections Scheduled for May 30

The President signed the UEC on February 17 and called for Parliamentary elections in May, controversy around the new electoral code swelled. As reported by RFE/RL on February 22, opposition forces noted that the document signed by the President

was not identical to the law passed by the National Assembly earlier in the month. According to reports, some 49 changes had been made to the UEC that was printed in the government's Official Bulletin and signed by President Kocharian.

The National Assembly is expected to address many of the issues raised by the opposition during its mid-March session and is expected to debate and vote on amendments to the UEC. According to political observers, the most likely amendments to the UEC will be technical changes in the language of the code. IFES/Armenia intends to continue monitoring the debate over amendments to the UEC and aims to provide constructive assistance to the amendment process by remaining in close contact with members of the UEC working group initiated by the CEC.

IFES Signs Memorandum Of Understanding with the CEC

In an effort to further strengthen and expand its cooperation with the Central Election Commission (CEC), IFES signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the CEC on January 22, 1999. Chairman Khachatour Bezirdzhan signed the agreement on behalf of the Commission while IFES/Armenia Project Manager Andre Bouchard represented IFES.

The memorandum of understanding between IFES and the CEC renews a previous agreement that both organizations pledge to fully cooperate in the area of organization of elections and training. Upon signing the new agreement, Andre Bouchard stated that, "The objective of the proposed cooperation is to assist the CEC in improving election administration procedures and in establishing a formalized training system for one year."

IFES Begins Targeted Assistance in Support of Parliamentary Elections

To support May's planned parliamentary elections, IFES/Armenia fielded two consultants in February: Judith Davis, a training expert, and Anthony Reissig, an election administration specialist. In cooperation with the CEC, Davis is designing a training program for election officials. Meanwhile, Reissig is providing on-site technical support to the CEC, by helping the Commission to develop written procedures according to the new UEC. Examples of the types of procedures that the CEC is developing with Reissig's help are procedures for military voting, procedures for voting that will take place outside of Armenia, and voting procedures for those detained in institutions. Reissig has also assisted the CEC with creating forms for new voter lists.

Impact Summary

IFES activity significantly impacted the development of a more transparent and sustainable electoral system through its contributions to the CEC's working group, which made important suggestions, included in the new UEC. Likewise, in signing an MOU with the CEC, IFES will continue to positively support the development through ongoing technical assistance. Within the framework of the MOU, IFES began work with the CEC to develop a training program for election officials and a national voter education campaign to assist in the writing of procedures that

will contribute to the effective and orderly administration of future elections.

AZERBAIJAN

Parliamentary By-Elections Held in Two Baku Districts

On February 21, Parliamentary by-elections were held in the Khatai (#11) and Nasimi (#26) districts of Baku. Elections were necessary to fill vacant seats in the Milli Majlis, the Azeri Parliament. Ex-Parliamentary speaker, Rasul Guliyev represented the Khatai district, until he was stripped of his mandate in December 1997, while the former representative of the Nasimi district, Yusif Samed Oglu, died in November 1998. The February 21 poll marked the third attempt to fill Mr. Guliyev's parliamentary seat, the previous two elections having been ruled invalid by the CEC.

Three days following the elections, the CEC met to certify the results and declared Tofiq Hasan Husseinov the winner in the Khatai district race and Zakir Hasan Sardarov the winner of the election in the Nasimi district. According to the CEC decision, published in the government newspaper, **Azerbaijan**, the number of eligible voters, which cast ballots in the two elections, were sufficient to deem the polls valid. In the Khatai district, the CEC claims that 61.8% of the voters on the voter's lists cast ballots, while in the Nasimi district some 66 % of the voters participated.

As was reported by RFE/RL and other news agencies, the validity of the election results in the Khatai District were disputed. According to members of The Committee in Defense of Rasul Guliyev, which monitored the Khatai election, the required 50% of the eligible voters did not participate in the poll. Nuraddin Mamedli, a representative of the Committee, was quoted by the Turan Information Agency as saying only 2,000 of 47,000 eligible voters in the Khatai district cast ballots in the February 21 by-election.

Milli Majlis Plans Legislative Activity on Municipal Governments

During the month of February, IFES/Azerbaijan worked toward determining the legislative activity related to the formation of municipal governments. As Azerbaijan looks toward holding municipal elections in this year, several pieces of legislation including bills on the status of the municipal governments and a law on municipal elections will need to be adopted. The Government of Azerbaijan has pledged that municipal elections, which have been repeatedly postponed over the past several years, will take place in 1999.

In support of emerging municipal elections IFES/Azerbaijan has begun a series of dialogs relative to legislative activity. On February 17 IFES/Azerbaijan met with Zahid Qaralov, the Chairman of the Parliament's Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs. During this meeting, Michael Svetlik underscored the desire of IFES to work cooperatively with the Chairman Qaralov

and his committee and reinforced IFES standing offer to provide an on-site legal consultant to work with the committee as it continues its work on drafting municipal governance and municipal election legislation. In response, Qaralov provided IFES/Azerbaijan with a list of 4 draft municipal election laws that have been officially submitted to Parliament and also stressed that the Committee's draft on municipal elections has previously been analyzed by the Council of Europe in 1997. In addition to the Committee's draft Law on Municipal Elections, the Musavat and Popular Front Parties, and the Center for Democratic Support, have submitted their drafts to the Milli Majlis for consideration. Qaralov suggested that discussion of the draft laws in the parliament would likely take place in April.

On February 24, IFES/Azerbaijan met with Safa Mirzayev, the Chief of Staff of the Milli Majlis. Svetlik and Project Assistant Farida Babayeva briefed Mirzayev on IFES/Azerbaijan's activities in support of last year's presidential election, and expressed the desire of IFES to work cooperatively with the Milli Majlis as it undertakes substantive work on municipal governance and municipal election legislation this year. Mirzayev welcomed the offer of assistance and explained that, in his estimation, the legislation on the status of municipals in Azerbaijan is of primary importance. Mirzayev added that there is currently little agreement among those in Parliament on which powers the municipal governments should be granted. When asked when the Milli Majlis might begin to work on municipal governance and municipal election legislation, Mirzayev suggested that serious work on the legislation could begin April

IFES Meets with Representatives of Local Organizations

During the month of February, IFES/Azerbaijan made a concerted effort to forge productive relationships with local civic organizations as a means of supporting the municipal elections expected later this year. To this end, Michael Svetlik first met with representatives of international non-governmental organizations, including ISAR, The Academy for Educational Development (AED), NDI, and the Eurasia Foundation, in order to conduct an informal assessment of the democracy building and voter education activities being carried out by local civic organizations.

Following this series of interviews, Svetlik met with representatives of the Support Center for Democratic Elections (SCDE) and the Centre for Democratic Elections. Meeting with SCDE President, Ali Guliyev, Svetlik outlined IFES project activities and stressed the importance that IFES places on collaboration with civic-minded local non-governmental organizations in all countries in which it operates. In response, Mr. Guliyev praised IFES support of the 1998 Presidential Election and welcomed the assistance of the international community as the country prepares for municipal elections later in the year.

GEORGIA

Conference on Georgian Elections

IFES/Georgia will present the Conference on Georgia Elections on March 4, sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development. The Conference is planned to convene in a one-day forum representatives from many government and non-governmental organizations that share concerns for planning and managing elections in Georgia. Over seventy participants representing election commissions, Parliament, the government, political parties, media, Georgian NGOs, and international community donors and NGOs, will be invited to participate. Issue-centered workshops at the conference will focus on identifying lessons learned from the 1998 municipal elections and move toward recommending actions for changes that should be considered to address the most important issues raised. The Conference comes at an auspicious time in the election cycle as Parliament prepares to review and revise election law (see more below).

Parliamentary Revision of the Election Law

The Georgian Parliament began work in late February of reviewing and revising the present Georgian election law with in view of the upcoming Parliamentary elections planned for October 1999. IFES is providing direct assistance to the process of legal revision by assigning election law specialist Antonia Dolar as a consultant to the Legal Affairs Committee of the Parliament, the committee charged with drafting the new legislation. Ms. Dolar arrived on February 26 to begin her consultancy, and immediately embarked on plans to meet with key participants in the process of decision-making, including officers and staff members of both the Central Election Commission and the Legal Affairs Committee. The long-range benefit of IFES providing election law consultation is to support the eventual creation of a universal electoral code within the Law of Georgia which would govern the basic structure of all future elections.

Focus Groups

In preparation for the Conference on Georgian Elections, IFES/Georgia conducted interviews with two groups of chairpersons of district election commissions and precinct election commissions, in Telavi and in Tbilisi. These focus groups reflected on their experiences in preparing and conducting the municipal elections; expressed views on problems and obstacles that hindered their performance; and offered opinions on recommendations for change which they would like to see enacted before the elections for Parliament. This information gathered from local election administrators will augment post-election evaluations and recommendations made by IFES and other interested parties to provide issues to be considered by the Conference on Georgia Elections.

IFES/Georgia Project Manager

During his first month new IFES/Georgia Project Manager Hugh Stohler moved quickly to become oriented to working with Georgian elections by participating in a series of meetings with

elections-related participants, including officers of the Central Election Commission, the chair and staff of the Legal Affairs Committee of Parliament, the election group of American and Georgian NGOs convened by the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the roundtable meeting of international NGO's.

CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL REPORT

IFES Program Officer Anthony Bowyer was joined by Central Asia Regional Project Manager Tom Leckinger in Warsaw for the second annual "Election Assistance Strategy Meeting" for Central Asia and Caucasus hosted by OSCE/ODIHR. Following a brief rundown of each organization's activities in pursuing democracy assistance efforts in Central Asia, common approaches were discussed towards addressing electoral development issues prior to the region-wide series of national and local elections scheduled to take place in 1999 and 2000.

Bowyer outlined IFES work in the sectors of election legislation review, professionalization of election administration, and voter/civic education, including development of election-oriented NGOs. Heralded as an example of the kind of collaborative effort that can be achieved on a multilateral level was the November 1998 Conference for Central Asian Regional Election Officials, co-sponsored by IFES, the United Nations, OSCE, UNDP, and the Soros Foundation. This event was borne out of discussions from the inaugural Election Assistance Strategy Meeting conducted in February 1998.

Bowyer discussed "lessons learned" from IFES' electoral sector work in 1998, and offered several points for further discussion, including:

- The need for continued coordination in all spheres of election-sector assistance in order to increase the effectiveness of activities and to avoid duplication of efforts;
- Pursue working on the local or "Oblast" level in the countries of Central Asia, so as not to deal exclusively or primarily with the central electoral bodies, i.e. advocating a more regional approach to election assistance;
- Establish benchmarks so that the international community could better assess when it needs to reconsider its assistance efforts in cases where the host government is unresponsive towards cooperating to support the creation of an election system that meets internationally-accepted standards, and;
- Consider developing local NGOs as partners in the work of voter/civic education and in the election legislative revision process.

In the afternoon session Bowyer moderated a session on "Recommendations for 1999: Possible Areas for Cooperation." Participants were asked to comment on the effectiveness of the country-specific focal point meetings proposed at the first Strategy Meeting and how to increase their value. OSCE country ambassadors were asked to provide a review of the current electoral conditions in each country, with the goal of looking for

room to develop common approaches.

An updated grid of election assistance provided to the countries of Central Asia was developed and circulated at the meeting, with follow-on implementation meetings to take place among the field office representatives of the organizations present.

KAZAKHSTAN

IFES Support for Election Education

During his visit to Kazakhstan IFES/Central Asia Program Officer Anthony Bowyer met in Almaty with Lyudmila Adilova, a Professor at the National State University *Al-Farabi*, to discuss the latter's electoral management curriculum for Ph.D. candidates at the Institute of Development. Adilova, who has created a course on image-making and candidate campaigns, received Russian-language information from IFES/Washington on theories of candidate campaigning, political advertisement and mass appeal. The information was shared with students and used in a series of mock election campaigns conducted recently in Kazakhstan, including the holding of student candidate debates. A new course being put together by Adilova and her associates will focus on image-making, electoral management, use of modern electoral technology, and political advertisement with an eye towards preparing aspiring candidates to run in future national and local elections in Kazakhstan. Adilova requested additional information from the IFES/Moscow database off a list, which was provided by IFES/Central Asia Program Officer Anthony Bowyer. In addition, she has requested IFES participation in a forthcoming seminar on political campaigning. Anthony Bowyer agreed to provide a copy of the recently translated voter education section of the ACE CD-ROM for use in developing the curriculum.

Plans Solidified for Cooperation on "Media Relations" Seminar

IFES/Astana has been working with Ann Marie Bereschak, ABA Liaison in Astana, in planning the session "Mass Media and Elections - Debate Training" as the part of the Seminar "Media Relations". The "Media Relations" Seminar is scheduled place on March 2, 1999 in Astana. Deputies of the Parliament have pledged to participate in the event. Representatives from IFES will conduct one session "Mass Media and Elections - Debate Training" together with Jerry Huffman of Internews/Almaty, and John Anderson, former U.S. Congressman and U.S. Presidential Candidate. IFES Project Coordinator Marat Begaliev will serve as one of three speakers on the session "Mass Media and Elections - Debate Training", as well as moderator of a later session.

IFES Activities in Kazakhstan Discussed at the USAID Democracy Roundtable

Anthony Bowyer and IFES/CAR Regional Program Coordinator Saule Buldekbayeva participated in an USAID Democracy Roundtable on February 16, which featured a presentation by U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan Richard Jones. During the meeting Bowyer reported on the completion of the Russian translation of

the ACE voter education section and that preliminary plans called for translation of additional sections, pending discussions with the ACE partners International IDEA and the United Nations. Also mentioned was the draft IFES Civic Education textbook developed for high school-age students, which has been translated into Russian and is in the process of being translated into Kazakh. Following a review by Saule Buldekbayeva, the draft document will be presented to the Department of Education as a follow-up to an agreement forged with the Department last year.

Ambassador Jones indicated that a major revision of existing legislation governing elections, public associations and mass media is underway in Kazakhstan. The Ministry of Justice has requested U.S. assistance in improving the consistency of this legislation, and IFES and ABA input on these documents was discussed as a possibility. The Ambassador stressed the need for Kazakhstan to bring its electoral code up to the standards set in the Copenhagen Document, and indicated the apparent receptivity of the Government of Kazakhstan to outside input in the redrafting process.

IFES Information Dissemination Efforts

The Russian translation of IFES' new program brochure has been completed and disseminated to partners within Kazakhstan. The brochure provides an overview of IFES projects in the country as well as contact information for its Almaty and Astana offices. Holdings in the Almaty Resource Center were featured.

Kazakhstan to Participate in AAEA Committee Meeting

Central Election Commission Secretary Elena Kuleshova will travel to Katmandu, Nepal to participate in a meeting of the Organizing Committee of the Association of Asian Election Administrators (AAEA). CEC Chairwoman Zagipa Balieva, who holds the position of Vice-Chairperson for AAEA, was unable to attend the event.

Impact Summary

IFES is working with local institutions and individuals to promote greater grassroots involvement in the election process by providing information on approaches to campaigning and candidate outreach. The work with Lyudmila Adilova is the latest in a series of contacts made with members of the Academy of Sciences, Universities, and local NGOs who promote student involvement and activity in electoral institutions. IFES/Almaty and IFES/Astana will continue to serve as outlets of information for students, professors, and other individuals in the academic and private communities who seek information on international election practices and democracy issues. Since 1994 IFES has promoted greater understanding and involvement in the democracy-building process by the young and future voting population.

IFES is pursuing professionalization of media coverage of elections by hosting debate-training events with partners Internews and ABA-CEELI. An event planned for March, "Mass Media and Elections - Debate Training" as the part of the Seminar "Media Relations," is geared towards encouraging the greater use of

debates as a source of public outreach by candidates as well as a source of impartial news covered by professional journalists. Past IFES work in debate training, including its pilot project in Kazakhstan in 1997 with Counterpart Consortium and in 1998 in Kyrgyzstan, forwarded the concept of live, televised debates as a way to augment the more traditional candidate outreach methods employed using the print media. The latest events seek to forward this concept as part of an overall strategy to increase coverage of elections and provide increased information to the voting population.

Major changes in the legislative framework governing elections, political parties, and mass media are underway in Kazakhstan. Working with other USAID-sponsored partners, IFES is providing commentary on existing legislation in the hopes that the Government of Kazakhstan remains committed to improving existing legislation to meet international standards.

KYRGYZSTAN

Election Initiatives Discussed at USAID Roundtable

Anthony Bowyer was joined by IFES Consultants John Christman, Enrique Saltos and Kyrgyzstan Project Coordinator Galina Sergunina at a USAID Democracy/Election Assistance Roundtable held at the United States Embassy in Bishkek. Ambassador Anne Sigmund presided over the meeting, which focused on strategy building to address elements of the electoral development process underway in Kyrgyzstan. Emphasis was put on the need to work as much as possible at the regional level in the country. A preliminary calendar of projects was introduced and discussed among the USAID-sponsored assistance providers, including IFES. Priorities for election assistance, in advance of parliamentary elections scheduled to take place in Kyrgyzstan in



IFES Regional Program Coordinator Saule Buldekbaeva delivers her comments at the NGO conference "Women in Parliament: Her Journey," held in Kyrgyzstan on February 27, 1999.

October, 1999, include training of election officials, development of poll worker guidelines, addressing electoral districting issues, training domestic observers, improvement of election administration and technical procedures, and conducting voter and civic education projects. IFES indicated its commitment to addressing these needs by highlighting the projects outlined in its 1999 workplan, stressing the desire for close cooperation with partners such as NDI, ABA, Internews, Counterpart, and AED/Global Training. Bowyer indicated that election administration work, particularly in the regions of Kyrgyzstan, would be a natural extension from the work started at the Central Asia Regional Election Officials Conference held last November in Almaty, to which Kyrgyzstan sent the heads of its Oblast Election Commissions.

Galina Sergunina provided an update of the status of the 5th draft election law, indicating that discussions on the document were well underway in a legislative subcommittee of the Jorgorku Kenesh, with 57 of the articles already considered. Sergunina highlighted the input of the local NGO *Forum*, led by Tolekan Ismailova, on the election law draft. Scott Kearin of NDI/Bishkek similarly mentioned that the election law drafters had already accepted a number of amendments proposed by the collection of local NGOs called the Coalition for Democracy. Sergunina and Kearin have cooperated closely to assure that the NGO perspective on the election law revision process is given due consideration.

IFES legal consultant John Christman, who has spent part of the last two years working on election law issues in Kyrgyzstan, re-introduced himself and stated his readiness to cooperate with the CEC, Parliament, local NGOs, international partners and USAID implementers in pursuing a coordinated approach to election law assistance. Many of Christman's prior suggestions for improving the election code have already been incorporated into the latest draft law, including better defining the rights and responsibilities of domestic election monitors, improving the ballot issuance and vote counting processes, switching to affirmative voting, and confirming that direct elections be held for both houses of parliament.

Enrique Saltos discussed the need for a comprehensive voter registration process that complements the computerization process underway as part of the State Program. Saltos, recently arrived from IFES/Dushanbe, traveled to Bishkek as a response to a request made by Kyrgyz Ambassador to the United States Baktybek Abdrysaev, who requested an IFES technology implementation assessment in support of the *Shailoo* computer network.

Ambassador Sigmund underscored the need to conduct a multi-lateral effort to election assistance, develop benchmarks for credible elections to take place and for assistance to proceed, and work with local NGOs to hold the government accountable for making it happen. Education of young and future voters was seen as a priority.

It appears likely that elections at the Oblast and Rayon level in Kyrgyzstan will be held concurrently with elections to the Jogorku Kenesh in October. Municipal and local elections will be held separately, in all probability.

IFES Working with Parliament and CEC on Amendments to Election Code

IFES Legal Consultant John Christman is working with the Jogorku Kenesh legislative sub-commission considering alternatives of the fifth draft election law, partnering with CEC experts and working with individual deputies. 57 articles of the draft document have been considered, and it appears that a final vote from a full session of the Jogorku Kenesh could take place as early as March.

Galina Sergunina together with John Christman, met with Murat Ukushev, Deputy Head of the Legal Department of the presidential office to discuss issues surrounding the election code. Ukushev asked IFES to provide his department with comparative electoral legislation, including voting in prisons, pre-election campaign financial regulations, and new election technologies. He also requested IFES assistance in conducting training of election commission members after adoption of the Election Code.

IFES Working to Strengthen the Role of NGOs in Monitoring Elections

Galina Sergunina and John Christman participated in a parliamentary meeting on enhancing NGOs role in the monitoring of future elections. The group of deputies, NGOs, other interested parties discussed amendments and changes to the Election Code aimed at strengthening the role of NGOs in monitoring of the elections. It was the first time that individuals outside of government took such an active part in a discussion of the legislation during its consideration in the Parliament.

IFES Takes Part in Woman Empowerment Event

Galina Sergunina assisted Gulnara Iskakova in organization of the Conference "Woman-Parliament: her journey" held on Saturday, February 27, 1999. John Christman and Saule Buldekbayeva participated in the conference on behalf of IFES. Buldekbayeva spoke on the need to encourage women's participation, and following the conference met with local journalists who had requested follow-on interviews.

Technology Assessment of Computer Network

Anthony Bowyer and Enrique Saltos met with Zakir Kenjebayev, head of the State Department on Technology under the direction of President Askar Akayev, as a follow up to a request made by Kyrgyz Ambassador to the United States Baktybek Abdrisaev for a technology assessment of the *Shailoo* computer network. Kenjebayev was joined by CEC Chief of Staff Tabyldy Oruzaliev and UNDP Information and Communications Technology Advisor Jorge Tenorio. The IFES guests received an extensive overview of the progress made in setting up the computer network and acquiring hardware to cover government offices in all six oblasts of the country. The basic superstructure of *Shailoo* has been

created, and was tested in the October 1998 Constitutional Referendum, where results were reported electronically to the CEC. The ultimate goal of the Government of Kyrgyzstan is to use *Shailoo* to conduct voter registration and electronic voting in future elections, in accordance with the adoption of a new codified law on elections and election procedures. Additionally, a system is being created, which is aimed to systematize all normative legal documents for access by government officials in every oblast, and connect all government agencies on one network.

IFES assistance was requested in determining the feasibility of electronic registration and voting procedures under the new system, with cooperation of international experts envisioned under the overall coordination of UNDP. In a follow-up visit, Enrique explained the problems of data entry and schematization of the flow and quality control of the system. Saltos offered to hold a one-day seminar addressing these issues, an offer favorably received by Kenjebayev. The seminar would be divided in two parts: one to explain the standards of data-entry systems and how they work and secondly to explain how this structure can be applied to a voter registration system.

TAJIKISTAN

Voter Registration Project Phase I Complete

IFES Voter Registration Consultant Enrique Saltos completed the assessment phase of the voter registration project in Tajikistan. Saltos produced a report outlining the legal and technical requirements for creating a minimally acceptable electronic voter registration database in advance of national elections and referenda in the country. Recommendations for realization of the project accompanied the needs for assessment and capabilities analysis. The report was informally discussed with USAID/Central Asia and a status report made to U.S. Ambassador Robert Finn and USAID Country Director Peter Downs. Saltos emphasized that, in addition to the obvious technical challenges in setting up the integrated computer network, the use of computers for voter registration has to be guaranteed in the election law itself. The process of revising the election law is in its infancy, with the legislative subcommittee of the Commission on National Reconciliation only beginning to address the issue. Once guaranteed in the law, a period of open registration would be proposed using optical scanners to electronically read and register voter information from a standardized form to be filled out by the entire voting population. Procedures for registering external refugees are also being considered.

Creation of a Memorandum of Understanding on use of resources outlined in the Voter Registration Proposal by the Government of Tajikistan was discussed with USAID/Central Asia Director of Democracy of Transition Alex Newton and Democracy Officer Greg Koldys. The MOU is seen as the key governing document to successful implementation of the project.

IFES learned that the CNR has approved creation of a two-chamber legislature to consist of a 45-member upper house and a

91-member Lower House. In addition, the structure and membership of the new Central Election Commission was announced, with 11 of the 15-member body to be comprised of Government of Tajikistan appointees (including the Chairman) and 4 chosen by the United Tajik Opposition. Chairman Mirzoali Baltuyev was appointed by the GOT to continue in that role, and was the only holdover from the previous Commission.

USAID Democracy Round Table on Tajikistan

Anthony Bowyer was joined by Enrique Saltos, Saule Buldebaeva and IFES/Dushanbe Project Coordinator Behzod Mingboev at a Democracy Team Meeting on Tajikistan conducted on February 19. U.S. Ambassador to Tajikistan Robert Finn presided over the meeting, and was joined by Deputy Chief of Mission Patty Culpeper and USAID Country Director Peter Downs. The need to establish benchmarks for electoral assistance was discussed, along with the creation of a reliable means of measuring impact in project activities. The need to focus resources on local NGO development was underscored, as was the need to work in tandem with other international assistance providers. IFES was mentioned in this sense as an equal partner of the United Nations and OSCE in addressing constitutional and electoral developmental issues, along with ABA. Work on a new NGO law in Tajikistan was also discussed; ABA revealed that the draft law seeks to separate NGOs from religious groups and political parties, thereby treating them as separate and distinct entities and recognizing for the first time their role in society.

IFES consultant Enrique Saltos and visiting United Nations consultant Horacio Boneo discussed the methodology of elections in Tajikistan. Saltos pointed out the importance of the election law and the interest of IFES to provide a long term legal consultant to the CNR to bolster up this activity and to suggest the changes that, for technical reasons, are necessary to introduce for introduction of the new proposed computerized registration system. Mr. Boneo informed IFES that his mission was related to international election observation and aimed to map the political and security situation for such an exercise.

Impact Summary

Phase I of the Voter Registration Project is complete. Recommendations for system requirements have been presented, in draft form, to USAID, the United States Embassy, and the Government of Tajikistan. A Memorandum of Understanding is being developed that outlines the responsibilities of each party in assuring the effective use of the voter registration network. The Central Election Commission will be custodian of the computer center, which will be subject to overall authority of the Commission on National Reconciliation. Subsequent phases of the project will call for acquisition of hardware and pilot testing of the scanning system (Phase II), and a period of open registration leading up to nationwide elections later in the year (Phase III). Possible timeline for Phase II will be April-May 1999.

IFES renewed its commitment to approaching election assistance on a multi-lateral level by supporting a Pre-Election Technical

Assessment project conducted by the United Nations. Information was exchanged that provided the UN with a better overall understanding of the political and electoral situation in the country. Plans for a joint election observation were discussed which includes representatives of the OSCE, IFES, and the UN. The election law roundtable will be rescheduled in order to promote complete participation on the part of international partners and local officials from the GOT and the UTO.

UZBEKISTAN

IFES Initiatives in Civic Education

IFES Project Manager Tom Leckinger, Project Coordinator for Uzbekistan Lola Maksudova and Liana Ibragimova from USAID/Tashkent visited to meet with local officials and NGO representatives and discuss possible IFES civic education projects in Western Uzbekistan. A meeting with local authorities and NGO leaders left a favorable impression on the prospects of supporting civil society development in the region. The approach of the Bukhara Khakimiyat to the local NGOs was seen as one of the best examples of fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation between governmental officials and NGOs.

Maksudova, IFES Project Coordinator, is working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to determine the needs for registration of IFES expatriate and local staff in Uzbekistan. This process will allow the issuance of official MFA ID cards for the staff, which significantly assists in the implementation of activities.

Democracy Workshops Conducted

A seminar on training domestic observers for future elections took place in the Presidential Academy of State and Social Structure in Tashkent. IFES Project Coordinator Lola Maksudova participated in the event, which was organized by the Konrad Adenauer and the OSCE. During the two days of the seminar (15-16 February), the seminar participants were informed about the election process, legislative foundation of the elections in Uzbekistan, international standards of democratic elections, role, code of conduct and duties of international and domestic observers.

CEC Seeking International Assistance in Preparation for Elections

Anthony Bowyer spoke with Acting Head of Secretariat on Elections to the Oliy Majlis Anvar Sadullaev to discuss the election calendar in Uzbekistan and discuss impact of the recent Tashkent bombings on the work of the Central Election Commission. Sadullaev made a formal request to IFES for information on the history of elections, IFES' work in supporting election development worldwide, and the methodology of IFES programs. The information was requested to support the preparation of a CEC publication addressing election issues and international experience in electoral development.

Lola Maksudova held an informal meeting with Anvar Sadullaev Sagdullaev to discuss election preparations in Uzbekistan. At the

meeting Sadullaev mentioned Presidential, Parliamentary and Municipal elections will be held in Uzbekistan on the same day in every wiloyat. There will be three types of ballot papers differentiated by format and color for each type of election. The CEC is going to publish its first information bulletin, which will include documents and comments on recently held and forthcoming elections, and a discussion of international electoral practice.

Impact Summary

IFES, working with the Public Education Center and partners in the international community, is supporting civic education initiatives in Uzbekistan with the goal of increasing the amount of information regarding democracy, the system of elections, and the role of citizens in building a civil society. The level of development of civic advocacy organizations in Uzbekistan varies, but the future for development of a network of CAOs appears bright, based on IFES' meetings in Bukhara and the high level of participation of NGO in events conducted in Tashkent. The Bukhara meetings particularly underscore the need of international organizations such as IFES to work regionally, as well as in the capital, to support the development of civil society and civic awareness at all levels. IFES is currently considering plans for expanding its civic education work in Uzbekistan to areas such as Bukhara and other regions outside of Tashkent.

ASIA

ASSOCIATION OF ASIAN ELECTION AUTHORITIES (AAEA)

Impact Summary

In its role as the Interim Secretariat of the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA), IFES strives to support the efforts of the association to further strengthen democratic institutions throughout the region. Conceived to promote and institutionalize open and transparent elections, independent and impartial election authorities, professionalization of Asian election authorities, citizen participation in the electoral and civic process, information sharing and the development of resources for election-related information and research, the AAEA is seeking to build sustainable networks of collaboration across Asia. This process began in January of 1997 and much has been accomplished now that the association is approaching its second year of operation.

Interim Secretariat Activities

In the month of February Chief Election Commissioner Bishnu Pratap Shah of Nepal, Chairperson of the AAEA, worked in collaboration with IFES to finalize preparations for the executive board meeting of the association. This meeting, set in Kathmandu, Nepal, is scheduled for the first week of March and will be attended by the following board members of the AAEA:

- Mr. Bishnu Pratap Shah, Chief Election Commissioner of the Election Commission of Nepal;

- Ms. Elena Kuleshova, Secretary of the Central Election Commission of Kazakhstan;
- Ms. Chen Li-Hwei, Secretary General of the Central Election Commission of Taiwan;
- Mr. Yu Ming-Hsien, Director of Election Administration of the Central Election Commission of Taiwan;
- Ms. Yao Hui-Wen, Election Administration Officer of the Central Election Commission of Taiwan;
- Mr. M.C. Arunthavachelvam of the Central Election Commission of Sri Lanka;
- Mr. Jeff Fischer, Executive Vice President of IFES; and
- Ms. Deepika Dayal, Senior Program Assistant for Asia, IFES.

The draft agenda for this meeting of the AAEA's Executive Board includes the following topics of discussion:

- ▶Election official exchanges in member countries;
- ▶AAEA election observation mission in Indonesia;
- ▶Candidates for remaining open seat on board;
- ▶New member recruitment;
- ▶Resources exchange among Association members; and
- ▶Member dues collection.

INDONESIA

(continued from page 1)

procurement of equipment and supplies needed at the national election office of the KPU; and planning of the structure, responsibilities, and powers of the KPU, the PPI, and other election committees.

National Voter Survey

Field work on IFES' national voter survey continued in the month of February. Over 80% of the national survey was completed. The survey results are expected in the beginning of March so that IFES' survey analyst, Steve Wagner, may review and analyze the data. Mr. Wagner will present his findings to the Government of Indonesia and USAID/Indonesia next month in a series of briefings in Jakarta, and will then present briefings in Washington on his return.

Voter Education

Hank Valentino, IFES' voter education specialist, met with USAID, the Indonesian-American Chamber of Commerce, USAID contractors, private companies, and various donors to discuss the voter education plan for Indonesia. In support of these activities, Javier Calero, another IFES voter education specialist, joined Mr. Valentino in Jakarta at mid-month to further advance IFES' voter education campaign. The overall voter education plan involves the creation of a Joint Operations and Media Center (JOMC) for the KPU. Such an addition to the national election office would enhance the Government of Indonesia's ability to report the returns from the polling stations on election day in a more effective and efficient manner as well as provide a venue for domestic and international observers to discuss the elections.

Party Agent (Election Monitor) Training

Party agent training specialists Paul DeGregorio and Kate Birsell began their assessment and planning of the IFES program in mid-February. The IFES party agent training program will be closely coordinated with other NGOs and USAID contractors involved in the process of preparing the electorate for observation and monitoring activities. Their findings and proposals for the direction and scope of the IFES program will be instrumental in the planning and implementation of the party agent training project.

Poll Worker Training

In February, poll worker training specialists Connie Kaplan and Jessica Hunter were identified as IFES' expert team to provide Indonesian poll workers with the necessary training. Ms. Kaplan and Ms. Hunter will be departing for Indonesia in early March to establish the IFES poll worker training program. The IFES poll worker training program will be closely coordinated with other NGOs and USAID contractors involved in the process of preparing the election officials to staff the more than 300,000 polling stations expected to be in operation during election day.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Impact Summary

In the month of February IFES completed its final Pre-Election Technical Assessment (PETA) report on the Electoral Commission of Papua New Guinea (PNG), with particular focus on the post-conflict electoral situation in the Province of Bougainville. With the political situation on Bougainville in a state of flux, IFES' technical assessment mission was conducted at an opportune time at the end of 1998. Jim Heilman, IFES' Election Administration Specialist, was able to accurately gauge the electoral assistance needs of the PNG Electoral Commission (EC) and the specific, acute needs of the election system on Bougainville prior to the changes that have taken place. IFES' time of arrival proved worthwhile as resources were maximized and opportunities seized for effective analyses.

Publication of the PETA Final Report

In mid-February, the elections for the Bougainville Reconciliation Government was expected sometime in late spring of 1999; to date, that estimate has been revised to late summer or even early autumn of 1999. Continuing communications with the EC and the US Embassy/Port Moresby are on-going as the political situation on Bougainville is changing on a daily basis. Mr. Heilman, in collaboration with the IFES Asia Program staff, edited the assessment report and compiled it for publication at the end of February. This final product will be delivered to USAID, the US Embassy in Port Moresby, and other appropriate assistance providers involved in the upcoming Bougainville and PNG national elections. Appropriate staff at the State Department and USAID/Washington will be briefed on the findings once the report is in circulation.

PHILLIPINES

On Site Technical Assistance in the ARMM

During the first week of February, Gwenn Hofmann was in Manila beginning preparations for the OTI funded project for the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) election. This project will cover the period March 1 to September 30, 1999, and will focus exclusively on the September 13, 1999 election. This election is critical to maintaining the peace and order in the region and the credibility of the election process will play a large role in the continuation of the peace process.

The new project has three partners; Notre Dame University, (NDU) and its Center for Policy Advocacy and Strategic Studies, (CPASS), in Cotabato City, the Philippine Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), and Comelec. IFES will work with all three partners to develop a regional, election specific program. Components will include, continued training of local election officers and board of election inspectors; development of a civic education curriculum to be used in the DECS non-formal education program; and a research and analysis of the 1996 and 1998 ARMM elections. The primary objective is to assist Comelec in continuing improvements in the registration and election process in the ARMM region.

All partners agreed on their programs and role in this project and action planning and formal agreements were negotiated. A Memorandum of Understanding was finalized and sent to NDU for signature. Because deadlines are close and time is of the essence, NDU/CPASS began development of their research which will consist of eight focus groups in all ARMM provinces an analysis of the data and a two day seminar for Comelec, legislative representatives, local election officials, and NGO representatives.

Comelec has approved the latest technical assistance plan, and based on IFES recommendations began its legislative program initiative. The date of the ARMM election will be moved to September 13, 1999, Congress will agree to a nullification of the voter lists in ARMM and a re-registration of voters will begin in May. Comelec is also asking for an increased budget so that voter ID cards can be issued to voters as they register, and IFES is assisting Comelec in the support and education of the Congress with respect to the critical needs for these special appropriations and rules.

Voter Registration Planning

At the recommendation of IFES, Comelec began exploring voter registration techniques that will reduce or prevent voter registration fraud and intimidation among the citizens. IFES has consistently recommended that new procedures be developed and that in certain areas of the ARMM Comelec should have special teams of registrars which will help de-politicize the registration process and protect the voters from intimidation.

Civic Education in the ARMM

Gwenn Hofmann is currently working on the draft civic education

program which will contain six modules. Each module is a lesson plan that can be taught in two hours to one week, depending on the competency of the students and their ability to process the information. The program will contain general information as well as Philippine specific material. It is intended to impart immediate knowledge about the importance of the upcoming election, how to become an active and well informed voter, and how and why voters should be interested in providing citizen oversight into their election process.

Impact Summary

The education program encourages teachers to use various resource experts who have agreed to be available to the schools and teachers. This includes local election officers who will be trained by IFES to become expert election trainers for this program. This is a continuation of the training that was started by IFES in the 1998 election cycle.