

FEBRUARY 2000

IFES Conducts Nationwide Poll Worker Training Program in Kyrgyzstan

On 20 February, elections were held in Kyrgyzstan for the Legislative Assembly (including a party list ballot), the Assembly of People’s Representatives, and for *oblast* and *rayon* level councils in areas outside Bishkek. IFES activities over the last several months focused on these elections, and activities intensified during the month of February. Poll worker training for members of Precinct Election Commissions was completed during the week prior to polling day, during which time polling day procedures were also emphasized. In coordination with the NGO *Polisa*, the distribution of the IFES Training Manual, the Violations Handbook, and the polling station layout and procedure poster (both in Russian and Kyrgyz) was completed by Election Day.

On polling day, 2 teams of observers visited 31



Pollworkers at the Cholpon polling station in Naryn oblast, Kyrgyzstan, register voters for parliamentary and local elections held on February 20.

Europe

<i>ACEEEO</i>	p. 2
<i>Albania</i>	p. 2
<i>Belarus</i>	p. 3
<i>Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	p. 3
<i>Moldova</i>	p. 5
<i>Russian Federation</i>	p. 7
<i>Ukraine</i>	p. 10
<i>Yugoslavia (Kosovo)</i>	p. 11

Caucasus/Central Asia

<i>Armenia</i>	p. 12
<i>Azerbaijan</i>	p. 13
<i>Georgia</i>	p. 14
<i>Kazakhstan</i>	p. 14
<i>Kyrgyzstan</i>	p. 16
<i>Tajikistan</i>	p. 17
<i>Uzbekistan</i>	p. 18

Bishkek area polling stations. IFES Program Assistant Maggie McDonough also participated as an official OSCE observer in the Naryn oblast.

IFES Undertakes Voter Education Campaign for Elections

In preparation for the elections, IFES completed a voter education campaign that concentrated on voter participation, voter rights, and the elimination of election law violations such as family voting. Both television and radio public service announcements (PSAs) were broadcast with cooperation from the NGO *TV Crossroads*. In addition, a print media campaign was conducted, including both leaflets and posters that were sponsored by IFES and their NGO partner *Coalition*.

(Continued on p. 16)

EUROPE

ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN ELECTION OFFICIALS (ACEEEO)

ACEEEO Steps Up Election Monitoring Activities

Independent of IFES, the ACEEEO is taking steps to undertake two major election-monitoring activities in Southeastern Europe. Promoting the professionalization of election management in that region as a means towards stabilization is a stated goal of the Association. Scheduled for April, the ACEEEO Secretariat in Budapest has initiated coordination with the U.S. Embassy in Hungary to send 60 polling-site supervisors to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to participate in local elections. Since 1996, the Association has supported more than 400 observers and supervisors in BiH alone.

Building on this experience, the ACEEEO has submitted a proposal to the OSCE outlining the formation of a consortium of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to observe the elections in Kosovo this fall. The model proposed by the ACEEEO would ensure the independence of observers, maximum coverage on the ground, and a credible reporting structure.

ACEEEO Executive Board Will Meet in March

Representatives of election management bodies from Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Ukraine will meet in Warsaw at the ACEEEO's Executive Board meeting in March. The Board will address the formation of a Southeastern European sub-grouping of election officials, the financial sustainability of the Association, and preparations for the upcoming conference in Warsaw.

IFES Prepares for ACEEEO Annual Conference

Preparations continue for the upcoming Annual Conference of the ACEEEO, "Information Technology in Elections," scheduled to take place from 14-16 June 2000 at the *Marriott Hotel* in Warsaw, Poland. Election officials, information technology specialists, and other experts from over 25 countries are expected to attend the conference. The agenda for the event will seek to address both practical and legal considerations tied to identifying and implementing new information technology into the electoral process. The event will be co-hosted by the ACEEEO, the National Election Commission of Poland and IFES. Information on the ACEEEO can

be found at their web site: www.aceeoo.com.

An exhibition of election technology, equipment, and services will play an integral role in the conference proceedings. Worldwide participation in the exhibition is expected from companies involved in elections as well as those interested in entering the field. For more information on the exhibition or to request a registration form, please contact IFES' ACEEEO Vendor Coordinator Matt Curtis by e-mail at mcurtis@ifes.org.

ALBANIA

IFES Helps Government of Albania Complete Draft Election Law

During February, IFES, with drafters from the Government of Albania, completed a draft election law for consideration by the government as a document that would serve as the basis for discussion with political parties. This draft was further changed through an internal government review prior to release to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for distribution to political parties scheduled for 2 March.

The finalization of a new election law for Albania continues to be a major source of dispute between the political parties. The major dispute centers on the composition of the Central Election Commission (CEC), specifically that it does not follow the past model of equal representation among all parties. While the composition of the CEC is in compliance with the Constitution, opposition parties allege that the process has disproportionately favored the ruling coalition. No further progress on the development of the CEC is expected until the election law is finalized.

Parties Agree to Technical Committee to Finalize Law

The U.S. Ambassador to Albania joined with Ambassadors of the Albanian Presence of the OSCE, European Union and the Council of Europe in encouraging the formalization of an all-party working group to review a draft electoral law and approve a final draft, acceptable to all parties, for submission to Parliament by the end of March 2000. An initial meeting of the parties was held on 21 February, at which time all parties agreed to form a "technical committee" composed of 5 entities from the governing coalition, 5 from the opposition coalition and 5 from the international community. The committee will be chaired by the OSCE. IFES is one of the 5

international participants along with the OSCE, ODIHR, the Council of Europe, and the European Union. The first meeting of the all-party committee is scheduled for 8 March.

Progress Made on Electoral Assistance Project

The management board of the Electoral Assistance Project held its first meeting on 4 February. The board is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister of Albania and includes the Minister of Local Government; the Minister of Economic Development; Ambassador Ahrens of the OSCE; Jan Walberg, Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP); Howard Sumka, USAID Mission Director; and Dickson Bailey (non-voting), IFES/Albania Project Director. Following the 4 February meeting, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), currently co-chaired by the Deputy Director of UNDP and the Deputy Minister of Local Government has been meeting two to three times a week to finalize technical details and time lines.

In February, IFES Senior Registration and Identification Specialist Enrique Saltos returned to Albania to work on planning for the commencement of the enumeration process. Mr. Saltos will be working closely with the management of the project on its implementation. Additional staff will travel to Albania as required to assist with other aspects of the registration project. The Norwegian government has also provided a civil registry database specialist to assist with the project, and further resources are anticipated.

Impact Summary

The creation of a democratic election law, voter registration, and the CEC's activities have a major impact on the democratic development of Albania and are closely tied to the requirements of the work of the Friends of Albania and the implementation of the Stability Pact. Working closely with officials in the Government of Albania and in close collaboration with the U.S. Embassy and OSCE, IFES has been instrumental in ensuring the completion of the draft law for the all-party committee and the initial implementation of the Electoral Assistance Project. Timely completion of these projects is essential to the successful conduct of local elections, which will likely be held this fall. As available time continues to shrink, it is important that these projects proceed and outstanding issues are resolved in time for electoral preparations to begin.

BELARUS

IFES/Ukraine Project Director Visits Belarus

IFES/Ukraine Project Director David Earl visited Minsk in February and met with the American Embassy, Belarusian government officials, the National Democratic Institute, and the International Republican Institute to determine future areas of development in Belarus.

Mr. Earl gave the Belarusian officials an overview of IFES' activities in Ukraine as well as a summary of IFES' projects throughout the world. No guarantees of assistance were offered during this visit, and the prospect of developing programs in Belarus to promote democratic standards of transparency and openness seems distant when considering the current state of affairs.

While presidential elections are scheduled for 2000 and the flaws in Belarus' current Election Law seem to suggest many opportunities for IFES involvement, the current government's control of Belarusian civil society lessens the likelihood of democratic development in the foreseeable future. Furthermore, opposition parties are currently uncertain as to whether they will participate in the election.

1999 Public Opinion Survey Translated into Russian

The 1999 Survey of Public Opinion in Belarus has been translated into Russian, and the Russian translation will soon be available for distribution. If you would like an English-language copy of the survey, please direct requests to the IFES/Washington F. Clifton White Resource Center. In addition, the survey will soon be available on the IFES web site (www.ifes.org).

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (BiH)

IFES Voter Education Seminars Reach 10,267 BiH Citizens

IFES voter education seminars are now in full swing as the 8 April elections draw near. IFES' unique, grass roots approach works to ensure that BiH citizens from large cities to the most remote villages understand the electoral process and their rights and responsibilities in that process. Since shifting to a voter education mode, IFES trainers have conducted 758 sessions reaching 10,267 citizens.

IFES civic education trainers find that there is no substitute for personal visits since many places are without electricity and often villages that appear to be abandoned are overlooked. For example, OHR and the OSCE regarded a village in Bosanski Petrovac as still abandoned, but IFES trainers discovered 250 people in residence who were registered to vote elsewhere. Recently, they were promised that a mobile registration van would arrive. The IFES team advised them about registering, which they now plan to do. Unfortunately, they will not be able to do so before the 8 April election. Another example is the Serb village of Kazanci, just over the Livno boundary in Bosansko Grahovo. When one drives by this village it appears that it is still abandoned, with roofs blown off and some walls torn away. However, off the main road connecting Drvar to Livno, ten families are living in their homes that are in various stages of repair and being rebuilt. Because there is no electricity here, at night no sign of life exists and obviously no media broadcasts can be received. It is expected that by May about 100 Serb families will return to this village.

IFES trainers are also finding that there is much confusion over the new open ballot system, which is being introduced in this election. In the Una-Sana Canton it appears that very few individuals or institutions, including political parties, understand the open-list ballot. Information about municipality lists is also overlooked to the disadvantage of displaced persons such as in the case of Sanski Most, where 84 displaced persons from other municipalities currently reside. Information about who is on the various lists is not well known, as the local party presidents alone decide who gets on the list even to the exclusion of the party executive councils. Tension is present as indicated by the four bombs recently detonated at the office of the new Demokratska Narodna Zajednica political party in Buzim. In the Republika Srpska, political parties are doing their best to convince voters that they should simply vote for the party and not select individual candidates. The parties believe that by advising people to mark only the party's name, the first candidates on the lists will be assured of being elected. This is true, of course, if voters do not select individual candidates who would move up on the list if they get more votes than the straight party ballot.

As part of its efforts to ensure that BiH citizens receive correct and complete information, IFES has developed its own printed materials and will also be distributing approximately 100,000 brochures ex-

plaining how to vote with the open-list ballot developed by the OSCE in addition to copies of the candidate lists. IFES brochures explain the general process and address issues faced by displaced persons. IFES has also designed a brochure specifically targeted at youth explaining their role in the democratic process and encouraging them to exercise their rights. In addition, IFES will also be working with local media. Eight radio stations have agreed to provide free airtime for Grupa Obuka Gradanas (GOGs), which IFES plans to direct toward young voters, returnees, and a general, typical session.

IFES Cooperates with Municipal Governments

In February, the IFES team continued to cooperate with cantonal and municipal government officials as a part of its civic education program. IFES representatives met with government officials to explain the project and its activities. Ninety nine percent of the time, government officials declare support of these efforts and indicate their support in writing. This month, the Governor of the Western Herzegovina Canton, Jozo Maric, issued a press statement to this effect. His support was key to ensuring support from mayors of this canton; Mr. Maric has the power to remove mayors, which is unlike other cantons where the municipal councils have that authority. Since his statement, IFES has received letters from all four mayors in Western Herzegovina. While IFES activity in a municipality is not contingent on support from the mayor, it does enhance the activity.

IFES trainers also regularly attend municipal council sessions and periodically produce reports on these sessions, which are then distributed at GOGs. Municipal reports have been produced for the Zenica and Doboje areas and are to come out soon for the Livno area. The trainers of the recently established Bihac and Bijeljina offices have begun attending municipal council sessions and plan to incorporate this material into their GOGs.

IFES Enhances Privatization Education Efforts

IFES has been conducting education seminars on privatization issues since June 1999. This month, 12 students who had participated in the IFES Civic Education Summer Internship participated in a 5-part series television program sponsored by the USAID Privatization Program. It began airing on 24 February on BiH TV. The taping lasted two hours, and the footage of the students was interspersed with footage displaying other citizen groups

such as pensioners and women. Despite the fact that it was exam time, the IFES trainers were able to find seven men and five women who were enthusiastic about participating in the program.

In addition, IFES Civic Education Project Director Ed Morgan and members of his team have been cooperating with the USAID privatization staff in Sarajevo on a survey form which is designed to assess awareness of the privatization program.

IFES/Sarajevo Coordinates with Association of Election Officials

The IFES/Sarajevo office, established in January, has been staffed with three local employees, the Institutional Development Advisor, Jeppe Olsen, who arrived in Sarajevo after a series of meetings with the Association of Central and Eastern European Election Officials (ACEEEO), and Field Representative Beverly Hagerdon Thakur.

Upon receiving an invitation from the OSCE for 10 members of the Association of Election Officials (AEOBiH) to observe the Train the Trainer seminar in Fojnica, 6 members were identified and sent to Fojnica on very short notice. The purpose of this event was to train the core and international trainers on how to conduct training for polling station and counting committees for the Municipal Elections. AEOBiH members were there to learn about training techniques, which will help them repeat a similar procedure for the general elections.

Four AEOBiH members, representing all four branches and four standing committees, attended the Association of Election Administrators (AEA) annual conference in England from 27 February – 1 March 2000. Areas of discussion encompassed educational, logistical, informational, and international/regional activities.

An introductory meeting was held at USAID in order to review the program of activities for the AEOBiH in 2000. One of the issues highlighted involved the AEOBiH's responsibility for training and professional development of the municipal election commission members.

A meeting was requested by USAID to discuss inter-agency coordination of voter information activities. Participants included the OSCE Elections Department, the OSCE Democratization Department, the OSCE Press and Information Office, IFES/Sarajevo, IFES Civic Education, USAID and the

Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). The IFES Field Representative familiarized the attendees with the AEOBiH and their planned activities over the coming months.

IFES/Sarajevo staff met with OHR's Legal Office and conducted a briefing on the status of the electoral law. The BiH Parliament again rejected the draft Election Law at its session on 15 February. The result was 11 for, 12 against and 7 abstained. The vote was very similar to when it was rejected on 18 January – a split between the Federation and Serbs from the Republic of Serbia, with the Serbs' representatives voting in favor of the draft law. It is clear that the Serb delegates can accept the draft as a base for a future discussion on amendments (knowing that they, if necessary, can block the process at a later stage, according to some political observers). Apparently, there will be no third attempt to try to reintroduce the draft. It is up to the Parliament to act.

MOLDOVA

IFES, CEC Conduct Political Party Conference

In February, IFES, in conjunction with the Central Election Commission (CEC), hosted a seminar entitled "Strategic Partnership: CEC, Political Parties, and Socio-political Organizations." During the seminar, speakers covered the impact of the choice of electoral systems on the development of political parties, campaign finance, media coverage of the election campaign, and the prevention of election violations. More than 60 participants, including representatives from 29 political parties, the mass media, public institutions, and universities attended the seminar.



CEC Secretary Anatol Puica discussed the formation of electoral bodies at a conference hosted by the Central Election Commission and IFES for political parties.

The conference was the first in a series of seminars to be conducted by the CEC for political parties to increase their understanding of electoral issues. In the upcoming months, IFES and the CEC intend to conduct similar regional seminars for representatives of political parties, poll workers, local public administration officials, and judges. The next seminar is scheduled for April in Balti County, with nine more to follow in April, May, and June 2000.

IFES and the CEC also continued to meet regularly to discuss several proposed modifications to the Electoral Code.

Focus Turns to Electoral Code

This month IFES and the Juridic Direction of Parliament hosted three roundtable discussions on the proposed modifications to the Electoral Code. Draft laws have focused on amending the Code in the following manner:

- Establishing a procedure for local elections consistent with modifications to the Law on the Administrative-Territorial Organization of the Country;
- Granting military personnel the right to vote in local elections;
- Increasing the threshold of representation to eight percent for political parties and decreasing it to two percent for independent candidates;
- Prohibiting the use of foreign mass media in campaigning and disqualifying candidates found guilty of such violations; and
- Introducing a proportional electoral system.

After considering the above revisions to the Electoral Code and discussing the provisions with IFES, the Juridic Direction indicated their disapproval of amendments increasing the threshold of representation and allowing military personnel to vote in local elections.

Upon the request of Vladimir Ciobanu, Secretary of Parliament's Permanent Bureau, a roundtable on regulating private mass media coverage of elections was conducted. The draft law amending pertinent provisions of the Electoral Code was passed in the first reading, but several questions remain to be resolved during the second reading. Several deputies have criticized the provisions that regulate the activity of private radio and television stations in their coverage of the election campaign claiming that

these provisions violate private property rights. During the roundtable it was noted that many democratic countries regulate private media coverage of election campaigns in cases such as when stations agree to allocate airtime to candidates. These regulations do not violate private property laws since the stations have voluntarily agreed to involve themselves in the electoral process. Upon their decision to become involved, they are required to abide by the law and grant airtime to all contestants according to the same conditions and prices. These conclusions were also presented during the seminar hosted by IFES/Moldova and the CEC.

The third roundtable considered alternative electoral systems for Moldova. Parliamentary factions oppose adopting a multi-mandate system based on second level administrative-territorial units since the current proportional system based on one national constituency is beneficial for them. Parliamentary parties also support increasing the representation threshold to six, or even eight, percent while maintaining the current threshold of four percent for independent candidates, thereby making it more difficult for smaller parties to gain representation in Parliament.

Electoral School Engages Youth in Political Process

During February, IFES/Moldova continued to work with the local NGO *Stars of Europe* to educate youth representatives of political parties about the fundamentals of the electoral process. One lecture at the weekly meeting of the Electoral School focused on procedures for initiating a referendum, legalizing initiative groups, and collecting signatures. The topic was especially timely given that the leaders of the *Republica* movement recently submitted petitions containing 500,000 signatures in support of a constitutional referendum to President Lucinschi.

Another session of the Electoral School was dedicated to local referenda: who can initiate them and how to verify the legality of the results. Much discussion focused around the President's appeal to the Constitutional Court regarding Article 150 of the Electoral Code, which specifies who can declare a referendum. The Constitutional Court has ruled that while the President and citizens have the right to initiate a referendum, only Parliament can declare one. During the session, it was suggested that the Code should be revised to grant citizens and the President a means to override the decision of Parlia-

ment should it decide not to declare a referendum initiated by the President or citizens. Other lectures covered electoral technologies and the impact of the selection of electoral system on the political process.

IFES Continues to Cooperate with Other NGOs

Victoria Antoniu, Public Administration Program Coordinator, SOROS/Moldova, requested IFES' expertise regarding local public administration. SOROS intends to organize a series of training seminars for public administration bodies at which IFES will moderate and distribute elections-related literature.

IFES continued to support the NGO Public Service Certification Commission in February. The Commission's activities were focused on the draft law on non-commercial organizations.

Civic Voice Radio Programs and Newsletters Keep Moldovan Citizens Informed

Throughout February, IFES and the League for the Defense of Human Rights of Moldova (LADOM) continued production of the radio program *Civic Voice*, which is broadcast weekly on ANTENNA C Chisinau Municipality Radio Station. Radio guests reviewed the local elections held in Taraclia County on 23 January and the importance of domestic observers for the electoral process in Moldova. Other issues considered included the role of international organizations in Moldova and how to improve the relationship between public bodies and citizens.

IFES/Moldova also interviewed Constantin Tanase, Editor-in-Chief of the *Flux* newspaper, for the 28th edition of the *Civic Voice* newsletter. Mr. Tanase focused on the difference between political party-affiliated press and independent press. He also discussed the relationship between the reader, the press, and public officials, stating that all three components are important. However, he noted that the press sometimes unintentionally manipulates the readers due to a lack of access to information.

Impact Summary

Through its cooperation with the CEC and the Juridic Direction of Parliament, IFES is helping amend the Electoral Code to clarify ambiguities and strengthen the electoral process in Moldova. The roundtables provide a forum for discussion, analysis, and comparison so that participants are more aware of the impact of the proposed amendments and better able to improve the process in prepara-

tion for the December 2000 presidential elections.

By establishing a means of communication between political parties and the CEC, the conference hosted for political parties by IFES and the CEC helped familiarize participants with election legislation and procedures. Currently, several political parties do not completely understand the Electoral Code, particularly provisions regulating media coverage and campaign finance. Through this conference, as well as the several regional conferences planned for the upcoming months, IFES intends to ensure that the various players in the electoral process are informed about their roles and responsibilities during the election campaign. Consequently, the potential for confusion and the occurrence of election violations that result from a lack of understanding of the proper procedures is decreased.

Finally, IFES' ongoing participation in the Electoral School continues to engage young people in the political process by informing them of pertinent legal and political issues. The weekly sessions prepare the participants to take an active role during the upcoming election cycle and in civil society in general.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

CEC Chairman Veshniakov Comments on Campaign Violation Complaints

The Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation (CEC) has received a number of complaints from individuals and organizations claiming that Gennady Zyuganov and Vladimir Putin have violated campaign rules, CEC Chairman Alexander Veshniakov reported at a recent news conference. He refused, however, to clarify what is the essence of such violations, other than to say that they relate not so much to the candidates themselves as to the ways the mass media cover their activities.

The CEC "cannot but notice some troubling moments that can be observed in the election campaign" said Veshniakov. He reminded reporters that pre-election campaigning officially begins on 25 February in the printed mass media, and on 3 March in the electronic mass media. Veshniakov added that issues referred to in the complaints would be reviewed at future CEC meetings.

CEC Rules Out Proposed Referendum

The CEC declined the possibility of holding a refer-

endum proposed by the Union of the Right-Wing Forces (SPS). SPS had suggested holding a referendum to enhance guarantees of private property, reduce the immunity of Duma deputies, abolish the use of unpaid military draftees in local conflicts, and introduce changes to the Constitution to limit the right of the President to dismiss the government.

The CEC reported that it had identified more than 1.8 million invalid signatures in support of holding the referendum out of the 3.6 million submitted. Out of the “flawed” signatures, 938,000 lacked supporters’ full dates of birth as required by the federal law “On Referenda of the Russian Federation.”

The referendum initiative group is considering the possibility of referring the matter to the Constitutional Court to clarify the procedure of applying the law’s provision on supporters’ full dates of birth on petitions. CEC Chairman Alexander Veshniakov has stated, however, that despite the CEC’s rejection of the referendum on technical grounds, “the initiative has found considerable support among the voters and does deserve serious attention.”

Vladimir Putin, the acting President of Russia, has been reported to support the idea of holding the referendum. He made a declaration to that end at a press conference held in Irkutsk: “I support the initiative of SPS and I agree that Russian citizens should be given an opportunity to express their opinions on such important issues for the country.”

Registration of Presidential Candidates Complete

The CEC of the Russian Federation has completed the registration of candidates running for the office of President of the Russian Federation. The last to register were Yuri Skuratov, the former Prosecutor General; Yevgeniy Savostyanov, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Moscow Fund of Presidential Programs; and Umar Dzhabrailov, co-owner of the Radisson-Slavyanskaya Hotel, bringing the initial total to eleven. They are:

1. Gennady Zyuganov
2. Alexey Podberyozkin
3. Vladimir Putin
4. Aman Tuleyev
5. Konstantin Titov
6. Stanislav Govorukhin
7. Grigory Yavlinsky
8. Ella Pamfilova
9. Yuri Skuratov

10. Yevgeny Savostianov

11. Umar Dzhabrailov

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), was later added to the ballot after winning a Supreme Court ruling against the CEC. Zhirinovskiy had earlier been refused registration for having failed to include certain family assets in his financial statement, required at the time of registration. The CEC has appealed the court ruling.

Primakov Declines Run for Presidency

Former Russian Prime Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, who is also known for having paired up with Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov last year to lead the Fatherland–All Russia (OVR) political movement, has made “a final decision” not to participate in the presidential election. Primakov made the announcement on 4 February on the RTR “Vesti” news program.

Primakov stated that this decision was “not an easy one to make.” He added that he had lost interest in the presidential post, “having realized how far away Russians were from a civil society, from a genuine democracy,” and that “the situation is very unlikely to radically change within the course of several months.”

The OVR leader stated that his decision not to participate in the election “does not mean that I will stop giving all my efforts, knowledge, and experience to serve Russia and Russians - at any post.”

Over 800 International Observers Set to Monitor Presidential Elections in Russia

At a press conference held on February 14, CEC Chairman Alexander Veshniakov informed the press that he had invited OSCE officials to observe the 26 March presidential election. In addition to the OSCE contingent—by far the largest—at least 65 organizations from over 50 countries will send observer missions. Veshniakov added that the CEC would prepare a special report for parliamentarians based on the results of the two election campaigns in which election legislation will be analyzed and measures for improvement will be discussed. Veshniakov said he would recommend that a special parliamentary hearing be held in the fall of this year to discuss the two campaigns, the lessons and re-

sults of the elections. At the same time, he concluded that, “We should not detail electoral procedures any further” with additional legislation.

Campaigning Begins in Print Media

A new stage in the presidential race has begun—as of 25 February candidates running for the top state office may start their pre-election campaigning activities in print mass media. In accordance with the federal law “On Election of the President of the Russian Federation”, pre-election campaigning in the print media is conducted exclusively at the expense of candidates’ election funds (unlike advertising in broadcast media, in which candidates are allotted a limited amount of free time). Fees charged by newspapers and magazines for the placement of candidate advertisements are established by the media, but must be equal for all candidates and uniform throughout the election campaign.

CEC Chairman Alexander Veshniakov has repeatedly stated that any violation of campaigning rules on the part of the candidates may lead to serious consequences, including cancellation of registration. At the same time, several media outlets have already committed a “false start” – the *Sovetskaya Rossiya* and *Pravda* newspapers published in mid-February contained campaign materials in support of Gennady Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party (KPRF). The CEC has issued campaign violation statements to the editors-in-chief of these newspapers. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, which in early February published an article in support of Vladimir Putin, has received a warning from the Ministry of Press.

CEC Apportions Free Airtime to Presidential Candidates

On 28 February, the CEC approved the apportionment of free airtime on state-owned TV and radio channels among the presidential candidates. The schedule of free airtime is based on the results of a 24 February lottery that was held with participation of the candidates’ official representatives.

The CEC decided that each candidate will be granted 80 minutes of free airtime on each of the TV channels owned by the state: ORT, RTR, and Television Center. In addition to that, it has been decided that candidates must dedicate at least 50% of their free airtime to televised political debating.

Although the CEC initially allowed the candidates to select their debate opponents based on their personal preferences, preliminary consultations demonstrated that this might cause some problems, therefore it was decided that a drawing should be held. The CEC has finally ruled that candidates may exchange their pre-scheduled debate opponents by mutual agreement of the parties. Should any of the candidates decide not to participate in a televised debate his/her free airtime is automatically cancelled. This provision has affected acting-President Vladimir Putin, who has refused to participate in debates.

The law allows the presidential candidates to conduct their pre-election campaigning activities in the electronic mass media within the period of 3-24 March. The free airtime has been apportioned in morning, afternoon, and evening blocks on weekdays only.

Out of the 11 candidates only two – Ella Pamfilova and Yuri Skuratov – attended the drawing in person. The latter expressed his firm intention to take part in televised political debates with other candidates, preferably with Putin and Zyuganov.

CEC Approves Election Ballots

On 28 February, the CEC approved the text on the ballots that will be used in the presidential election. The names of all 11 candidates for the top state office are listed in alphabetical order. Opposite each candidate’s name is his or her date of birth, place of residence, current occupation, and information about the initiative group that nominated the candidate. The last line on the ballot states: “Against all candidates.”

Each ballot must be signed by at least two members of the precinct election commission and carry an official stamp. Approximately 111 million ballots are to be printed by 8 March, although the number of ballots to be used in Chechnya has not yet been determined due to a lack of precise data on the number of eligible voters currently in the territory. No later than 10 March, Subject Election Commissions must transfer the printed ballots to Territorial Election Commissions, who in turn will pass them over to Precinct Commissions.

CEC Promises to Count Votes Overnight

At a press conference recently held at the Russian “Novosti” news agency, Alexander Veshniakov, Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, announced that voting results for half of the election precincts will be known by 0200-0300 hours. By 0900 hours the next morning the CEC intends to have “almost the entire picture”. Chairman Veshniakov believes that a comparatively small number of candidates may expedite the process of the vote count. He mentioned that 94,500 election commissions would be involved in the preparation and conduct of the presidential elections. The formation of all election commissions is to be completed in early March.

Impact Summary

In February, IFES/Russia continued its longstanding programs in technical election assistance, NGO development, and journalist training. IFES focused on preparing for the 26 March presidential election by offering analysis and advice to the CEC and by conducting training for various international observer groups. During the month IFES also sought to increase the independence and sustainability of the Institute for Election Systems Development (IESD) by providing them with financial and management training and discussing possibilities for a new subgrant. More information on IESD and their programs is available at www.democracy.ru.

UKRAINE

IFES Implements Student Government Elections in Civic Education Program

In February, IFES/Ukraine participated in a roundtable discussion on civic education at the Canadian Embassy. IFES/Ukraine presented an overview of its civic education program, which is geared toward making young Ukrainians aware of the importance of elections as a way for citizens to express their will to the government. In a developing yet fragile democracy such as Ukraine, it is crucial that students understand the value of voting and political participation.

To this end, IFES has developed a pilot civic education program that is currently being run in three Kyiv secondary schools. The implementation of this program will allow Ukrainian teachers to use teaching methods such as group discussion and student role-playing to enhance students’ understanding of the importance of civil society; it will also allow IFES to evaluate strengths and deficiencies of the program, should it be implemented on a larger

scale. Ultimately, it is IFES’ hope that the program will be approved by the Ukrainian Ministry of Education as an obligatory course of study in the secondary school curriculum. To evaluate the program, IFES is distributing a questionnaire to teachers who have used the civic education modules.

In February, IFES began to focus on the second stage of the program, student government elections. Such opportunities will allow students to express their concerns about and hopes for the future of their schools by electing representatives to student governments. The student governments will be authorized by the students to resolve school issues and express student concerns to school boards. After the student government elections have been completed, IFES will conduct a students’ conference where all participants will have the opportunity to share their opinions about the program.



IFES/Ukraine Project Director David Earl and Professor Sergei Ryabov of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy meet with teachers to evaluate the implementation of a pilot civic education program.

IFES Participates in Mass Media and Elections Conference

On 2 February, IFES/Ukraine attended a roundtable discussion entitled “Media and Elections,” which was sponsored jointly by the International Renaissance Foundation and the Society Center. Members of the mass media, the Central Election Commission, senior government officials, and representatives from the Institute of Political and Sociological Sciences attended the roundtable along with representatives from non-governmental organizations. The discussion addressed such topics as the role, behavior, and influence of the mass media in the Ukrainian election process; a geographical analysis of the 1999 Ukrainian presidential elections; and the media’s rights to freedom of choice and freedom of speech.

The geographical analysis of the elections gave

IFES and other organizations the opportunity to analyze the role of voters in Southern and Western Ukraine in solidifying President Kuchma's reelection victory. Discussion participants also noted that the President's support is weakest in Central Ukraine.

Most Ukrainians do not currently possess a strong idea of what role the mass media should play, and discussion participants debated whether the Ukrainian media should try to pursue the American model of privatized mass media and anti-monopoly legislation, or the European model of relatively strong civil control over the media. Since Ukraine has yet to define the role of the media, mass media organizations are more susceptible to abuse and manipulation by politicians and oligarchs; this, in turn, impedes the democratization process and hinders the development of free speech in Ukraine.

IFES Continues Work with Parliament, Prepares for Information Fair

IFES/Ukraine participated in Parliamentary Assistance Coordination Group meetings throughout the month of February. The meetings allow IFES to discuss recent programming with members of the Verkhovna Rada and be informed of Rada political activities. In addition, IFES is preparing for an annual Ukraine "Information Fair" with the Verkhovna Rada. Informational materials on IFES activities will be printed and distributed for approximately 500 fair participants.

IFES Continues to Work Closely with CEC

While IFES/Ukraine has had no direct involvement in the referendum process, IFES' close working relationship with the CEC has allowed for limited observation of the referendum preparation process. IFES' highly successful poll worker training program for the 1999 presidential elections will be used as the basis for an upcoming training program for poll workers for the 2000 referendum.

Impact Summary

IFES' civic education program is intended to remedy the disillusionment of the youth in regards to the political process and community development. While informing students of their rights and responsibilities, the program also equips the students with the necessary critical thinking skills to prepare them for active and informed participation in the country's social and political development. In IFES' 1999 focus groups, Ukrainian voters cited the importance of allowing young people to develop these

skills in order to become active electoral participants and future leaders of Ukraine. In one of IFES' pilot schools, students organized their own elections for student government as a result of their enthusiasm for the civic education program. Feedback from a seminar for participating teachers, and an upcoming conference for students who have participated in the program, will help IFES determine future areas of improvement and further development of the project.

In addition, IFES' recent participation in a mass media and elections conference allowed members of the Ukrainian mass media to understand how the NGO community views the influence of the media in Ukrainian civil society. By encouraging the media to develop independently of the government or of political parties, IFES is helping to promote the establishment of a reasonably objective, independent press in Ukraine. This will result in a higher quality and greater quantity of information being distributed to Ukrainian citizens, which will allow them to make more educated and informed choices in future local or general elections.

YUGOSLAVIA (KOSOVO)

IFES Deploys Election and Registration Experts

IFES deployed a team of eight election and registration experts led by Jeff Fischer, IFES Senior Advisor and Director of Registration and Elections in Kosovo. IFES experts are assisting the UN and OSCE to implement the operational plan for registration and elections developed by IFES and the OSCE. In particular, they will be working closely with the Joint Registration Task Force (JRT), set up by the UN and OSCE, to develop technically feasible parameters and standards for the civil registration--a process that has been delayed since the beginning of last summer.

The implementation of the operational plan will be one of the most technically challenging undertakings IFES has conducted in recent memory and will be carried out in a constantly shifting political environment. IFES staff continues to assist in the development of the Election Commission structure, duties and rules, and comment on draft legislation for polling at the municipal level. The Foundation anticipates opening offices in Pristina shortly to focus more directly on this long-term programming.

IFES Helps Joint Registration Task Force to Prepare for Registration

The completion of the Document Consolidation Project, which is consolidating data from Elektro-Kosova, telephone records, data sets from CRS/Albania and CRS/Macedonia, and social security information, will mark an important step in the registration process. Plans are also being made to identify and deploy personnel in preparations for registration. International Municipal Records Officers (MRO) are scheduled to be deployed in Kosovo's 29 municipalities in March. At the same time, international trainers will be assigned to assist with the sorting of documents at the municipal level. Over 2000 local staff will be recruited to work on the registration process in approximately 400 registration sites.

IFES Heads Information Technology Activities

All information technology including network administration, hardware maintenance, help desk support, database development and other IT projects will be consolidated under one department, headed by IFES IT Specialist Mike Yard, who will handle all information technology-related activities. This department will work with SAGEM (a fingerprint equipment vendor) on issues concerning database programming specifications, equipment configuration, training requirements, and Central Database site considerations. In March, Yard will conduct a series of tests to determine whether SAGEM has met contract requirements before accepting delivery of equipment from the factory. The department will also work with Thomson (an identification card printer and digital camera vendor) and other companies that have yet to be selected. Bids have been requested for a data capture company to enter information from approx. 1.6 million registration forms, both within Kosovo and out of the area.

Public Information Activities are Underway

Numerous visits to international and local NGOs, minority communities, and OSCE field offices will be conducted in order to assess opportunities to reach women, youth, and minority groups. The OSCE plans to use both radio and posters in its outreach efforts in March. A survey of citizens' attitudes is also in the planning stages.

Out-of-Kosovo Registration May Prove Problematic

A formal agreement has yet to be signed with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia concerning the registration of Kosovar residents living in Serbia and Montenegro. Diplomatic efforts are underway to prevent the possibility of a boycott of these resi-

dents. At the same time, alternatives are being examined.

CAUCASUS/CENTRAL ASIA

ARMENIA

IFES Submits Comments To Working Group On Electoral Code Amendments

During February, IFES/Armenia submitted comments on amendments to the Universal Election Code to the Parliamentary Committee on State and Legal Issues. Remarks were coordinated with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The comments focused on three amendments proposed by Central Election Commission (CEC) Chairman Artak Sahradian on the following issues:

1. What to do about voters whose jobs forced them away from their home precinct on election day, such as policemen and poll workers? (Response: add advisory language that these workers should be assigned close to home whenever possible.)
2. How to rationalize the participation of the election committees and various courts in the appeals process? (Response: the entire issue of electoral appeals needs to be consolidated into a new section of the code rather than fine tuning the existing and chaotic system of current law.)
3. Should the right to appeal decisions of electoral committees be left in the hands of domestic observers, the media, and proxies? This right, contained in the current code, would be removed under a CEC recommendation. (Response: this right should be maintained, but with language reiterating that observers cannot interfere with the work of electoral commissions.)

The next phase will be discussions with the political factions in the National Assembly regarding more politically sensitive issues involving the mixture of seats in Parliament, the composition of electoral committees, etc. Final action on code amendments is not expected until the end of the year.

IFES Presents at Caucasus Links Conference

IFES/Armenia Program Manager Jeffrey Swedberg gave a presentation at a conference entitled "Democracy in Armenia: Crisis or Renewal" on 24-

25 February. The conference was organized by the international NGO Caucasus Links. IFES was represented on a four-person panel, along with Alexander Iskandarian of the Caucasus Study Center, former CEC Chairman Khachatur Bezerjian, and party leaders Payrur Hairikian of the Self Determination Union and Vigen Khachatryan of the Liberal Democratic Party. The topic was "Lessons Learned from the 1999 Parliamentary Elections." Swedberg's presentation focused on the role IFES has played in Armenia since 1995 and its work, in particular, on a revised election code, which demonstrated its value in the improved processes seen in the 1999 parliamentary and local elections. Swedberg pointed out that such reforms as the elimination of the supplemental list has led to significant problems with the voter lists. He also pointed out that problems such as the continued presence of unauthorized personnel inside and outside the polling station, the partisan propensity to remove precinct committee members, and the convoluted and confusing appeals procedures suggest the need for further adjustments to the code.

IFES Begins Analysis of Possible Referendum on Constitutional Amendments

At the request of the U.S. Embassy, IFES began translating the Armenian Law on Referenda in preparation for a possible referendum on a package of constitutional amendments. Numerous amendments are currently being drafted by political factions in the National Assembly and by the Office of the President. At issue is the constitutional relationship between the President, government and Parliament, in particular the current ability of the President to dissolve the Parliament after a year has elapsed following the election of the National Assembly. Under current law, the President will be able to dissolve the Parliament on 31 May, 2000.

Impact Summary

IFES' discussions with the CEC and leaders of the National Assembly are clarifying issues for future activities. In addition, through comments made to the National Assembly at the earliest stages on proposed changes to an election code, IFES was able to impact legislation amendment work on the Universal Electoral Code from the outset.

AZERBAIJAN

CEC Releases December 1999 Municipal Elections Results

The Central Election Commission (CEC) released results of the municipal elections. While the document contains 140 pages of voter turnout and registration statistics and 3 pages of results at the territorial election commission level, it does not include a single result of any municipal contest.

IFES Anticipates Repeat Municipal Elections

In support of the CEC, IFES produced additional copies of Voting Day Guidelines for Precinct Election Commissions (PECs) and voter information posters for use in voting stations. The posters are designed to inform voters about voting procedures as well as to teach voters how to mark ballots.

IFES Prepares for November 2000 Parliamentary Elections

During the month of February, IFES/Washington staff and other international organizations met at the International Republican Institute's headquarters with senior officials from major opposition parties--including Musavat, Popular Front, and Azerbaijan National Independence Party - to discuss the November parliamentary elections. The discussion included the parliamentary election framework, CEC and political party laws, opposition cooperation for the parliamentary elections, and effective methods of obtaining accurate election results from the 2000 parliamentary elections.

New Laws Translated and Distributed

IFES staff finalized the translations of municipal-related laws and decrees on finance. Copies were distributed to embassies and interested local and international organizations. In addition, IFES/Azerbaijan translated the DemCongress draft of a parliamentary elections law. The new draft law on political parties was obtained, translated and distributed as well. This draft is similar to the former law, but drops some restrictions--public employees including military personnel and police can now be party members, and the President can be a member of a political party. Amendments proposed by government members include a 500 percent increase in the number of members required to form a political party.

IFES Assists Local NGOs

IFES staff met with the director and senior academic staff of the private Azerbaijan University to

discuss accessing IFES resources and materials for a new course on electoral systems and frameworks. IFES began participating in the university's regular Sunday democracy-oriented seminars and shared views on legislative development.

Impact Summary

In preparation for the repeat municipal elections, IFES worked with the CEC to increase voter information and transparency through production of voter education materials. To support reformed election legislative development for the November 2000S parliamentary elections, IFES is working with the presidential apparatus, the CEC, and opposition leaders to review draft laws. In addition, IFES has entered into discussions for making election results transparent and widely available.

GEORGIA

IFES and the CEC Launch New Website

At the request of the USAID/Caucasus Mission, IFES/Georgia continues to assist the CEC with the installation of an Internet network intended to increase the Commission's transparency prior to and after the 9 April presidential elections. The 2000 Presidential Elections of Georgia web site has been created to improve public access to CEC resolutions and instructions and to increase overall transparency in the elections process. The web site includes:

- Copies of all election laws governing the 9 April presidential elections;
- Procedures for filing election complaints;
- Contact information for district and precinct election commissions.

In addition, important voter information and regularly updated news about CEC activities will also be found on the site. Following the 9 April elections, preliminary and final results will be posted on the site to provide citizens and journalists alike with the most up-to-date information regarding election outcomes. The web site can be accessed at <http://www.cec.gov.ge/index.htm>.

IFES Conducts Post-Election Review

During the month of February, IFES/Georgia undertook a post-election review to help the Central Election Commission (CEC) identify lessons learned from the conduct of the October 1999 parliamentary elections. From 14-24 February, IFES/Georgia Project Manager Antonio Spinelli and Deputy Project Manager Michael Svetlik conducted interviews with

all 17 members of the Commission in a small group format.

As in the post-election conference that IFES/Georgia conducted following the 1998 local elections, the questions posed during the series of interview sessions addressed specific areas. These included:

- Legal structure for elections and the responsibilities of the CEC;
- Planning, organizing, and managing the elections;
- Voter registration and identification;
- Training of election commission members;
- Voter education and voter motivation;
- The adjudication of election complaints; and
- Public trust in the election process.

During the interview process, IFES suggested to Commissioners that a post-election conference that would bring together all members of the Commission in a single venue be scheduled following the 9 April presidential elections. IFES hopes that such an event would serve to focus those interested in the electoral process on legislative and procedural reform.

CEC Prepares for Presidential Elections

The CEC continues to prepare for the 9 April presidential election amid protracted negotiations among majority and minority factions in Parliament regarding proposed amendments to the laws that will govern the upcoming poll.

Candidate registration closed on 20 February, with the CEC having received applications from 17 candidates for the presidency of Georgia. Included among the 12 candidates that were certified on 29 February upon submission of 50,000 signatures of support are the incumbent President Eduard Shevardnadze, former General Secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia Jumber Patiashvili, and the leader of the Autonomous Region of Adjara, Aslan Abashidze.

Working closely with the CEC, IFES plans technical assistance in support of the 9 April election in the areas of elections administration training and voter education. During the past month, IFES Voter Education Consultant Catherine Barnes began planning and executing a national voter information campaign that will be comprised of two phases.

Phase I of the campaign will provide voters with information on how to make appeals to the voters' lists, which are on public display one month prior to election day. Phase II, set to begin in mid-March, will focus on voter motivation and technical procedures.

Election Complaint Adjudication Activities Planned

From 7-11 March, IFES/Georgia will hold a series of roundtables and workshops aimed at clarifying the judicial and administrative procedures for adjudicating election complaints. These activities are a major component of IFES' technical assistance in support of the 9 April Presidential elections, and will involve collaboration with a number of local partner organizations.

More than 160 participants have been invited to participate in 5 separate sessions. Participants will include representatives from the Supreme Court of Georgia, District Courts, the CEC, District Election Commissions, Georgian NGOs, international NGOs, election observer groups, and representatives of the Georgian media.

IFES has invited two distinguished officials from the United States Department of Justice to participate in this series of workshops: Craig Donsanto, the Director of the Election Crimes Division of the United States Department of Justice, and Barry Weinberg, the former Deputy Head of the Voting Rights Division of the Department of Justice. Both Mr. Donsanto and Mr. Weinberg have presented at several international conferences on election complaint adjudication and election law development.

Impact Summary

During the month of February, IFES/Georgia continued to achieve substantial progress with the CEC in support of the upcoming presidential election, including planning a nationwide voter education campaign, preparing a series of workshops on election complaint adjudication led by USDOJ officials, a joint IFES/CEC training of election administrators, and the installation of a CEC internet network, all of which will encourage transparency and add to the legitimacy of the election process in Georgia.

KAZAKHSTAN

IFES/Kazakhstan Welcomes New Project Manager

IFES is pleased to announce the arrival of our new

Project Manager Dr. Eil~~R~~ Ward. Dr. Ward joined IFES as a specialist in the area of civil society and civic education after obtaining her doctorate at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. Dr. Ward will oversee IFES' on-going civic education programs in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Civic Education and Curriculum Development Project Continues

IFES efforts in February focused on continuing the curriculum development project by expanding the civic education program in all high schools. On 7 February, Marat Bigaliev and Baghlan Yerzhan met with Zhukeshev Kanat Muratbekovich, a member of the Educational Methodical Council from the Altynsarin Institute, who recommended the IFES Civics textbook for publication. Mr. Zhukeshev shared the Ministry of Education's plans to develop a new subject called the "Fundamentals of Social Science," or "Civics," comprising 102 academic hours, and said that IFES' civics program could fit this subject as an alternative subject for special schools oriented toward social and humanitarian science. He also said that there is a great demand for Law Science subjects.

IFES staff met with Mr. Ashimzhan Akhmetov, Vice-minister of Education and Science, on 10 February in Astana. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce Mr. Akhmetov to the on-going IFES curriculum development project and discuss further activities in this area. Arrangements were made for IFES to obtain an official memo to be sent to each of the education departments and IFES pilot schools throughout the country. Mrs. Rakhimzhanova, Head of the Methodological Department of Ministry of Education, also attended the meeting.

Marat Bigaliev and Baghlan Yerzhan attended a seminar for the directors of high schools that was organized by the Association of Initiative Schools (AIS) of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 8 February at pilot school #38, Almaty oblast. At the seminar, IFES representatives attended the lesson on "Elections and Referenda in Kazakhstan" and discussed the use of interactive methods of teaching as well as the IFES Civics textbook and reading materials. The teachers of the civics course said that they find IFES' materials very useful and helpful because the issues presented are not covered in local textbooks. This was followed by a roundtable with participants of the seminar, where AIS and IFES made presentations.

IFES/Almaty was informed that Nagzhan Rakhimz-

hanova of the Ministry of Education has developed and submitted a new State Program "On Education" to the President of Kazakhstan for approval. As she mentioned, civic education is one of the priorities among other educational policies of the state program "On Education." The program will be published in the media in one month.

IFES Prepares for Civic Education Event in Cooperation with the Association of Initiative Schools

Preparations commenced for a March civic education event that will include both a Civic Education Tournament for top Kazakh students and a teacher seminar on the civic education curriculum. IFES staff met with Shamen Akhimbekova, Director of the Association of Initiative Schools in order to discuss a draft format for the tournament among IFES pilot school students. Ms. Akhimbekova provided IFES with a detailed format of the day-and-a-half tournament that includes tests, written assignments and final oral presentations by students. Most of the test questions and assignments are based on the IFES textbook and readings. The civic education tournament and teacher's meeting is tentatively scheduled for the end of March. IFES Vice-President Juliana Pilon will attend the tournament as one of the presenters and judges.

University Level Mock Elections Project Discussed

IFES/Almaty staff met Lyudmila Adilova, Candidate of Historical Sciences at the Kazakh National State University "Al-Pharabi," to discuss a student mock elections project at the university level. Adilova has an interest in cooperating with IFES on conducting an "Elections of a University Akim" program. According to the program proposed by Adilova, more than 360 students would be involved in the electoral process. IFES would provide them with technical information related to election law, campaigning and electoral administration. The concept will be discussed further with new Project Manager EilR Ward.

Administration and Cost of Elections (ACE) Vote Counting Module Translated

The ACE Translation group submitted all of the material on vote counting on 10 February. The translators shared their views with regard to the quality of the English version of the text for updating and revising the ACE project. Currently, IFES is in the process of printing and editing the text of the Russian version.

Impact Summary

IFES has continued civic education activities with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, pilot schools, and local and international NGOs, thereby contributing to the long-term development of civil society in Kazakhstan. With continued advice from the Altynsarin Methodological Institute, IFES anticipates the expansion of its curriculum during the 2000-2001 school year. During the month, IFES also focused efforts on developing new civic education initiatives with international and local NGOs in order to increase youth participation in social and political life.

KYRGYZSTAN

(continued from p. 1)

On 10 February, in cooperation with the Kyrgyz State National University (KSNU), IFES highlighted student election education at a candidate debate at KSNU for candidates for the Legislative Assembly in that constituency.

Approximately 500 students and local voters attended the lively debate, which was also covered by three television channels and the national newspaper *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*.

IFES Drafts Election Dispute Adjudication Manual

The drafting and printing of the Election Dispute Adjudication Manual was also completed in February. A training event to educate judges in the use of the manual was undertaken at the Judicial Training Centre on 14-16 February 2000. This activity will be important to both courts and plaintiffs in the weeks immediately following the elections as election grievances are filed.

Impact Summary

IFES strategies have been aimed at increasing both the professionalization of election administrators and informed participation in the election process by voters. The training of poll workers has resulted in a vast improvement in election administration since the October 1999 local elections. The Election Dispute Adjudication Manual is now being used to strengthen the judiciary by training judges in administering acceptable standards of election dispute adjudication. The voter education campaign contributed to increased voter awareness, particularly in young voters, and stressed the importance of voting individually to play a role in building a stronger

country. This program is also helps strengthen the various NGOs with which IFES has partnered in an effort to sustain Kyrgyzstan's civil society.

TAJKISTAN

Parliamentary Elections Held on 27 February

The parliamentary elections took place as scheduled without reports of any major incidents of violence or intimidation. The peaceful atmosphere experienced throughout Tajikistan could be attributed to the desire of the general population for peace. The OSCE has released a preliminary report, including conclusions about the election process.

IFES Produces Voter Education Campaign for February Elections

In preparation for the February parliamentary elections in Tajikistan, IFES undertook a widespread voter education campaign that included both the print and electronic media outlets. Using print media sources, 6,000 copies of a poster entitled "Secrecy of Voting" and 6,000 copies of a poster explaining the voting process were printed and distributed. Each poster consists of the same text in Tajik, Russian and Uzbek. All of them were ready by 19 February for distribution in the week before the elections.

IFES also produced six television and six radio spots for the election, focusing on themes such as "Your vote is our children's future," "Your vote is protected," "Vote on February 27," and "The future of Tajikistan is in your hands."

Finally, IFES produced a brochure on political parties, including the answers to five questions that were posed to each party. The questions were:

- What will be the top 3 priorities of your political party in the next Majlisi Oli?
- How will you improve the lives of women and children in Tajikistan?
- What are the ways in which your party will encourage economic growth and thus create more jobs in Tajikistan?
- How will your party improve relations with Tajikistan's neighbors and work for regional stability?
- How will your party work towards national reconciliation if elected to the Majlisi Oli?

The questions were given to each party, and each party was given several days to submit their responses. The responses were included in the pamphlet for mass distribution.

IFES Completes Polling Station Commission Procedures Manual

During the month of February IFES/Tajikistan completed the final draft of the polling station procedures manual and submitted it to the CCER. Pursuant to the request of the CCER, 3,100 copies of the manual were printed, which contained both Russian and Tajik translations of the manual. The CCER cooperated in distributing the manual to all its polling station committees. Reports from UNMOT, OSCE and JEOMT confirmed that the manual was in wide use on Election Day. IFES/Tajikistan staff also observed the manual at the polling stations visited on polling day.



The Chairman of Polling Station Number 1 in Kofarnihom, Tajikistan references the IFES polling station manual on election

IFES Sponsors Political Party Forum Events

On 5 February IFES sponsored a political party forum at the Hotel Dushanbe, with a follow-up forum on 7 February in Kurgan Tyube. For both of these events, IFES staff reported that all six political parties were represented. Saifullo Safarov, Deputy Chairman of the PDP, was in attendance. The participation of the PDP was noteworthy, because from a political standpoint the PDP would seem to have little to gain from an exchange with other political parties. By participating, the PDP was sending an important positive signal to international observers of the democratic process in Tajikistan.

In attendance from the diplomatic community were representatives from the US, Indian, and Turkish

Embassies, along with German Ambassador Meyer. UNMOT also had several persons in attendance over the course of the day.

A representative of Television Tajikistan (TBT) approached Project Manager Frank Vassallo and Political Party Development Expert Phil Griffin at the end of the event and requested that IFES sponsor a debate between the parties on TBT. This idea came to fruition when the candidate debate was conducted and aired on the English news in a 7:30 a.m. program on TBT. The following day, a 10-minute summary of the debate aired in Tajik. One week later, a second round of debates were televised during the week before the elections. Several private TV stations also aired the debate.

Election Dispute Adjudication Project Continues with a Training Seminar for Judges

On 24 February, IFES and ABA/CEELI co-sponsored a training seminar in Khujand regarding the election laws of Tajikistan, specifically those governing the adjudication of election disputes. The seminar was conducted by Justices Isroilov and Khodjaeva of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tajikistan. Approximately 35 judges from the Leninabad region and 15 representatives of the regional Department of Justice attended the Khujand training seminar.

Murodjon Radjabov, Chairman of the Leninabad Regional Court, Justice Isroilov and Justice Khodjaeva offered opening comments, followed by training sessions aimed at familiarizing judges in attendance with the processes for submitting and appealing an alleged electoral violation. According to the laws of Tajikistan, complaints must first be brought to the local election commission before appeals can be made to the CEC and, finally, the Supreme Court. Judges also discussed the sometimes overlapping jurisdictions between the courts and the election commissions. The participants also discussed more unusual problems with interpreting election dispute legislation. For instance, Justice Isroilov stated that persons taken into custody should have no right to nominate a candidate or be nominated only when they are charged with especially grievous crimes. In all other cases the defendants shall have equal rights to nominate candidates. At first sight, this provision of the Tajik election law may seem to contradict the Tajik Constitution, Article 27, Paragraph 4, which states that persons sentenced to imprisonment by a legally binding court verdict shall not have electoral rights (i.e. the

rights to elect and be elected). That provision was included in the Tajik election law due to the unstable post-war situation in the republic.

Impact Summary

IFES activities increased greatly during February in anticipation of the parliamentary elections. Through its continuing work with the CEER, the judiciary, media, local NGOs, and political parties, IFES effectively increased understanding about election day procedures and candidates. The voter education campaign, along with efforts focusing on the professionalization of election administration and observation, contributed to a more transparent election process for February elections. Through activities such as the judicial training seminars, IFES and ABA/CEELI demonstrated their commitment to strengthening the independence of the judiciary in Tajikistan, as well as their support of judicial reforms. Finally, IFES' assistance to all political parties for pursuing constituent outreach strategies will contribute to an increased sophistication of the electorate.

UZBEKISTAN

IFES Plans Student Action Committee Projects in Samarkand

IFES/Tashkent Project Coordinator Lola Maksudova commenced preparations for student action committee (SAC) activities in Samarkand in partnership with the NGO Center *Ayol*. *Ayol* was registered in August 1998 and began its activities in December 1997. Since that time, *Ayol* has gained a reputation as one of the most prominent and successful NGOs on women's and youth rights, promoting civic education not only in Samarkand but all over Uzbekistan. Its leader, Victoria Ashirova, participated in NGO leaders' educational programs in the United States with the help of the U.S. Government in 1997 and 1998. She has also attended numerous international training programs conducted by SOROS and the OSCE in Uzbekistan and abroad, including the United Kingdom, France, and Germany.

The mission of the organization is to promote social innovation, informational, and educational activities among women and youth in order to promote their consciousness and active participation in the democratic challenges of society. *Ayol* has its own youth program. The Youth Club Leader was created specially to implement this program. Members of the club are students in the 10th and 11th grades of

education establishments of Samarkand.

As part of the organization's efforts to implement new interactive methods of teaching and work with young people, *Ayol* approached IFES to develop a partnership aimed at creating a network of SACs which would teach and encourage students how to identify issues of local importance and enlist local governmental bodies in addressing those issues.

IFES Contributes to NGO Development

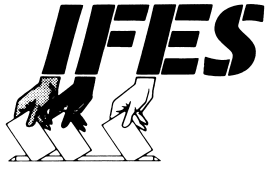
Lola Maksudova served as a facilitator at a February OSCE training session/meeting on NGO Strategy Development, at which many international donors--including USAID--participated. The NGO Strategy meeting was the first internationally sponsored meeting to build an NGO coalition in Uzbekistan. All the prominent NGOs of Uzbekistan created a coordination council and agreed to work on three areas: technical information cooperation, improvement of legislation framework, and NGO sustainable development.

IFES Participation Planned at ACIE Conference

Lola Maksudova had a meeting with Brendan Dallas, Director of Teacher Programs of the American Councils for International Education. Lola Maksudova received the conference proposal on "Civics and Interdisciplinary Education" from the American Council for International Education. The one-day conference will be held 10 March at the Ferghana University. Igilik Kosymbetov from the Karakalpak Ministry of Education in Nukus is expected to speak about curriculum development projects and the need for civic education in Karakalpakstan.

Impact Summary

IFES/Uzbekistan continues to focus its efforts on civic education. IFES and its local NGO partners will monitor progress of the project throughout the rest of the school year and make preparations for editing and translation of all materials. These continued civic education activities, along with NGO development, contribute to the creation of a civil society in Uzbekistan.



International Foundation for Election Systems
1101 15th Street, NW
Third Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Tel. (202) 828-8507
Fax (202) 452-0804

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

**PLEASE VISIT THE IFES
WWW PAGES AT:**

Washington, D.C.:
www.ifes.org

ACEEEO:
www.aceeeo.com

Armenia:
www.ifes.am

Bosnia:
www.oscebih.org

Georgia (CEC):
www.cec.gov.ge/index.htm

Russia:
www.ifes.ru

IESD (Russia):
www.democracy.ru

Ukraine:
www.ifes-ukraine.org

IFES/Washington ENI Staff:

Scott R. Lansell, Director
(slansell@ifes.org)

Steve Connolly, Senior Advisor
(steve@ifes.org)

Phylis Greenfield, Senior Advisor
(phylis@ifes.org)

Michael Conway, Senior Program Officer
(mconway@ifes.org)

Alexander T. Knapp, Senior Program Officer
(atknapp@ifes.org)

Anthony C. Bowyer, Program Officer
(anthony@ifes.org)

Jeffrey Carlson, Program Officer
(jeffrey@ifes.org)

Alexandra Levaditis, Program Officer
(alexandra@ifes.org)

Lewis Madanick, Program Officer
(lmadanick@ifes.org)

Matthew Curtis, Senior Program Assistant
(mcurtis@ifes.org)

Maggie McDonough, Program Assistant
(mmcdonough@ifes.org)

Chad Vickery, Program Assistant
(cvickery@ifes.org)

Irina Zaslavskaya, Program Assistant
(irina@ifes.org)

Carrie Ellis, Program Assistant
(cellis@ifes.org)

Sonia Pastuhov-Pastein, Program Assistant
(spastein@ifes.org)

Sarah Hirschman, Program Assistant
(shirschman@ifes.org)