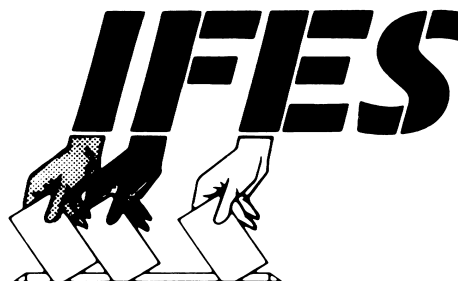


Europe and Newly Independent States (ENI) Report



JANUARY 2000

IFES Helps Train Domestic Observers in Moldova

In January, IFES, in conjunction with the League for Human Rights of Moldova (LADOM), the Helsinki Committee of Moldova, and the Central Election Committee, conducted training seminars for domestic observers who traveled to Taraclia County on 23 January 2000 to monitor local elections. The training of the approximately 60 observers was held in both Chisinau and Cahul County. CEC Secretary Puica covered the background of these elections and spoke on the rights and responsibilities of observers and proper observing procedures. In his presentation, IFES/Moldova Senior Program Coordinator Igor Botan focused on the legal framework regulating elections, the establishment of the CEC, and international standards regarding observers' activities. Scott Lansell, Director of Europe and NIS,



CEC Secretary Puica addresses the rights and responsibilities of domestic observers during the training seminar.

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spoke briefly about IFES' activities and elections in the United States. Participants received copies of *The Observer Guide*, *The Observer Form*, and the most recent issue of the *Civic Voice* newsletter.

Local Elections in Taraclia County

On 23 January, local elections were held in Taraclia County. The former Taraclia District, which contains a substantial Bulgarian minority, boycotted the May 1999 local elections after the district was included in Cahul County. To ease tensions in southern Moldova, the government created Taraclia County in October 1999, and elections were set for January 2000. The Communist and Agrarian Parties captured many of the seats in the county and local councils.

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EUROPE

ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN OFFICIALS (ACEEEO)

Information Technology in Elections

Preparations are underway for the upcoming Annual Conference of the ACEEEO scheduled to take place from 14-16 June in Warsaw, Poland. Representatives from IFES, ACEEEO, and National Electoral Office of Poland met in Warsaw to discuss the event titled "Information Technology in Elections." Election officials, experts, and others interested in elections and information technology 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.

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.

IFES Helps ACEEEO Increase Capacity

IFES has undertaken several projects designed to increase the capacity of the ACEEEO to organize events and provide a better service to election officials in the region. Aware of the ACEEEO Secretariat's enhanced role in planning and organizing annual conferences, IFES has prepared a Conference Planning Handbook. This comprehensive Handbook, which is based on over ten years of experience, covers everything from outreach to planning to training material development. IFES also conducted an assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses of the ACEEEO's Secretariat. IFES is undertaking steps to identify needs and provide support. In addition to the Handbook, IFES is developing an *access* database to track event participants and collect information on regional experts in the field of elections. By increasing the capacity of the ACEEEO, IFES is developing a long-term partner in the region.

ALBANIA

Programming Initiatives

In January, the Council of Ministers formally approved the Election Assistance Project that seeks to computerize voter lists and create a central voter registry. In addition, a voter identification card will be created to help workers at polling stations identify voters against voter extracts and better ensure against multiple voting. Work has begun to finalize the project outline and implementation schedule to fit the new time lines. With approval, the Minister of Local Government indicated that local elections would not take place before mid September of this year. On 11 January, the Organization for Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) sponsored a meeting with representatives of all political parties where they gave their support to the Election Assistance Project.

The Central Election Commission (CEC), and by implication the new draft election law, has been strongly criticized by opposition parties as attempting to manipulate future election results. IFES is working closely with the US Embassy and OSCE to find a way to enable all political parties to enter into a dialogue to allow the CEC to begin its work and allow a new law to proceed.

Draft Election Law Under Discussion

The draft election law (although incomplete) was discussed with a number of local NGOs in mid-December. At that time, support was given to the direction the law was taking and little detailed criticism was raised. It was the intent of the government to hold all party talks on the draft law in late December and early January. These discussions have not taken place and comments from the Ministries of Finance, Justice and Local Government as well as the Council of Europe have not yet been received by the Judicial Branch of the Prime Minister's office. In the meantime, the government decided to submit a law on the CEC to Parliament in order to allow that body to begin its work. The draft CEC law, taken directly from the draft election law, with the exception of the list of CEC responsibilities, has been strongly opposed by the opposition and has not yet been placed on the parliamentary agenda.

Law on Central Election Commission Delayed

With the lack of an implementing law, the CEC has not yet been able to begin its formal functions. The opposition of opposition parties is based on two is-

sues: a disagreement that the provisions in the Constitution are appropriate, and second the lack of consultation between the President and the opposition parties before appointments were made. Opposition to the law has been strong enough to prevent opposition parties from considering a new electoral law without seeing substantial changes.

Initiation of Voter Registration Project

With the formal approval of the project by the government, it has been possible to proceed on this initiative. In late January, IFES Voter Registration Specialist Enrique Saltos returned to Albania following the November/December '99 IFES registration assessment to work in more detail with UNDP and the Government of Albania on this project. Additional IFES registration technicians are likely to travel to Albania in February as the project fully develops. In addition, other international partners are making commitments to the project including several European governments and the Canadians. The project is now looking again at the issuance of a photo identification card for voting.

IFES' principal activities for the project are anticipated to be in door-to-door enumeration which will develop the new voter lists and the voter/civic education program designed to educate the public on the registration process and its purpose. Without an extensive public information effort, it will be difficult for an enumeration process to be successful.

Impact Summary

The Electoral Assistance Project will have a considerable impact on the way in which political parties, voters and the international community perceive the electoral process in Fall 2000 and will set the tone for national elections to be held no later than June 2001. The support the project has from the international community and all political parties is a good beginning and will hopefully transfer into the issues of the electoral law and CEC.

The political disagreements over the CEC, in particular, have not made it possible to begin an all-party dialogue on a new electoral law without the intervention of the international community. IFES has and will continue to work closely with the OSCE, USAID, and the US Embassy on this issue. In addition, IFES staff is continually looking for ways in which proposed changes to the election law can be included in a way that would be acceptable to the opposition and government alike.

BELARUS

1999 Opinion Survey Translated into Russian

The 1999 Survey of Public Opinion in Belarus has been translated into Russian and will soon be available for public distribution. The IFES survey examines public opinion on several issues, including the elections staged in May 1999 by political parties opposed to the rule of President Alexander Lukashenko, the current state of affairs in Belarus, and the proposed union between Belarus and Russia. It also measures the level of public information available and the impact of the mass media. While providing a better understanding of the public's attitudes toward Belarus' current political and economic situation, the data can also be compared to similar information from other countries, such as Ukraine and Russia, to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of political, economic, and social transitions in the former Soviet Union. To order a copy of the English-language copy of the survey, please direct your requests to IFES/Washington's F. Clifton White Resource Center.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (BiH)

BiH Parliament Blocks Election Law

On 20 January, a spokeswoman for the BiH Parliament reported that they had failed to pass the permanent election law despite appeals by the Council of Europe. (RFE/RL 1/20/00). OSCE Ambassador Robert Barry and High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch have since engaged the BiH Parliamentary Assembly Collegium in discussions on the law. OSCE and OHR are urging the Parliament to pass the law by 15 February to ensure that the October 2000 general elections can be carried out under the new law by BiH election officials as planned.

The sticking points include election procedures for the BiH Presidency; the election of mayors; and candidacies of citizens removed from office. Changes have been made to address these areas of concern. Since presidential elections are not scheduled until 2002, it was decided that that chapter will be removed from this law and discussed at a later date. In the case of the election of mayors, the law was amended to allow for Entity laws to stipulate whether or not mayors will be elected directly or indirectly by municipal councils. In the case that the Entity law does not stipulate this, the mayor will be elected indirectly. The third area of contention - candidacies of citizens removed from office - has been addressed by adding language to Article 20.11 which directly specifies that no person who has

been removed by the Provisional Election Commission, or the Election Appeals Sub-Commission as established by the Provisional Election Commission Rules and Regulations, or who has personally obstructed the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace or the Provisional Election Commission Rules and Regulations shall be permitted to be a candidate in the elections or hold any public elected or appointed office. Nor will any person who has been removed from public office by the High Representative will be permitted to be a candidate in the elections or hold any public elected or appointed office.

In related news, the OSCE, which will be supervising the April municipal elections, announced that it has disqualified 9 candidates for failing to move out of apartments belonging to other people. A major problem hampering refugee return across Bosnia is the presence of squatters in the refugees' flats. The squatters are usually members of the ethnic group in control of the given region, while the would-be returnees tend to belong to other nationalities. (RFE/RL 1/20/00)

New Croatian Policy Toward BiH

Foreign Minister Tonino Picula publicly stated on 31 January that the new Croatian government will carry out its obligations toward Bosnia under the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement "...even if there are certain [unspecified] political realities that we do not like." (RFE/RL, 1/31/00) Picula stressed that Zagreb will try to better the lot of the Croats in the neighboring state but not by calling for a revision of the Dayton agreement, as did the *Croatian Democratic Party* (HDZ). Picula added that he hopes a new election law in Bosnia will put an end to ethnic polarization in voting patterns there and called upon Serbian and Muslim leaders to help end such polarization. The Croatian government will continue to provide financial assistance to the ethnic Croats in the neighboring state but will do so in a completely transparent manner.

IFES Opens Office in Sarajevo

In January, IFES opened an independent formal office in Sarajevo. IFES will continue its cooperation with OSCE but operate independently, working directly with local election officials on training programs and assisting the Association of Election Officials in BiH (AEOBiH) with its development. Beverly Hagerdon Thakur will serve as IFES Field Representative and Training Coordinator and Jeppe Olson will serve as Institutional Development Advi-

sor. Together they will assist the AEOBiH to develop a strategic plan, identify a fundraising strategy for long-term sustainability, establish relationships with other professional elections associations around the world, develop training programs for their members, and design programs to help educate citizens about the democratic process.

Under the draft election law and the nationalization proposal being under consideration in the BiH parliament, local officials take on greater responsibility both in maintaining the voter registry and in the execution of elections. Mr. Olson will be assisting local election commissions (LECs) with their insti-



Six members of the steering committee of the Kopas women's NGO meet with IFES Civic Education Trainer Tanja Bogdanovic (far left).

tutional development to prepare for their new responsibilities. Areas of concentration are being determined from a needs assessment survey conducted in December 1999.

Civic Education Trainers Assist Women's NGO

Recently, several women in the Local Community of Kobas of the Srbac municipality in the Republika Srpska (RS) identified a need for improving the status of women in society, improving their rights and assisting women in the areas of employment, education and childcare. Before the war there had been at least some social structures that addressed those needs, but they are no longer available and these women decided they should organize into an NGO.

Some were familiar with IFES civic education trainers Tanja Bogdanovic and Branko Buzakovic, who had visited this local community several times, and turned to them for assistance. This group had the

ideas, needs and genuine enthusiasm necessary, and the IFES trainers had the expertise to help the group turn their ideas into a reality. Bogdanovic and Buzakovic guided the group through the preparation of the necessary registration documentation, creation of a statute, plan and program, organization of a steering committee, expansion of membership, and planning initial activities.

The group sees their primary role as improving the status of women in society, democratization of inter-gender relations, improving women's rights, building confidence in a professional world, offering social programs, assisting with employment, education, and helping mothers and their children. The constituting assembly is expected by the end of February as the documentation is almost ready and they have gathered 30 enthusiasts – including one man. Their first activity will be an income-generating project, as they believe the economic situation of rural women is in a critical state. They will help to organize women, skilled in making handcrafts.

Civic Education Initiative Prepares for April Elections

As April elections draw closer, the IFES Civic Education Initiative Program will begin conducting its grassroots level voter education sessions (GOGs) in 4 areas of the country. At USAID/Sarajevo's request, IFES has expanded its program to include the areas of Bijelina in the RS, and Bihac in the Federation in addition to the Doboj (RS), Zenica and Livno areas. The Bijelina office is headed by Velko Miloev, former Project Manager for Doboj, and has a team of 6 civic education trainers. Foster Tucker has returned to Bihac, where he was Project Manager in 1997, and is joined by 4 civic education trainers who had also worked under the IFES project.

From 23-26 January, all 30 IFES civic education trainers gathered in Teslic in the RS to train their new team members and prepare for the GOG phase. The topics included the following: the new rules and regulation for the April elections; the GOG agenda; the registration process and changes specific to the upcoming election; and necessary additional brochures or other materials would be necessary for our pre-election GOGs. As a group, the trainers developed this year's GOG agenda. They will meet with groups of citizens in towns and villages to explain the following information:

- Voter registration and its importance;
- Meaning, importance and details of the municipal elections;
- Party registration procedure;
- Open lists;
- Candidacies of both sexes;
- Polling stations lists;
- Observers;
- Election campaign and role of media; and
- Deadline for election results announcement.

The trainers also designed and developed informational materials that will be distributed at their GOGs. They prepared a general brochure that will include basic information including information for displaced persons and a brochure targeting youth and first-time voters.

Impact Summary

The IFES Civic Education Initiative Program continues to assist citizens throughout the country to help themselves. The women of the local community of Kobas have gained valuable knowledge and skills for organizing to address issues of concern to them and other women. As they gain more experience in these activities they will be able to share their knowledge with other women who want to undertake similar activities in their own communities.

With well-prepared and thorough voter information sessions (GOGs) at a grassroots level, the IFES civic education trainers will help BiH citizens to understand new election procedures and their role in the democratic process. By focusing on specific segments of the population, such as youth and displaced persons, they will help to increase the participation of these groups in the democratic process and gaining representation by elected officials.

MOLDOVA

(continued from p. 1)

On election day, at least two independent domestic observers trained by IFES, LADOM, and the Helsinki Committee were present at each polling station in the county. Additionally, Igor Botan, IFES/Moldova Senior Program Coordinator, and Carrie Ellis, IFES Program Assistant, observed the elections. Although violations were observed, domestic observers, as well as observers designated by political contestants, helped to reduce their impact on the outcome of the elections.

On 26 January, IFES, LADOM, and the Helsinki

Committee of Moldova hosted a press conference with the CEC on the Taraclia elections.

IFES, CEC Cooperate to Amend Electoral Code

In January, IFES presented the Central Election Commission (CEC) with model legislation amending provisions of the Electoral Code that pertain to presidential elections. At issue is clarification of the phrase “votes cast against a candidate” as stated in the 1994 Constitution. The Constitution was adopted with the understanding that voters would indicate their choice by crossing out the names of the candidates for whom they did not want to vote and leave only their candidate selection. The Electoral Code of 1997, however, requires positive voting where the electorate marks the circle next to their candidate preference. Consequently, the phrase “votes cast against a candidates” is open to interpretation and could prevent the election of a presidential candidate in the second round if invalid votes are counted as votes against a candidate. IFES has proposed including an option “vote against both candidates” on the ballot to ensure a candidate is elected. The model amendments also specify procedures for collecting signatures and forming initiative groups.

The CEC has also requested IFES’ assistance in improving the provisions of the Code that regulate campaign financing and the distribution of airtime on private radio and television stations. CEC Secretary Puica asked IFES to provide the CEC with materials from Russia and Ukraine on media coverage



The official successor NGO to IFES/Moldova, the Center for the Development of Participatory Democracy (CDPD), registered with the Ministry of Justice in January.

of elections and campaign finance.

IFES and Political Parties

This month IFES continued to provide assistance to political parties in Moldova. In January, Victor Rosca, For a Democratic and Prosperous Moldova Movement, requested IFES’ expertise in regards to conducting special elections. He was particularly interested in determining if the electoral blocs formed during general elections had to be maintained during special elections or if the parties composing the bloc were permitted to run separately.

Supporting NGOs

Throughout January, IFES/Moldova focused on refining the criteria and legal framework regulating NGOs. IFES met with Petru Gorbunenco, member of the Public Service Certification Commission to discuss the Commission’s recent activity and the Minister of Justice’s recent initiative to develop a draft law on non-commercial organizations. The development of the law will coincide with the debates on the Civil Code.

IFES also met with Natalia Izdebski, Chair of the NGO Registration Department of the Ministry of Justice. IFES proposed that the Public Service Certification Commission establish a new association that would focus on improving the procedures of acquiring public service certification. This association would be created to insure continuity in the process of reforming legislation and procedures governing the activities of NGOs.

IFES also continued its participation in the Electoral School, hosted by the Moldovan NGO Stars of Europe. Lectures focused on provisions in Russian and Moldovan law regulating campaign finance and the mass media’s coverage of the election campaign. Vladimir Botnarenco, Chairman of the Stars of Europe, expressed his appreciation for IFES’ participation in the School and requested IFES’ assistance in creating an administrative school. The Electoral School was founded in November and brings together members of the youth branches of political parties to discuss issues related to elections and the political process.

On 11 January, the Center for the Development of Participatory Democracy (CDPD), the official successor to IFES/Moldova, registered with the Ministry of Justice. CDPD will focus on the implementation of international standards and practices for the development of the electoral process, consolidating

civil society and further developing the local NGO community, and monitoring elections.

Civic Voice

IFES and LADOM finalized an agreement to jointly produce weekly segments of the *Civic Voice* radio program through March 2000. January programming focused on the local elections in Taraclia County. The 23 January edition featured CEC Secretary Puica, IFES/Moldova Senior Program Coordinator Igor Botan, and IFES Program Assistant Carrie Ellis.

IFES is currently working on the 28th edition of the *Civic Voice* newsletter, which will concentrate on issues related to local public administration, NGO development, and mass media.

Impact Summary

Through its cooperation with the CEC, IFES is helping to eliminate ambiguities in provisions of the Electoral Code that regulate presidential elections. Specifically, IFES has proposed amending the ballot to give voters the option of voting against both candidates in the event that a second round is necessary. Consequently, the possibility of neither candidate winning the election would be avoided. Additionally, IFES is assisting to improve the Code so that the CEC can fulfill its functions within the time specified by law. By ensuring that political parties, contestants, and the election commissions understand their role and responsibilities in the process, IFES hopes to reduce the number of administrative errors and election disputes during the upcoming election cycle.

IFES continued to focus efforts on strengthening civil society in Moldova by working with the Public Service Certification Commission to develop clear criteria for NGOs. The creation of permanent association with a clear legal status will ensure that experienced professionals are addressing issues related to the activities of local NGOs. The regular publication and radio broadcast of *Civic Voice* provides citizens, public officials, and NGOs with unbiased information on civic life, public administration, and the role of the mass media. By publishing the newsletter in both Russian and Romanian, IFES ensures that this information is accessible to various segments of the population. In some areas, the *Civic Voice* newsletter is the only source of independent information on political and legal issues.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

New Duma Starts Out with Parliamentary Crisis

On 18 January 2000, the newly elected Russian State Duma held its first meeting, but the initial agenda items of electing the Duma Speaker and distributing committee Chairmanships among the various factions resulted in a walkout by several groups. The walkout was prompted by what some have called an "unholy alliance" between the supposedly right leaning "Unity" bloc and the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) through which a "package deal" was negotiated splitting key Duma positions between them, including the position of Duma Speaker (Gennadiy Seleznyev of the KPRF). In response, the Union of Right Wing Forces (SPS), Yabloko and Fatherland-All Russia (OVR) boycotted the initial Duma sessions and created a "common coordination council" to promote their programs.

The session continued without the boycotting groups, and committee chairmanships were distributed as follows: the KPRF faction acquired 9 committees. The Unity bloc obtained 7 committees. The People's Deputies received 5 committees. The Agrarian-Industrial deputies' group will head two committees, and The LDPR faction was given 1 committee. The remaining committees - on Budget and Tax, on Legislation, and on the CIS Affairs and Russians Abroad - were offered to Russia's Regions, Union of Right-Wing Forces and Fatherland-All Russia, and are being held on reserve pending these parties return to the Duma when it reconvenes on 9 February 2000. No committee chairmanship was given to Yabloko.

On 25 January, OVR, SPS and Yabloko withdrew their demand for a new election for Duma speaker and committee chairmanships. Still, the Right-Centrist minority is determined to make amendments to Duma regulations and to submit a set of bills that the three party groups have been preparing for the Duma's consideration. The chief legislative proposals of the three parties include reforms to the tax code, introduction of alternative service for military conscripts, and abolition of deputies' immunity from prosecution. The three continue to iron out differences on another key piece of legislation - a federal law on private land ownership.

Finally, at a joint meeting on 27 January members of the OVR, SPS, and Yabloko factions decided to begin participating in the State Duma when it reconvenes in early February.

Russian State Duma Alignments

Newly elected deputies - especially those elected as independents in Russia's 225 single-mandate districts - quickly aligned themselves in the days leading up to the Duma's first session. On 18 January, the Duma registered six party factions and four deputy groups. Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), heads the biggest party group with 93 members. Fatherland-All Russia (OVR) has 46 members and is led by former Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov. The Unity bloc, which is supported by Acting President and PM Vladimir Putin, has 81 members and is headed by Boris Gryzlov. The Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) consists of 17 members and is led by the Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Union of Right Forces (SPS), which is headed by Sergei Kirienko, a former Prime Minister, is made up of 32 deputies. The Yabloko party, under Grigory Yavlinsky's leadership, consists of 21 members. There are also the Agrarian (39 deputies), People's Deputies (58), Russian Regions (39), and Solidarity (12) Deputy groups, which do not maintain a party structure but do coordinate their voting. As of mid-January, twelve deputies had remained independent.

IFES Presidential Election Programming

IFES will continue to provide technical assistance to federal and regional election bodies during the Presidential election cycle. Continuing its work during the December 1999 Duma elections, IFES will focus on candidate registration, campaign finance, the role of the media, and adjudication of electoral grievances. IFES will also attempt to assist the CEC in remedying problems having to do with ballot security, mobile voting, and training of sub-level election officials. As always, IFES and its Russian partner, the Institute for Election Systems Development (IESD), will serve as a training and information resource for the diplomatic community, observers, and the Russian mass media.

In the two months before the 26 March election, IFES and the National Press Institute (NPI), in partnership with the CEC, will hold four new seminars under its successful Media Training Project. The 2-day seminars will be organized in Moscow City, Moscow Oblast, Sochi, and Khabarovsk. IFES is currently in the process of finalizing its Presidential Elections and Media Handbook for these seminars as follow up to the highly successful Duma Elections and Media Handbook.

Key Dates for the 2000 Russian Presidential Election	
DATE	ACTIVITY
January 13	Federation Council calls for early presidential elections.
January 14	Public mass media organizations publicize their political advertising fees and reserve paid air time and print area for candidates.
January 17	Central Election Commission remits funds to subject election commissions.
January 25 – February 9	Candidates and election associations submit registration documents to the CEC.
January 25	List of territorial election commissions is approved
February 2 - February 9	Territorial election commissions are formed.
February 9	Voter data compiled and submitted to the CEC.
February 20 – March 24	Campaigning in print publications is allowed.
February 24	SECs remit funds to territorial election commissions; Funds allocated to registered candidates.
February 26 - March 24	Campaigning on TV and radio is allowed.
March 2	Election precincts are formed.
March 5	Voters' lists are compiled.
March 8	Ballots are printed.
March 14	Early voting where allowed.
March 22	Ballots transferred to precinct election commissions.
March 26	Voting day
March 28	Territorial commissions report election results.
March 29	Subject commissions determine election results, mass media are notified within 24 hours.
April 16	Repeat election held if no candidate receives an absolute majority of votes in the first round, or if voter turnout is less than 50%.
May 10	CEC publishes an official bulletin with detailed election results.

Impact Summary

By its ongoing work with the CEC, IFES helps to solidify the basic principles of democracy in Russia. IFES continues to offer training and to contribute timely analyses and recommendations on elections administration, law, and mass media to elections professionals at all levels. The Media Training Project has engaged hundreds of journalists from across the country in a critical discussion of their role in society and politics.

In the months between the Duma contest and the March 2000 presidential election, IFES is actively promoting better management of candidate registration, campaign financing, ballot security, and other important aspects of the election process. In coming weeks, IFES will release a comprehensive report of findings on the Duma elections, and will begin preparing a combined analysis of the entire 1999-2000 elections cycle.

UKRAINE

IFES Cooperates with CEC to Develop International Conference

IFES and the CEC met several times throughout the month of January to discuss the development of and preparations for an upcoming conference entitled "Election of the President of Ukraine: 1999." The conference will evaluate the administration of the recent presidential elections, and will focus on possible improvements to the Ukrainian Electoral Code.

In addition, IFES and the CEC have worked together to compile voter data from individual polling stations throughout Ukraine. Polling station information will be posted on the IFES/Ukraine web site shortly. Although IFES will not be involved in the CEC's preparations for the upcoming referenda, the CEC has already agreed to provide IFES with detailed referenda results to be posted on the web site.

IFES, SOCIS Conduct Field Work on Post-Election Survey

In the last two weeks of January, SOCIS interviewed approximately 1,500 Ukrainian adults for IFES' 2000 post-election survey. The survey will provide IFES with statistical data on Ukrainians' involvement in the political system, opinions of the recent presidential elections, and attitudes toward the current political and economic situation in Ukraine. IFES conducted a similar survey prior to

the presidential elections. The two surveys will allow IFES, USAID, and the international community to analyze the impact of the elections on Ukrainian public opinion. The survey will also help IFES determine future programming activities in Ukraine. A series of presentations to USAID, the U.S. Embassy, and other organizations are being planned once the survey data is collected and finalized.

IFES Continues Civic Education Pilot Program

IFES and Dr. Sergei Riabov of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy continue to monitor the success of IFES' civic education program, which was piloted in three academically rigorous Kyiv high schools. In January, IFES made preparations for a 9 February seminar to bring together teachers whose students participated in the civic education program. The seminar will give teachers the opportunity to discuss the positive and negative outcomes of the program and offer suggestions for improvement. In addition, teachers who have expressed an interest in participating in the program, but who have not yet become involved, were invited to attend the event.

IFES Parliamentary Development Project

IFES continues to work with the Parliamentary Assistance Coordination Group, meeting with various organizations to keep them informed of recent Verkhovna Rada activities. IFES' activities have become particularly crucial in light of the recent division and reorganization within the Rada.

IFES Project Director Participates in Committee of Voters of Ukraine Seminar

IFES Project Director David Earl recently participated in a CVU seminar entitled "The Problems of Improving Election Administration in Ukraine." At the seminar, Mr. Earl highlighted the various differences between Ukrainian and Australian election legislation, and addressed a wide array of topics including political party registration, candidate nomination procedures, voting methods, mass media, election administration, and enforcement of election law violations.

Impact Summary

The administration of a post-election survey will allow IFES, as well as other US and international organizations, to assess public opinion regarding the electoral process and measure Ukrainians' knowledge of and access to information concerning their rights and the law. Such information assists in evaluating the impact of programming and determining areas that need improvement. In addition,

IFES surveys provide a valuable resource to Ukrainians seeking impartial, detailed knowledge of public opinion trends in Ukraine. By administering a survey comparable to those fielded in previous years, IFES will be able to track Ukrainian public opinion to monitor changes and to measure the impact of IFES' programming on the people of Ukraine.

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 allowing 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 mock elections for student government as a result of their enthusiasm for the civic education program. Feedback from a seminar for participating teachers will help IFES determine future areas of improvement and further development of the project.

IFES' upcoming conference on the recent Ukrainian presidential elections will allow Ukrainians and international observers alike to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the 1999 presidential election process, and, most importantly, to determine possible areas for administrative and procedural improvements.

YUGOSLAVIA (Kosovo)

IFES completed an operational plan for eventual elections in Kosovo, under the auspices of the OSCE. IFES cooperated with the Joint Registration Task Force, set up by the UN and OSCE, to develop technically feasible parameters and standards for the civil registration, which has been delayed since the beginning of last summer. After considerable preparatory effort and task sharing negotiations with our on-site partners, IFES is preparing to deploy a team of eight on-site registration and election experts to assist the UN and OSCE to implement the IFES operational plan. The implementation of the operational plan will not only be one of the most technically challenging undertakings IFES in recent memory, it will also be carried out in a constantly shifting political environment. IFES staff also con-

tinues to assist in the development of the Central Election Commission (CEC) 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.

CAUCASUS/CENTRALASIA

ARMENIA

IFES/Armenia Welcomes New Project Manager

At the end of January, Mr. Jeffery Swedberg took over as the new Project Manager for IFES/Armenia. Swedberg will continue to provide support to Armenia's Central Election Commission (CEC) and National Assembly to implement transparent and sustainable elections.

IFES Observes Session on the Preparations of the Amendments to the Electoral Code

On 13 and 20 January the working group on preparations of amendments to the Universal Electoral Code (UEC) carried out its first session. The group, lead by Victor Dallakyan, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Issues of National Assembly, includes members of the CEC and the Constitutional Court. The CEC presented more than thirty recommendations.

IFES was invited to attend and provide analysis on political issues, including the correlation of proportional and majoritarian seats and the formation of election commissions. The Commission requested removing the provision of electoral deposit and electoral fund for the candidates nominated for Community Councils during the elections to local self-governing bodies.

In addition, the working group recommended the date for local elections to be announced 80 days prior to the local elections, rather than the current 60 days. The CEC Chairman recommended equal election conditions during all three level elections.

IFES Follows Results of Syunik Election

The Syunik local elections held on 16 January, were held in 60 communities of the region. The elections coincided with the completion of a three-year term of office of current elected community representatives elected in 1997. Appeals, received from 3 communities, included complaints that some state officials interfered in the election process.

Local Elections Scheduled for March

The Mayor of Yerevan announced that elections to the head of Kanaker-Zeytun community will be held on 12 March in Yerevan. The acting head of the community will hand over his powers to the newly elected head of the community on 13 April. According to the timeline approved by Yerevan REC, nomination of the candidates is to take place from 11-16 February.

Impact Summary

IFES/Armenia continues to play an important role in the development of the electoral process. The participation of IFES in collaborative work with the Committee on State and Legal Issues as it considers reforms to the Universal Electoral Code advances Armenia's future towards efficient and transparent elections.

AZERBAIJAN

Outlook for Parliamentary Elections

Parliamentary elections for the Azerbaijan Milli Majlis are expected in the first half of November 2000. In January, IFES Project Manager Alan Wall continued discussions with presidential apparatus and Central Election Commission (CEC) members on content of the parliamentary elections law currently being drafted, the amendments to the CEC law currently being reviewed by the government, and on proposals from some government circles to amend the law on political parties. All three laws are listed for debate during the spring session of the Milli Majlis, and are expected to be finalized by June 2000.

IFES also had frequent meetings during January with senior officials of major opposition parties Musavat, Popular Front, and Azerbaijan national Independence Party, to discuss their approach to these elections. Major issues discussed related to reform of the CEC, the opposition's proposals for the legal framework for the elections, on which IFES has provided advice on international standards, and methods for ensuring that voting results from all voting stations can be made widely and publicly available shortly after Election Day. IFES has been assisting opposition parties in adopting a multi partisan and realistic approach to these issues.

These major parties have all made it clear that they intend to participate in these elections. There are encouraging signs of potential cooperation between opposition parties in election monitoring, legal framework proposals, and perhaps extending as far as joint nomination of some candidates.

December 1999 Municipal Elections

At the end of January there was no official announcement for the CEC, as required by law, of the results of the municipal elections held on 12 December. In this regard it must be remembered that complete voting results for the October 1998 Presidential Elections have not yet been officially published. As at end January, IFES had been able to obtain from Territorial Election Commissions lists of winning candidates for a very few of the 2665 municipalities. Analysis of these in terms of party support is difficult, as over 70% of the winning candidates in these areas are shown as 'independents' in the information provided. Information from political parties has proven little more comprehensive. Major opposition parties Musavat and Popular front have claimed success for around 1400 and 1500 respectively of their nominated candidates (elections were being held for 21,087 positions). It is not yet clear how many municipal councils have a pro government or pro opposition majority. Opposition parties claim that they have control of some municipalities, perhaps around 100, almost all of which are in small villages. The opposition has not claimed control of any major regional center municipal councils.

The CEC has announced that repeated elections would be held on 26 March, in 76 municipalities where the required minimum turnout for election validity (25% of voters) was not achieved. IFES has been assisting the CEC in preparation for these elections in the review and production of additional copies of Voting Day Guidelines for Precinct Election Commission staff, and voter information posters for use in voting stations.

Implementation of Municipal Structures

During January a number of further laws and decrees governing the structure of municipal actions were officially published including legislation on: municipal service, charters, property, transfer of property, finance, and local opinion surveys. IFES has been translating these laws into English and advising other relevant international NGOs working in Azerbaijan and local NGOs, on their content.

Presidential decrees issued in January specified that:

- Executive authorities were to provide municipalities with appropriate premises from which to operate, by 30 January 2000. As at end month anecdotal evidence suggested many mu-

municipalities were still without premises

- Executive arms of government were to draw up plans for transfer of specific properties to municipalities. It is not clear that municipalities themselves will have any input to these plans

Many municipalities are currently developing their charters for approval by the Ministry of Justice, as the first necessary step towards commencing their operations.

Municipal Education and Training

During January, IFES Project Manager Alan Wall IFES has been discussing with the Azerbaijan President's Office, representative of the European Commission, the Permanent Parliamentary Commission on Local Government, and other international NGOs such as the Open Society Institute appropriate cooperative measures that could be taken to assist new municipal structures to operate effectively and to institute open links between local communities and elected and appointed municipal officers. Intensive discussions on perceived training and civic education needs, potential links with local NGOs in the delivery of education and training services to municipalities, and potential funding facilities and cooperation between international agencies are continuing into February.

Resources Center

Research by IFES/Azerbaijan staff has resulted in the addition of several hundred new electoral and governance related information documents in electronic formats. The center now holds well over 2000 documents including electoral related laws, election manuals, examples of election forms and procedures, election observation reports and recommendations, anti corruption initiatives, public management reform and performance issues. It is intended to expand the center even further during 2000, and with the assistance of local partner NGOs make resource center materials more easily available outside Baku.

Impact Summary

In cooperation with the CEC, IFES continues the production of voter education materials for the repeated municipal elections in March. In preparation for the November parliamentary elections, IFES works with the CEC on translations of municipal laws and decrees and opposition proposals for parliamentary election law. In addition, IFES held extensive discussions with opposition and political

parties on municipal and parliamentary elections issues and with presidential officials and CEC representatives to discuss November elections.

GEORGIA

Support To the Presidential Elections

Continuing its close cooperation with the CEC, during the month of January IFES/Georgia actively worked with the commission and with USAID to assess the needs and priorities of the national election body for the presidential elections set for 9 April. Based on the joint IFES/CEC activities for the recent parliamentary elections, IFES will continue to provide technical assistance to the CEC in several areas, including:

- support to the CEC in its development of an election day procedures manual to be used by the 2700 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs).
- development of election regulations with the CEC;
- design and implementation of the CEC training program for the PECs;
- support to the official CEC voter education program;
- provision of commodities to increase the transparency of the elections.

March Complaint Adjudication Workshops

IFES/Georgia has begun working with the CEC, the Supreme Court of Georgia, and the Judicial Training Center in the preparation of a series of workshops on the adjudication of election complaints. The workshops will be held in Tbilisi on 7-10 March and will include two U.S. Department of Justice officials, Mr. Craig Donsanto, of the Election Crimes Division and Mr. Barry Weinberg, of the Civil Rights Division.

Donsanto and Weinberg will expose workshop participants to international standards of adjudication and share their extensive experience on election complaints adjudication in the United States. As a result, it is hoped that the participants will have a better understanding of the process of adjudication electoral complaints and will become aware of the specific areas in the Georgian legislation on this subject requiring revision. Both the Head of the Supreme Court of Georgia, Lado Chanturia, and the CEC Chairman, Jumber Lominadze, have expressed great interest and appreciation to IFES' role and assistance in the organization of these workshops.

New Additions to IFES/Georgia

In January, IFES/Georgia welcomed Michael Svetlik as Deputy Project Manager. Previously a Program Officer in IFES/Washington, Svetlik has considerable election experience in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. In 1998, Svetlik opened the IFES field office in Tbilisi and also served on-site in Azerbaijan for IFES in early 1999.

In addition, Revaz Kakulia has joined IFES/Georgia as a Legal Advisor. Kakulia holds a degree in law from Tbilisi State University and a Masters in Law from the University of Minnesota School of Law. Kakulia will undertake IFES/Georgia legislative advisory work with both the CEC and Parliament.

Impact Summary

During the month of January, IFES has focused its efforts on the definition of the joint activities with the CEC for the forthcoming presidential elections. Using the experience gained through the October 1999 parliamentary elections, IFES technical assistance activities will lead to improvements in the general administration of the presidential elections and, based on the findings of its technical observation of the parliamentary elections, IFES will ensure that electoral procedures for the Presidential elections are applied correctly and consistently throughout Georgia. The CEC commitment to adhere and adopt uniform procedures will help to raise the level of confidence of the electorate in the process limiting the potential for frauds and election malpractices.

KAZAKHSTAN

Civic Education and Curriculum Development Continues

IFES received an official review of its civic education materials from the Altynsarin Methodological Institute of Education. According to the Institute's final decision, the textbook "Civic Education: A Primer" and all accompanying materials for the course on democracy have been approved and recommended for publication as an additional subject in secondary schools, lyceums and gymnasiums. As written in the review, "the textbook and methodical materials for high schools contains much information of sociological, political, philosophic and legal character. The timeliness and importance of the course "Civic Education" is beyond doubt. This course of civic education will help the students in senior grades to understand the issues concerning citizenship, state and power, and the dynamics of civil society. Materials are oriented to create stu-

dent activities in high schools, and it will help them understand the main concepts and definitions of political systems, legal norms and economics." One critical recommendation is that IFES should work on adapting the textbook to include more focus on Kazakhstani history and individual and human rights, introducing "national components" of education and methodology. Should the course and materials receive a favorable review by teachers, school directors, students and parents, as expected, IFES will work with the Ministry of Education and private scholars to make necessary revisions and adaptations to the course materials in time for introduction nationwide in the Fall.

In January, IFES/Kazakhstan representatives visited two pilot schools to observe how the IFES civics course has been received by students. Over 34 pilot schools formally began using the course materials in mid-November. IFES/Kazakhstan Country Coordinator Marat Bigaliev, together with USAID/CAR Director of Democracy Transition Alex Newton, visited gymnasium # 46. Lidya Rybakova, a teacher at the gymnasium and close collaborator of IFES who attended the teacher-training seminar last August (and participated as an IFES nominee on civic education study tour to the U.S.), led the session. IFES and USAID representatives observed the last lesson from the series of "State and Political Power". During the lesson, 11th grade students presented the results of their research projects conducted during the previous three classes. Research subjects included "Types of Political Systems", "The Structure of Government – Comparative", and "The Structure of Government – Kazakhstan". Five groups presented reports on different topics. While researching, students had to participate in group activities, undertake individual assignments and initiatives, and develop analytical skills to further explore additional topics. Students used a variety of types of research techniques such as brainstorming, interviews (broadcast by the local TV station at gymnasiums), surveys, mass media monitoring, and more. At the end of each group presentation, presenters were questioned by their peers and teachers. Students explained why they choose their topics, what special challenges they faced while researching, whether their findings were surprising, etc. Practical assignments and interactive methods of teaching from the IFES teacher's manual proved very useful and productive for a variety of textbook themes and topics. Students were able to go beyond a basic understanding of the material and learn to analyze and forecast results, discern the differences, and see the

advantages and disadvantages of political processes. Finally, students were able to improve their oral presentation and speaking skills as well as their ability to ask questions.

By invitation of the pilot school-gymnasium #38 from Almaty Oblast, IFES' Marat Bigaliev and Baghlan Yerzhan observed how the IFES textbook has been introduced in 11th grade classes. Leila Narymova, a teacher of civics, has been using the IFES materials in accordance with the educational plan of the school-gymnasium since November 1999. In this school, 111 students are studying civic education using the IFES textbooks. During the observation, students worked in small groups, participated in discussions and group presentations on individual topics. IFES has been invited to attend sessions from other pilot schools as part of an ongoing monitoring program prior to conclusion of the pilot semester in mid-March

Coordination with Local Civic Education Organizations

IFES met with a number of local civic education and youth organizations to develop joint projects targeting youth civic education. IFES met with representatives of the *Association of Initiative Schools* (AIS) the *Association of Young Leaders* (AYL), the *Youth Information Service of Kazakhstan* (YISK) and the *Civic Education Project* (CIP) to discuss possible cooperative efforts. Discussions included ideas for Student Action Committees, town hall meetings, further continuation of mock election initiatives for higher-level students, and other issues that would help youth to better understand the fundamentals of democratic society, the workings of local government, and the non-governmental sector. YIS provided IFES with a draft plan of a project called "We Choose Democracy" for secondary school students. "We Choose Democracy" seeks to enhance the level of student participation through the consolidation of experience and participation in social activities. The proposal closely matches the concept of IFES Student Action Committees included in the draft 2000 workplan, and offers a potential high-impact, hands-on natural extension of the IFES civic education pilot course.

Impact Summary

Progress continues on the civics pilot course, now being taught in more than 37 Kazak and Russian language secondary schools throughout the country. With the Academy of Sciences Altynsarin Institute rendering a positive review of the curriculum materials, IFES was encouraged that parallel reviews

being conducted by individual schools would also yield a favorable recommendation. As IFES prepares to improve the materials for a second edition for possible nationwide introduction in the fall, plans intensified in January for introduction of other civic education initiatives for school students. IFES' local NGO contacts will play an important role in all phases of its civic education work, and through this partnership will hopefully gain greater recognition by local governments and educational departments.

KYRGYZSTAN

Election Administrator Training

Electoral Administrative Training of all Oblast, Territorial and Precinct Election Commission Chairpersons was completed. The training sessions were based on the revised election administrator/poll worker handbook developed by IFES and the CEC in advance of the February parliamentary elections. IFES invited USAID representatives to attend various training sessions both in Bishkek and regional centers. USAID commented on the success of the training sessions and expressed satisfaction with the positive and progressive attitude demonstrated by many election commission members. The final round of training involving members of Precinct Election Commissions will be completed in the two weeks immediately preceding polling day.

Election Dispute Adjudication

The draft of the Election Dispute Adjudication Manual was completed and then delivered to the Central Election Commission for review. During its review, the CEC made only a small number of minor amendments. These amendments were later added by IFES to the text of the Manual. A conference for training judges in the use of the manual will be undertaken between February 14-16 and will be a joint effort between IFES, ABA, the Judicial Training Center and the CEC.

Voter Education

Print Media

A poster and brochure encouraging polling day participation and discouraging multiple voting have been approved for printing. The project is a cooperative effort between IFES and the local *NGO Coalition*, who agreed to collaborate on an overall theme of addressing why and how people should vote. The brochures also contain questions and answers on election procedures, and target local communities and community leaders in rural areas.

200,000 copies of the brochures are to be printed in three languages (Russian, Kyrgyz and Uzbek). The posters give specific information to particular groups such as soldiers, students and hospital patients. 1,000 copies will be printed in two languages (Russian and Kyrgyz). The distribution of the posters and the leaflets will be handled by the regional offices of the *NGO Coalition*.

Broadcast Media-Television

The two IFES Public Service Announcements have been delivered to national and regional television stations. The *NGO TV Crossroads* completed the production of the two TV spots (on participation and multiple voting; in three languages) on Monday January 24. IFES Voter Education Advisor Sébastien Drans directed the entire process of production and editing of the spots. The Chairman of the Central Election Commission, Sulayman Imanbayev, approved the spots and recommended that National Television as well as the Bishkek-based private station *Pyramid* broadcast them for free and as often as possible. Meanwhile, on Thursday 27, Internews distributed videocassettes of the IFES spots to the 10 main TV stations in the country.

Broadcast Radio-Radio

A series of radio spots on the election are currently being produced. The spots consist of a series of questions posed to an official of the Central Election Commission for clarification. The content of the messages, drafted by IFES, has been submitted to the CEC for review. Meanwhile the local *NGO TV Crossroads* has agreed to produce the spots. The format of questions and answers was designed to allow for a fast process of production of the spots.

IFES Sponsors Students' Forum and Candidate Debate

An IFES sponsored Students' Forum "Students and Democratic Elections" was held on January 28–30. The main objective of the Forum was to get young students involved into the democratic process. There were seventy participants (the most interested and active students of all faculties of the Kyrgyz State National University-KSNU) who were divided proportionally into groups representing key categories of election participants: candidates, political parties, election officials, observers and mass media. Four hundred students at the University participated in the process as voters.

On Election Day 4 polling stations were set up; one on each floor of dormitory No. 5. Each polling sta-

tion had approximately 100 voters. For 2 days before the elections candidates' debates were conducted (one day for political parties and another day for the other candidates). The voters were well informed about candidates' platforms and made a conscious choice. Tracy Atwood, USAID Country Representative and Will Melara of USAID/Bishkek were present at the counting of votes and expressed their satisfaction with the high level of proficiency and interest shown by the participants.

The event was widely covered by national mass media – three TV companies (including the state television) – showed the opening ceremony in the news the same day with one of them (KOORT) filming IFES/Kyrgyzstan Country Coordinator Galina Sergunina as she was training election officials. The local print media also covered the event. At the closing ceremony on January 31 all the participants were given certificates signed by IFES and KSNU.

Impact Summary

The completion of the Election Commission Chairperson trainings mean that each polling station has in place a trained team leader who is now able to pass election administration knowledge on to the individual Precinct Commission members. The Election Dispute Adjudication Manual will be used as a basis for training and strengthening the judiciary in acceptable standards of election dispute adjudication. The Voter Education Program is currently raising voter awareness of both the importance of voting individually and using one's own vote to assist in building a stronger democracy. This program is also assisting in strengthening the various NGOs with whom IFES is working to produce the program, and elevating their status as credible private counterparts to the Central Election Commission.

TAJIKISTAN

IFES Continues Work on Polling Station Commission Procedures Manual

IFES, in cooperation with the Central Committee on Elections and Referenda (CCER), is developing a polling station procedures manual to be used during the February 27 Parliamentary elections in Tajikistan. The CCER approved the final draft of the manual, which was translated into Tajik in January. IFES/Tajikistan aims to submit the manual for printing by the beginning of February. When completed, the manual will serve as a reference on polling station procedures for pollworkers nationwide on Election Day. The manual is based on similar handbook

produced by IFES/Kyrgyzstan and amended for use in Tajikistan by IFES Project Manager Frank Vassallo.

IFES/Tajikistan Prepares for February Elections

Parliamentary elections in Tajikistan have been confirmed for 27 February. Six registered political parties –the Peoples Democratic Party; - the Islamic Renaissance Party; the Party of Justice; the Democratic Party (Almaty Platform); the Communist Party; and Adolatkoh submitted their list of candidates for the elections. The nomination of candidates to Parliament is complete and the registration of single mandate candidates is expected to be completed by 6 February. A UNMOT/OSCE Joint Observation Mission has been assembled, with OSCE supplying observers and specialists and UNMOT contributing experts and logistics to the long-term observer teams. IFES will be forming its own observer teams to monitor Election Day polling in Dushanbe, Khojand and Kurgan-Tyube.

The CCER submitted a draft document title “50 Questions and Answers” related to the elections and intended for use by candidates, parties, election officials, and voters. IFES agreed to help print and distribute the documents nationwide as part of its poll-worker training and voter education initiatives.

It is believed that the CCER document, which serves as an electoral law companion, will greatly improve the overall framework for the parliamentary elections and provide additional clarification for election administrators at all levels. One deficiency in the law noted by IFES and the international partners, however, has to do with the lack of a provision allowing participation of neutral, non-partisan domestic observers. This major oversight threatened to compromise transparency and the integrity of the elections, and it was hoped the CEER would rethink this issue in February prior to the holding of elections. As such, only party or candidate observers, in addition to international observers, are allowed to receive accreditation.

Political Party Development Activities Continue

Philip Griffin, IFES Political Party Expert, delivered a presentation at training session sponsored by NGO partner *Tradition and Modernity*. The program was geared toward training women candidates in how to prepare for the upcoming parliamentary elections, and was an extension of the IFES – Traditions 1999 “School of Political Leadership”

project. Griffin’s presentation, “The Elements of a Campaign Plan,” was followed by a spirited question-and-answer session. Additional trainings will continue up until the elections. Phil Griffin finalized details of a three-city political party/media relations round table series, set to take place in early February. The Tajik “First Press Club” agreed facilitate media coverage and the participation of journalists in the sessions, which will discuss how parties can use their rights under the law to conduct voter outreach through television and radio. Dr. Muzaffar Olimov was selected to chair the Dushanbe session with Dr. Asherboi Imomov serving as moderator for the Kurgan-Tyube round table. A moderator for Khojand was not confirmed, as the local government in Leninabad Oblast had yet to grant its support. USAID and the U.S. Embassy were apprised of progress in organizing the events.

Election Dispute Adjudication

IFES Election Dispute Adjudication Consultant Lamar Cravens arrived in Dushanbe in the beginning of January to develop a Training Manual for resolution of election disputes in Tajikistan. Together with ABA/CEELI, IFES hopes to train judges in resolving electoral complaints by the mechanism outlined in the new election law and provide each judge with a “how to” handbook containing all relevant legislation, including the election laws and criminal code. Cravens further recommended that judges from each region of Tajikistan be sent to a training conference in Bishkek for a similar project being sponsored in Kyrgyzstan by IFES, ABA and the Judicial Training Center. IFES and ABA discussed plans to facilitate this exchange, pending approval of the Head of the Supreme Court of Tajikistan.

Voter Education Project

IFES Voter Education Specialist Joaquin Bernardo arrived in January to begin the electronic and print voter education project for the parliamentary elections. Mr. Bernardo attended a training workshop in Kubishevskiy district arranged by UNMOT, who is also working on voter education initiatives. IFES is working with the CEER to develop Public Service Announcements for television and radio, sponsor a televised debate involving representatives of political parties, print posters emphasizing the importance of voting, and prepare a “party perspectives” bulletin in which all political parties will be asked six identical questions. The bulletin, which will also include general election information, will be

printed and distributed to voters' households. Bernardo reviewed all drafts for the television and radio spots and contacted a TV company in Khond to clarify details of one proposal of cooperation. He also designed initial poster schematics with Frank Vassallo and completed design and painting of the logos for the posters.

Election Observer Training

IFES, together with local NGO partners *SHARQ*, *Traditions and Modernity*, and *Modar* submitted a proposal to USAID and the U.S. State Department to conduct training of political party and independent candidate observers. Given the absence of regulations permitting independent domestic observers, focus of the project has been modified to increase the professionalization of "partisan" electoral monitoring in the hope that overall transparency will be heightened. IFES began preparing an observation handbook to use in possible training sessions in February prior to the Majlisi Oli elections.

Impact Summary

IFES activity intensified in January in preparation for the February Parliamentary elections. Balancing its work between the CEER, judiciary, media, local NGOs and political parties, IFES sought to increase the amount of electoral information reaching the population, promote professional election administration, observation, and grievance resolution, and assist all political parties in pursuing constituent outreach strategies. Activities have been coordinated with other international assistance providers under USAID auspices, and with the United Nations and OSCE. A lack of legislative guarantees and governmental support left IFES-proposed voter registration and election observer training projects in peril, though a proposal to train party and candidate observers would help contribute to transparency of the elections, which is one of the stated goals of the CCER.

UZBEKISTAN

Curriculum Development Project in Nukus

Karakalpak Minister of Education Sultanov expressed his support for implementation of the civic education course in the participating pilot secondary schools in Nukus. Sultanov reinforced his eagerness to further develop the textbook to meet the specific cultural and historical dynamics of Karakalpakstan and Uzbekistan. As a follow up to a teacher-training seminar in Nukus conducted by IFES and the local NGO *Renaissance* in November, teachers

in participating schools have already conducted student mock elections in their classes in which students formed political parties and competed in school wide student body elections. High student interest in the project was enhanced by discussions of the national elections taking place in Uzbekistan and local elections in Karakalpakstan. The mock elections conducted in December and January were prelude to the introduction of the textbook and accompanying materials on democracy, which began to be used in January at the beginning of the second academic semester. This experimental course will continue through the remainder of the school year, with evaluations and ongoing monitoring determining whether it will be recommended as a mandatory course for the 2000-01 school year. IFES will work with the Ministry of Education and *Renaissance* to conduct performance monitoring and, as necessary, adaptation and editing of all materials.

New USAID/Tashkent Democratization Officer Jennifer Brick visited Nukus on January 11-12 and held meetings with *Renaissance* leader Gulnara Dosumova, Minister of Education Sultanov, Mr. Kosymbetov from the Ministry of Education, teachers, and participants of the IFES teacher training seminar. Brick's main objective was to get acquainted with IFES' local partners in the curriculum project, assess IFES' role, and evaluate the first steps of the curriculum development pilot project in the Republic of Karakalpakstan.

IFES/Uzbekistan Country coordinator Lola Maksudova held a follow up meeting with Jennifer Brick, who stated she was pleasantly surprised by Minister Sultanov's support for the curriculum development project. Brick encouraged the continuation of the project began under the 1999 workplan, and challenged IFES to use its resources creatively in the critical pilot phase of the project.

IFES' draft 2000 work plan was also discussed at the meeting. Lola Maksudova shared some of IFES' ideas regarding an initiative to create "Student Action Committees" in Samarkand and Kokand. The "Committees," to be created in select schools in partnership with local NGOs and school directors, would match student leaders with newly-elected members of the local government to create one-on-one contact and give students hands-on experience in the work of local officials. A strategy for addressing issues of concern to the students would be created along with an implementation plan involving local government and the private sector, thus

exposing students to the workings of government and civil society. IFES also plans to promote the concept in Nukus, where it would serve as a natural extension of the curriculum project. Brick expressed support for the idea as well as a proposal to conduct a Democracy Summer Camp in Nukus, modeled after the IFES 1999 national camp. Brick recommended seeking partnerships for the summer camp with other international donors in order to defray costs.

USAID Round Table Discussions

Lola Maksudova participated in a USAID Democracy Round Table in Tashkent headed by USAID/CAR Mission Director Glenn Anders. The goal of the meeting was to discuss the main objectives of USAID's activities for the year 2000. Due to the lack of government-level democratic reforms in Uzbekistan, USAID is orienting its programs towards citizens in order to build more democratic culture through the sustainable development of civil society. This development would be achieved through education, training and professional exchanges. Anders indicated programming in democracy would be more regionalized and oriented towards the Ferghana Valley and Karakalpakstan, along with other select regions. Teresa Ware, USAID/Tashkent Country Director, added that at present USAID programs in Uzbekistan are oriented mainly towards health and civil society.

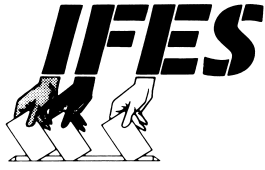
Cooperation with Local NGOs

Lola Maksudova spoke with Victoria Ashirova from the Samarkand NGO "Ayol," which specializes in women's and youth issues. The two discussed IFES' proposed Student Action Committee Project, with Ashirova promising to develop an implementation plan for the project in Samarkand. IFES views "Ayol" as a strong local partner NGO with whom it can work on the Action Committees and other future projects.

Impact Summary

IFES/Uzbekistan continues to focus its efforts on civic education. With the approval of Minister of Education of Karakalpakstan Sultanov to continue the implementation of the civic education courses in the pilot schools in Nukus, IFES and its local partners will monitor progress of the project throughout the rest of the school year and make preparations for editing and translation of all materials.

Jennifer Brick, the new USAID democratization officer in Tashkent, has met with many local leaders regarding curriculum development, which is drawing growing interest. IFES is encouraged by USAID's initial support for the 2000 workplan, which is focused primarily on civic education for young persons. In February IFES will release the results of its November 1999 Public Opinion Survey of democracy and civics, conducted in select regions of Uzbekistan, to underscore its strategy for continued educational sector assistance.



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

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