

Bosnian Inter-Entity Leadership Conference Deemed a Success

On 23 October the IFES Civic Education Initiative Program held its first Inter-Entity Leadership Conference. This was the first time leaders of civic activist groups (GAINs) have come together from Doboj in the Republika Srpska (RS) and Zenica and Livno in the BiH Federation. Thirty representatives from these GAINs had the opportunity to share their experiences working with their municipal council and to discuss entity laws on local government with guest speakers from the RS and BiH Federation. The conference proceeded devoid of political connotations that only further contributed to the productiveness of this event. This conference was a definite stepping-stone toward putting the needs and interests of people before the ethnic or political goals in this country.



Husein Kasumovic, LC leader from Travnik, addresses the participants of IFES' first Inter-Entity Leadership Conference on 23 October, 1999.

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The overall atmosphere was relaxed and grew friendly as the participants were divided into five groups to discuss one of the following topics: working with municipal and cantonal officials; working with international organizations; working with IFES; the need for the local community structure; and motivating citizens. Conclusions from these working groups include the following:

- More effort needs to be invested in encouraging officials to become more involved in solving problems in the field;
- Municipal officials should visit local communities more often and estimate the situation, in order to be better able to approach international organizations about potential projects;
- It is necessary to first inform citizens then, once they know the problems and how the process works, they will more likely motivate themselves;

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EUROPE

ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN OFFICIALS

ACEEEO Addresses Voter Education

The ACEEEO held its annual conference in Bratislava, Slovakia from 6-8 October 1999. The event was co-hosted by the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, the ACEEEO, and IFES. Senior election officials and elections experts from throughout Europe and the United States gathered to discuss the decline in voter participation throughout the region.

Mr. George Smith of the Association of Election Administrators (AEA) in the UK discussed trends in declining voter participation in Europe and IFES' Ed Morgan and his team presented their grass roots voter education activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Election officials from Russia, Ukraine, Croatia, Latvia and Romania also presented their own experiences with civic education activities in their countries as case studies.

Participants then broke into small groups to share their own experiences with declining voter participation and to identify solutions. The groups identified the following as the primary reasons for declining voter participation: belief that their vote is ineffective; economic problems; and dissatisfaction with parties/candidates. Some of the effective measures undertaken by election officials in the region included: television, radio and print media campaigns; cooperation with NGOs; televised candidate debates; public advertisements; and campaigns targeting first time voters. Solutions identified included:

- Election officials should provide more and better quality information with regard to the electoral process taking into account differences among urban and rural populations;
- Legislation should be improved to allow for increased accessibility of special needs voters;
- Parties and candidates should establish a permanent dialogue with citizens to improve their understanding of the role of elections and that of their elected representatives;
- Civic education should be encouraged in schools-the electoral process should become part of their everyday lives; and
- More resources should be dedicated to encouraging greater participation of minority groups.

IFES also conducted a survey on civic education among the conference participants. The results of this survey and the working groups will be published in the final report. The report will also be available from the IFES F. Clifton White Resource Center and the ACEEEO Documentation Center.

IFES and ACEEEO Meet the President of Slovakia

On 8 October, IFES President Richard Soudriette, Zoltan Toth, Secretary General of ACEEEO, Stanislav Becica, Director General of Internal Administration, MoI SR, and Livia Skultetyova, Head of the Elections Department of the MoI SR (and current president of the ACEEEO Executive Board) met with President Rudolf Schuster to discuss the growth of democracy in the region and ACEEEO's efforts to strengthen it. President Schuster endorsed ACEEEO's efforts and affirmed the Slovak Republic's commitment as an active member in the Association. He has also asked Jan Kubis, Secretary General of the OSCE, to support the Association and call on it as a partner in democratization efforts throughout the region.

ACEEEO Accepts New Members

The ACEEEO now includes the Association of Election Officials in Bosnia-Herzegovina (AEOBiH), the CEC of Republic of Armenia and the CEC of Republic of Georgia among its members. The three new members signed the charter, along with Romania, on the last day of the conference after their applications were unanimously accepted by the Association's General Assembly.

The increased interest in membership in the ACEEEO attests to the fact that election officials from throughout the region recognize the value in exchanging ideas and information on a regular basis with their colleagues. Through its conferences and other activities, the ACEEEO can provide training and up-to-date information to its members to help them resolve issues they face in ensuring free and fair elections and participation in the democratic process for their fellow citizens.

IFES, ACEEEO, and University of Essex to Establish New Election Resource

IFES, the ACEEEO, and the University of Essex have formed a unique partnership to collect election laws and results from Central and Eastern Europe dating back to 1990. The information will be made available through a user-friendly, web-based data-

base. Lawmakers, policymakers, and other experts will soon have this useful comparative information in one, easy to access, location. Its electronic format will also allow the database to be expandable and updated over time.

ALBANIA

Prime Minister Majko Resigns, Meta to Replace Him

Prime Minister Pandeli Majko formally resigned on 26 October following his defeat to former Premier Fatos Nano for the leadership of the Socialist Party. The two have been at odds over control of the party and Majko had threatened to resign prior to the vote if he did not win the party position. President Rexhep Meidani named Deputy Prime Minister Ilir Meta to replace Majko as Prime Minister.

New Government Named

Mr. Meta promptly named his new government a few days after being named Prime Minister, maintaining much of the same composition as Majko's government. It is anticipated that members will be approved by Parliament in December. Some changes in the cabinet's composition are the elimination of the Ministry of Legislative Reform and Relations with Parliament and the breaking up of the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Public Works into two separate Ministries.

IFES Programs with the Government of Albania

IFES has three initiatives with the Government of Albania: preparation of a new election code, institutional development of the Central Election Commission (CEC), and preparation of a new list of voters. In the pursuit of these initiatives, IFES has established a working group to advise on the drafting of a new electoral code, meets regularly with the members of the CEC, meets frequently with relevant officials of the Government of Albania and consults regularly with other international organizations and selected embassies on the electoral code, the CEC and the development of a major voter registration project proposal.

Progress on the Development of the Electoral Code

The IFES working group on the electoral code was provided with a set of major proposals for inclusion in the new electoral code during October in anticipation of a relatively quick completion of the first major draft of the code during the month of November. Working group progress was slowed due to

CANDIDATE	CABINET POSITION
Ilir Meta	Prime Minister
Makbule Ceco	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labor and Social Affairs
Spartak Poci	Minister of Public Order
Luan Hajdaraga	Minister of Defense
Paskal Milo	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ilir Panda	Minister of Justice
Anastas Angjeli	Minister of Finance
Zef Preci	Minister of Public Economy and Privatization
Lufter Xhuveli	Minister of Agriculture
Ermelinda Meksi	Minister of Foreign Economic Cooperation and Trade
Ingrid Shuli	Minister of Transport
Arben Demeti	Minister of Public Works
Et'hem Ruka	Minister of Education and Science
Edi Rama	Minister of Culture, Youth, Sports
Leonard Solis	Minister of Health
Bashkim Fino	Minister of Local Government
Prec Zogaj	State Minister under the Prime Minister

changes within the Government of Albania at the level of the Council of Ministers and through the elimination of the Ministry of Legislative Reform which was previously responsible for drafting the code. While the working group will continue the drafting progress, it awaits the decision from the government who will now have authority over the drafting of the code.

Institutional Development of the CEC

During October, the CEC members began, through encouragement from IFES, to meet with the President of Albania to encourage a resolution to their transient status and become formally established. At the same time, in an attempt to put some public pressure on the Council of Ministers to act on this

issue, the President of Albania publicly released a copy of a letter sent to him by IFES in July 1999 requesting quick action to ensure the institutional and legal establishment of the CEC. As a result of this action and following meetings with the CEC, the new Deputy Prime Minister initiated a number of meetings to resolve these issues.

Through IFES it was made possible for two members of the CEC to attend the Association of Central and East European Election Officials (ACEEEO) annual conference in Bratislava, Slovakia. IFES continues to seek out training experiences for CEC members.

Voter Registration

The third major activity IFES is undertaking in Albania is voter registration. IFES has been working with other international organizations and the Albanian government to develop a program that can be accomplished for next year's local elections. IFES has played a key role in ensuring that the project has a strong management structure involving the new CEC, is open to a wide base of international donors and coordinated internally within the government of Albania. Initial plans are being made for a voter registration planning team to travel to Albania in November and work with donors, registration partners, and other groups to develop the registration strategy.

Impact Summary

Through IFES involvement and leadership in the drafting of a new electoral code, the establishment of the CEC and the initiation of a voter registration program, a major objective of institution building within the Government of Albania is being pursued. As each of these activities come closer and closer to being a reality, the attainment of our major objective also becomes possible. The thinking and strategizing necessary for the new democratic election institutions to be developed is occurring in the context of the three major activities mentioned above and the drafting of the necessary legal frameworks.

While attaining these objectives are important in their own right, the work IFES is performing has a much wider impact nationwide. The issue of a stable, democratic electoral system is a major condition of the Friends of Albania for future assistance to be provided to Albania. Consequently, the work of IFES will have a significant impact on decisions of international donors as they consider economic

and social investments opportunities.

BELARUS

1999 Public Opinion Survey Released

In October, the 1999 Survey of Public Opinion in Belarus was released and distributed. The survey examines public opinion on several issues, including the current state of affairs, the proposed union between Belarus and Russia, and the elections staged in May by political parties opposed to the rule of President Alexander Lukashenko. It also looks at the level of public information available and the impact of the mass media. The survey provides a better understanding of the public's attitudes toward Belarus' current political and economic situation. Furthermore, the data can be compared with similar information from other countries, such as Ukraine and Russia, to develop a clearer understanding of the impact of political, economic, and social transitions in the former Soviet Union.

The survey will be translated into Russian and distributed to regional media sources. It will also be posted in English on the IFES web site.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (BiH)

(Continued from p. 1)

- Grass roots education should be expanded to a larger audience- not only through local community leaders and citizens meetings such as those that the IFES Civic Education Program uses.

Aside from the conclusions that each group presented, it was most important that these civic leaders openly shared their experiences with each other despite their ethnic differences. Izmir Hadziavdic, BiH Federation expert on local government, stated that this was the best conference on this topic he had attended this year for the reason that the participants were local civic leaders at the grassroots level who deal daily with the implementation of this legal framework.

Draft Election Law Presented to Parliament

On 21 October, Amb. Robert Barry, Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH and Mr. Francois Froment-Meurice, the Chairman of the Election Law Commission, formally presented the draft Election Law to BiH Parliamentary Assembly officials in Sarajevo, following the Peace Implementation Council's Steering Board approval of the draft. Messrs Barry and Froment-Meurice called on the BiH Parliamen-

tary Assembly to take up the parliamentary process of the law immediately - calling the law one of the most critical steps forward in the democratization process for BiH. Copies were also provided to the members of the BiH presidency as well as the Co-Chairs and Vice-Chair of the BiH Council of Ministers. The BiH Parliamentary Assembly is expected to take up the Election law in the next several weeks.

The draft was prepared by Bosnian and international experts from Europe and the United States, including IFES Election Law Specialist Jessie Pilgrim, in a joint effort by the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and the OSCE Mission to BiH. Both OHR and OSCE note the importance of the passage of this law through the BiH parliament for BiH becoming a member of the Council of Europe.

The new draft law incorporates the following: an open list proportional representation system for all levels of elections; the preferential vote system for the presidency and cross-entity support for the BiH presidency; multi-member constituencies; a requirement that at least one-third of the candidates' list is of a second gender; a preservation of voting rights of refugees and displaced persons; proportional election of the municipal and executive board members and cantonal governments; campaign spending limits and financial disclosure requirements; and a provision for citizens' observation of the elections and a ban on paid political advertising on television and radio.

BiH citizens through their direct participation in OSCE-sponsored Election Law Information Campaign activities conducted by IFES Public Information Specialist Elise Shoux and IFES Media Advisor Charlotte Souibes provided many of the electoral innovations included in the draft election law by the working group. IFES Legislative Awareness Specialist Jean Lavoie worked closely with BiH organizations to solicit citizens' input.

Citizens overwhelmingly asked for more accountability of elected members in municipal councils and parliaments, more women's participation in politics, and more effective representation by their elected officials at the local to national levels. The OSCE will continue its outreach campaign to the public as the law progresses through the BiH parliamentary process.

Election Law Information Campaign (ELIC)

In order to inform the BiH citizens about the Election Law and support passage in the BiH Parliament, IFES Media Advisor Charlotte Souibes has produced a series of print and electronic media products. One of the main incentives is that, by passing the law in the Parliament, BiH will increase its chances to enter the Council of Europe. The media products as currently scheduled to run from 1 November until mid-February 2000.

A poster brochure has been designed to present the highlights of the Election Law and the basic steps of lobbying, including office numbers of all elected representatives in the BiH parliament. 350,000 brochures will blanket the BiH territory and be inserted in BiH newspapers and magazines.

Souibes and her team have also produced a billboard for ELIC, that will be displayed throughout the BiH territory for the month of November. This take-off billboard bears the message "The Way to Europe Depends on You". A new billboard is planned every month until February.

In addition, the team has set up an electronic media campaign to support the proposed election law along the same lines. Animated cartoon video spots, the first of this kind in BiH, will feature a main character that personifies the campaign for the Election Law. The spots explain the main points of the election law as well as encourage BiH citizens to lobby their representatives and hold them accountable as elected representatives.

Nationalization Program Moves Forward

IFES Election Administration Advisor Tom Parkins is working with the nationalization project team on a draft organization plan for the BiH Election Commission Secretariat. The main challenges of this process are maintaining citizens' trust in the election system and managing the logistical and financial aspects of administering free and fair elections. A lack of sufficient infrastructure creates many difficulties. Functional support of the electoral system such as equipment and material procurement and transport, typically provided by government even in emerging democracies, is almost nonexistent in BiH and must be developed within the election administration unit or through international assistance.

Bosnians are slated to take control of election administration after municipal elections in April 2000 and administer general elections in October 2000.

The international role is to be reduced to one of monitoring and advising the new Election Commission and Secretariat.

IFES Educates Youth on Privatization Process

The IFES/Doboj team in the Republika Srpska (RS) led by Doboj Project Manager Natasa Borcanin, initiated privatization information seminars (GOGS) for high school juniors and seniors in eleven municipalities in the Doboj region. RS minors also have the right to take part in the privatization process and IFES' activities are designed to educate young people about their rights, as well as about the rights of their parents. According to the IFES Civic Education Trainer, Nebojsa Bljajic, the youth are showing a great interest in this process, especially when they find out that they too have the right to participate in it. By the end of this month, over 1,380 GOGs were conducted reaching over 18,900 citizens, over 660 of which were high school students.

Impact Summary

BiH citizens are becoming increasingly informed about and involved in their political process. Through culturally appropriate information products, citizens are learning about the proposed election law and the rights it will afford them. BiH citizens are also becoming increasingly aware of, and active in, solving problems in their local communities. Most importantly, they are gathering together to share information and advice with their fellow citizens despite ethnic differences.

BiH election officials are becoming increasingly responsible for administering their own elections. They are learning how to conduct the electoral process in keeping with international standards as well as how to ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to express their will and have reason to trust the electoral process.

MOLDOVA

IFES, CEC Cooperate to Improve the Electoral Process

In October, IFES and the CEC hosted a roundtable discussion during which the verification and updating of voter rolls and the Supreme Court's report on standardizing court resolutions pertaining to election cases were addressed. The CEC intends to submit a work plan detailing cooperation between IFES and the CEC very shortly. Additionally, the CEC is drafting a schedule for the upcoming regional train-

ing seminars.

While in Moldova, IFES expert Paul DeGregorio met with Dumitru Nidelcu, Chairman of the CEC, to discuss the conclusions of the ACEEEO conference that Mr. DeGregorio had recently attended. Vice-Chairman Televco also participated in the conference, which was held in Bratislava in early October. Discussions also touched upon upcoming voter and civic education programs the CEC and IFES plan to implement throughout Moldova.

IFES, Juridic Direction of Parliament Host Roundtable Discussions

During October, IFES, in conjunction with the Juridic Direction of Parliament, hosted two roundtable discussions. The first roundtable focused on the Law on Local Public Administration and the number of votes needed to pass resolutions in local councils. The Law on Local Public Administration requires a majority of voters to pass a resolution; however, there is some confusion on the precise meaning of the term "majority." In regards to parliamentary resolutions, the Constitutional Court determined that the 50%+1 formula should be employed to calculate a majority. There are 101 deputies in the Parliament of Moldova; thus, 52 votes are needed to reach a majority ($50.5\%+1 \Rightarrow 51\%+1=52\%$, as figures are rounded up to the nearest whole number). According to this method, in a seven member local council at least five votes are necessary to pass a resolution. Many members of Parliament insist that the Constitutional Court's interpretation of majority should be applied to local councils in an effort to establish uniform procedures throughout the country. The Juridic Direction requested IFES' assistance in resolving the issue by clearly defining the terms simple and absolute majority. An absolute majority is defined as the number of votes that, when compared to the number of votes cast in opposition plus the number of refrained votes, will always be greater. According to the definition, only four votes would be necessary to constitute a majority in a seven member local council. Application of this definition should be accompanied by a revision of the Constitutional Court's earlier interpretation, as the Constitutional Court possesses supreme legal power and its decisions cannot be overturned by other institutions.

Participants also discussed the government's initiative to establish Taraclia County as a separate administrative-territorial unit. Currently, localities of the former Taraclia County are considered part of Cahul County. The Law on Local Public Admini-

stration allows the alteration of administrative-territorial borders only with the consent of the citizens in the appropriate locality as demonstrated through a local referendum.

The second roundtable hosted by IFES and the Juridic Direction of Parliament examined Deputy Ion Morei's initiative to amend the Electoral Code by increasing the legal threshold of exclusion from four to eight percent. A threshold is often instituted to inhibit parties which do not enjoy widespread support from gaining representation in Parliament and to avoid the dissolution of parties into increasingly smaller parliamentary factions which could impede the efficiency of the legislative body. However, it was noted that the last parliamentary elections, which were conducted with a four percent threshold, seated only four political parties. Participants also agreed that independent candidates should remain exempt from the representational threshold.

IFES, Political Parties Discuss Proposed Changes to Electoral System

Throughout October, IFES met with representatives of various political parties to examine the proposed modifications to the electoral system of Moldova. In a meeting with IFES expert Paul DeGregorio, Victor Josu, Vice-Chairman of the Revival and Reconciliation Party, expressed his concern over the National Commission's proposal to implement the majoritarian system, especially given that authorities in Transdnistria do not permit the formation of electoral bodies on their territory. Mr. Josu prefers improving the current proportional system by conducting parliamentary elections based on constituencies with several mandates that coincide with the administrative-territorial units. Oazu Nantoi, Chairman of the Social Democratic Party, echoed Mr. Josu's sentiments and cautioned that frequent changes of electoral systems within countries transitioning to a democratic form of government can be dangerous.

At a press conference attended by Mr. DeGregorio, the National Liberal Party stated that the electoral system must be altered and an imperative mandate should be introduced to enable voters to remove deputies who have failed to fulfill their pre-election promises. The party favors a mixed system.

IFES also discussed the 2000 parliamentary elections with Ion Jigau, Executive Bureau, Party of Democratic Forces. The recent defection of members of the Democratic and Prosperous Moldova

Bloc (DPMB) left the DPMB without a majority in Parliament. Mr. Jigau stated that the Communists and Christian Democrats, who together control a majority of seats in Parliament, support the resignation of the incumbent government.

IFES and the NGO Community

IFES/Moldova continues to serve as a resource for the international and local NGO community. The recent proposals to modify the electoral system of Moldova and the Law on Local Public Administration have generated much interest and consequently requests for relevant information. This month, IFES provided Kristina Malai, attorney, IRIS-Moldova Center for Legislative Reform with information on US and Moldovan electoral systems. Furthermore, many newly established NGOs have requested assistance from IFES. Recently, Ivan Telpiz, former Vice-Chairman of Gagauz-Yeri Popular Assembly, informed IFES that he was elected Chairman of *Edinstvo* (Unity), a recently founded Moldovan NGO. Mr. Telpiz identified the *Civic Voice* newsletter as an invaluable resource since very little information on the NGO sector, independent mass media, and free and fair elections is available in Gagauzi-Yeri. He requested copies of the newsletter to distribute to his organization.

In October, IFES/Moldova met with Elena Peltun of the Eurasia Foundation to consider various proposals from local NGOs. Projects focusing on local public administration and mass media independence were given particular attention.

Mihai Perebions, Chairman of the Mayor's Association of the Republic of Moldova, briefed IFES on his organization's recent activities and upcoming events. For the last three months, the association has supplied newly elected public administration officials with materials on public administration. In the near future, the association plans to send two mayors to a conference in Turkey and host their own international conference with the assistance of the Council of Europe. Mr. Perebions extended IFES an invitation to the conference. Mr. Perebions also discussed with IFES the President's initiative to modify the Constitution and the legal framework of public finances.

IFES and the Mass Media

The IFES/Moldova Resource Center is now available for use by representatives of the mass media. This month, Vlad Turcanu of the National Radio Station requested data on youth participation in

elections and the percentage of young people elected to Parliament and public administration bodies. He also expressed an interest in Moldovan organizations implementing voter and civic education programs. Additionally, he requested back issues of *Civic Voice* for use in the development of the *Modern Club* and *Youth Force* radio programs.

In an October issue, *FLUX* newspaper cited data extracted from *Access to Information in the Republic of Moldova*, a study conducted by IFES and a Working Group of the Committee for the Freedom of Press. According to the data, a majority of journalists consider their access to information of public interest to be insufficient. Furthermore, legislation clarifying what is considered information of public interest and guaranteeing access to such information does not currently exist in Moldova. The study is intended to complement the few analyses on the constitutional right of access to information. The brochure also includes a draft law on information, a culmination of the cooperation between the Working Group and Parliament.

IFES Production of Civic Voice Newsletters and Radio Programs a Success

In October, IFES continued to work on the 26th edition of the *Civic Voice* newsletter, which includes an interview with Cahul Municipality Mayor Stefan Bratu and Ungheni Municipality Mayor Vitalie Vrabie. Mr. Bratu stated that his county is having difficulties paying pensions and salaries and discussed his initiative to involve secondary schools students, university students, and other community members in local clean-up efforts. He also concluded that while public administrators have been awarded autonomy, they do not yet possess the legal authority to exercise that autonomy. From another perspective, Mr. Vrabie discussed the difficulties he inherited from the previous mayor of Ungheni municipality and said that the debts, low level of employment, and underdeveloped industry in his area have prevented him from implementing most of his initiatives. He also stated that the recently adopted Law on Local Public Administration has had a positive impact, though he suggested some areas in which the law could be improved.

IFES and LADOM continued to produce the *Civic Voice* radio program, which is aired by Antenna C in Chisinau. This month's programs addressed local public administration's relationship with Moldovan citizens, increasing the level of political awareness in Moldova, tolerance and respect for others'

political views, and public administration bodies' relations with the mass media. One program included an interview with IFES expert Paul DeGregorio and IFES Senior Program Coordinator Igor Botan. Mr. DeGregorio discussed Moldova's successful implementation of international standards for free and fair elections and noted that citizens should try to more fully understand their electoral rights.

The *Civic Voice* radio program has become increasingly popular with the Moldovan public, with many listeners calling to request information on solving problems they encountered with public administration bodies. In addition, many sociologists have contacted IFES to obtain copies of the material on which the *Civic Voice* is based.

IFES Releases Book and CD-ROM on Elections in Moldova

This month, IFES distributed the recently published book entitled "Republic of Moldova. General Local Elections. May 23, 1999." to the presidential administration, members of parliament, the CEC, embassies, NGOs, public libraries, universities and foreign organizations operating in Moldova. In addition, IFES and TISH, Ltd. completed work on the final version of a CD-ROM entitled "Elections in Moldova: Local 1995, Presidential 1996, Parliamentary 1998, Local 1999." The CD contains election results, excerpts from Moldovan electoral legislation, CEC resolutions, and the Moldovan Constitution.

Impact Summary

Throughout October, IFES continued to cooperate with the CEC to improve the electoral process. The proposed training of poll workers will help ensure that electoral procedures are applied consistently throughout Moldova. Adherence to standard procedures raises the public's level of confidence in the process by decreasing the potential for fraud and increasing transparency. In addition, the planned civic and voter education programs will inform citizens of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society.

The implementation of the Law on Local Public Administration has raised many questions among citizens and public officials. Through roundtable discussions hosted in conjunction with the Juridic Direction of Parliament, IFES provided necessary clarification and a forum in which government officials and interested parties could exchange informa-

tion. By addressing these issues in the *Civic Voice* newsletter and radio program, IFES has also improved the general public's understanding of the legislation. Furthermore, the newsletter supplies information on the electoral process, the NGO sector, the necessity for an independent mass media, and legislative issues to citizens, public officials, and the NGO community. In some regions of Moldova, it is the sole source of this type of information.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The First Presidential Draft Law Passed the Duma

On 27 October, the Russian State Duma almost unanimously (336 pro vs. 1 con) passed the first draft of the new Law on the Election of the President of the Russian Federation that was introduced by President Boris Yeltsin.

According to the draft law, the newly elected president will be able to officially assume the post on 9 August 2000. Should an additional round of elections be needed, the new president would assume the post on the 30th day after publication of the election results. If the draft law passes both chambers of the parliament and is approved by the President, elections will take place on 4 June 2000.

According to the draft law, the Federation Council will have to call for presidential elections not earlier than 4 January and not later than 4 February 2000. If a runoff election is required, the second round will be required to take place within 21 days after the first round (i.e. 25 June 2000).

The new law incorporates a number of new provisions concerning the rights and duties of candidates, participation of election associations and blocs in the presidential elections, collection of signatures, election results determination, as well as specifics about the inauguration of the President. The law requires that candidates disclose any criminal convictions or foreign citizenship in their official "intent to run." Candidates would also be required to notify the Central Election Commission (CEC) of the source and amount of income for the candidate, his or her spouse, and their common children over a period of two years preceding the election. The new law also forbids presidential candidates who occupy high posts in any sphere of the economy, as well as candidates who are public servants, to abuse their official power in order to facilitate their election campaign.

According to the draft law, presidential candidates will have to collect 1 million signatures in order to register, and this process of signature collection is strictly regulated. For example, the procedure cannot be conducted in such places as cashiers' offices, bank tellers' windows, and places where salaries, wages, and bonuses are paid. The law does not provide for election deposits in place of signature collection, as does the Duma election law. Elections are to be considered as valid if at least 50% of registered voters have participated. Should an additional election round be needed, the winner would be the candidate who has received a higher absolute number of votes.

The CEC of the Russian Federation is the main author of the draft Presidential law. Its chairman, Alexander Veshniakov, has been appointed Official Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the State Duma for the period of deliberations on the draft legislation.

It is essential that the law pass the Parliament in early December in order to create a functional legal basis for the forthcoming presidential elections. Presidential elections will only take place on 4 June 2000 if the new presidential election law passes the Parliament before the State Duma elections scheduled on 19 December 1999.

IFES Conducts Pre-Election Technical Assessment in Advance of Duma Elections

IFES has completed a Pre-Election Technical Assessment (PETA) of the Russian Federation to evaluate preparations for the 19 December 1999 elections to the State Duma and to make recommendations for improvements in elections processes in the Russian Federation. The report examines the electoral process and current issues requiring evaluation and attention.

The report was developed by an international delegation of four technical experts with considerable expertise in the field of election administration, election law and the Russian political process. The team included: Christian Nadeau, Program Director for IFES/Russia; Paul DeGregorio, senior IFES consultant and former U.S. election official; George Russell, a Technical Specialist and former Chair of the U.S. National Association of State Election Directors and as the chief election official for the State of Kentucky; and Alex Yurin, Executive Director of the Russian Institute for Election Systems Development (IESD).

Through an extensive series of meetings with Russian election officials, political party and NGO leaders, and others involved in the electoral process, the PETA team was able to gain valuable insights into the needs and concerns expressed by these officials regarding the 19 December Duma election. In addition, the observation of the gubernatorial elections in the Yekaterinburg Oblast on 29 August 1999, and in the Leningradsky Oblast on 19 September 1999 allowed for analysis of the real-time application of election laws and procedures. The complete report may be obtained from IFES through the F. Clifton White Resource Center.

LDPR Contends with Candidate Exclusions

On 11 October, the CEC threw out the list of candidates submitted for registration by the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), headed by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, after two of the LDPR's top three candidates were disqualified for not fully disclosing personal income. According to the Law on Election of the State Duma, if any of a party list's top three candidates are disqualified, then the entire list must be struck. Zhirinovskiy immediately requested an appeal with the Russian Supreme Court. Within days, however, the LDPR had reformed and submitted a new list as Zhirinovskiy's Bloc, which was registered by the CEC on 18 October. The new bloc is an amalgamation of the LDPR, the Spiritual Revival Party, and the Russian Union of Free Youth. Nevertheless, over 150 names were removed from the original LDPR list after the CEC expressed concerns as to their validity.

Media Under Fire From CEC, Government

As the December State Duma elections draw closer, Russian media have come under increasing scrutiny from the CEC, the Ministry for Mass Media and other government agencies. On 29 October, CEC Chairman Alexander Veshniakov requested that the Media Ministry take unspecified action against Sergei Dorenko, a commentator on the ORT network, for a 25 October broadcast in which he implied that presidential candidate Yevgeniy Primakov may be linked with an attempt on the life of Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze.

The Voting Rights Act, Russia's basic electoral code, stipulates that during the official election campaign period media outlets must maintain a strictly neutral position when reporting on candidates. However, what exactly constitutes neutrality, or even news, may be interpreted in numerous ways due to the law's vague provisions. The complete set

of Russia's current election law can be found online at www.ifes.ru.

Ballots Reported Safe from Fabrication As Duma Toughens Election Fraud Responsibility

In the last week of October, the CEC agreed security measures and the format of the ballots that will be used in the single-mandate electoral districts during the forthcoming parliamentary elections. They are almost impossible to forge, CEC Chairman Alexander Veshniakov has been reported as saying, adding that even if ballot fabrication does take place, election commissions would immediately notice it. Unlike in previous Russian elections, this time ballots will carry additional information about the candidates. Voters will be able to see, for example, whether a candidate has a criminal conviction or holds citizenship in another country.

Meanwhile, on 29 October, the State Duma passed a new law amending the Russian Criminal Code, which considerably stiffens the responsibility for falsification of election results. This document had been introduced for deliberation by a diverse group of deputies representing the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, Yabloko, deputies from the group "Democracy," and the Russian Agrarian Party.

The draft law provides that falsification of election or referenda results is punished with either a fine of 100-500 monthly minimum wages (currently about US\$330 – US\$1,640), or with incarceration or correctional labor of up to two years. The penalties are doubled if the violation involves bribery, conspiracy, or an act or threat of violence. If an official or a representative of state authorities or local self-government bodies commits such violations, the punishment provides for incarceration of 2-6 years. Upon release, such individuals are not allowed to occupy any official post for a period of 3 years.

UKRAINE

IFES PSAs Prepare Voters for Election Day

A series of public service announcements (PSAs) developed by IFES in conjunction with the Central Election Commission (CEC) and NTM, Ltd. were aired throughout October to provide Ukrainian citizens with a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities in elections.

The PSAs clearly and precisely explained the voting process, especially the impact of the new presiden-

tial law on voting procedures, and encouraged voters to participate in the democratic process. IFES/Ukraine is attempting to determine the amount of exposure the announcements received in each region. Feedback on the PSAs has been extremely positive.

IFES Produces Voter Education Poster

In conjunction with the F-4 Laboratory of Ukraine and the CEC, IFES produced an election poster to assist voters in understanding voting procedures at polling stations. Copies of the posters were distributed in advance to polling stations, and they were prominently displayed at the entrance to each station. Election officials and voters noted that the poster provided them with clear and precise information; the posters were particularly helpful to elderly and first-time voters.

IFES and the CEC Prepare for Elections

IFES/Ukraine continued to work closely with the CEC by monitoring training programs for election officials, preparing election posters, and distributing materials and information to CEC members. The CEC also held a briefing on its procedures for receiving information from polling stations and territorial election commissions on Election Day. This allowed IFES to post the election results on the website (www.ifes.kiev.ua and on the mirror www.ifes-ukraine.org) quickly and easily.

IFES Visits Polling Stations on Election Day

On 31 October, IFES staff visited polling stations in Kyiv and small villages outside the city to speak with members of the CEC, as well as territorial election commissions. While staff members did not serve as election observers, the polling station visits provided them with the opportunity to meet with commission members, political party officials, and voters to discuss IFES' pre-election activities. Every person with whom IFES staff spoke expressed his or her gratitude for IFES' assistance and noted that the clear, concise information provided was particularly helpful. In addition, many officials noted that the IFES-sponsored training helped them gain a clearer understanding of their duties and built confidence in their abilities to administer this important election. In the past, training was extremely limited, so the training program became especially important in this election. The training was conducted at all levels of election commissions.

IFES Websites Post Election Results

The IFES/Ukraine website (www.ifes.kiev.ua) and

the mirror site (www.ifes-ukraine.org) were updated with all first round election results provided by the CEC to IFES. The website includes profiles of each presidential candidate, including individual biographies and election programs; the date he or she submitted his or her signature sheets; the number of signatures collected and the number of invalid signatures; the date the candidate was registered with the CEC, and the resolution number or court decision; and the political party nominating the candidate. Also included were:

- Final results of the first round of elections; the number of votes for each candidate and the percentage that candidate received; and
- A breakdown of the election results by oblast; the name of the candidate who received the largest number of votes in that oblast; the number of votes cast per oblast; and the percentage and number of votes for each candidate.

IFES is preparing to provide similarly detailed results for the second round of elections, to be held on 14 November. All results will be published on the website as soon as possible following their release by the CEC. The IFES website had become a highly regarded and valuable resource to users in Ukraine and internationally.

IFES Implements Civic Education Program

The civic education program developed in September has now been introduced in three secondary schools as well as in the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. Teachers from all schools were enthusiastic about the program and pleased that their students are participating in the program.

The contacts established during the implementation of this program will serve as an excellent resource for the further development and expansion of the program in the future. In addition, IFES is arranging program roundtable with teachers to review the impact of the program and discuss their ideas, experiences, and recommendations.

IFES Prepares for 5th Adjudication Conference

IFES is working with the Supreme Court of Ukraine to develop a fifth conference on the adjudication of election disputes. The conference will be held in Kyiv on 11-12 November. Judge Bohdan Futey, U. S. Court of Federal Claims, will provide his expertise at the conference. The Supreme Court ex-

pressed its gratitude for IFES' assistance with the conferences and noted that it would like to continue working with IFES to train judges in Ukraine.

IFES Participates in Mass Media Conference

IFES/Ukraine participated in a mass media conference arranged by the Society Center from 29-31 October. More than 250 people participated in the conference, including several presidential candidates and many highly respected Ukrainian business leaders. While the conference was held in the State Administration building, participants also visited area election commissions on election day.

IFES provided various publications and materials to conference participants. Internet facilities at the conference also provided participants with information from the IFES website.

Impact Summary

Working closely with the Ukrainian government, political parties, and the NGO community, IFES-sponsored public service announcements (PSAs), poll worker training programs, voter education posters, and website information prepared voters effectively for the 31 October presidential elections. A series of PSAs explained new balloting procedures to voters and encouraged them to vote. IFES' poll worker training program also helped election officials to understand their role in the election process and standardized procedures for officials. Uniform procedures and adequate preparation of election officials develops public confidence in the system, increasing transparency and decreasing concerns about potential fraud. IFES' civic education program was implemented in three secondary schools as well as the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. The program will introduce students to the Ukrainian political process and highlight the responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society. Finally, IFES and the Supreme Court are planning a 5th conference on the adjudication of election disputes to bring together judges from throughout Ukraine and to increase judges' understanding of precedence and the role of courts in ensuring uniform application of legislation and grievance resolution in Ukraine.

YUGOSLAVIA (Kosovo)

IFES Registration Planning Mission

In May of 1999, IFES deployed an advance team to the OSCE Mission in Kosovo to provide technical assistance in civil registration and election planning. Over the 6-month project, the IFES team focused on

legal, logistical and systemic design of a multi-use population database with priority on utilization in electoral management.

In early October, IFES submitted a substantial operational plan to the UN Interim Civil Administration (UNMIK) for the creation of a civil registration system, including recommended legal framework, domestic resource integration and public administrative structures. This plan, built in conjunction with Kosovar expertise and registration specialists, detailed the construction of a registration process which focused on a rapid population enumeration and identification card process which forms the basis of the civil registry institution, to be developed concurrently.

IFES remains ready to advise the United Nations and the OSCE in this, and other, important projects, and will continue its technical assistance in election administration through the creation of a Kosovar Central Election Commission.

CAUCASUS/CENTRAL ASIA

ARMENIA

October Local Elections

On 24 October, Armenia held its second nationwide local elections under the new Universal Electoral Code (UEC). In 766 communities over 6,000 candidates contested for positions as mayors, Community Heads and members of Community Councils. Previous elections to these posts were held in 1996.

According to the Central Election Commission (CEC), voter turnout for the election was as high as 40% in some areas; however, the percentage of voters participating was lower in the capital city of Yerevan than in other parts of the country. Domestic civic organizations and the Council of Europe monitored the polls on election day and accessed the election positively.

During the pre-election campaign, the issues of residency requirements for candidates, military and refugees was the source of considerable controversy. Prior to the election, the CEC and courts disagreed on the interpretation of articles 122, 123 and 140 concerning the length of residence required for a candidate to run for office. The CEC and Regional Electoral Commissions (REC) interpreted these articles to mean that residency of one year was a re-

quirement. However, several candidates who were not registered in the community for one year, presented their case to the courts and won, and were able to register as candidates regardless of their length of residence.

A second question regarding the interpretation of UEC articles pertained to the military. According to the changes to the code made by the National Assembly in mid-October, for the local elections, military conscripts and officers have the right to vote only in their place of residence where they are registered. This amendment was adopted to avoid the influence of the military in a given community where their barracks are located.

Lastly, according to the UEC, refugees do not have the right to vote. President Robert Kocharian asked for a ruling by the Constitutional Court with regards to the voting eligibility of refugees to vote. The Constitutional Court ruled that refugees have the right to vote in local elections only. Subsequent to this judgement, President Kocharian issued a decree ordering that the elections be postponed in communities where refugees are more than 50% of the population, which included 69 communities. Elections in these communities will be held upon completion of the amendment in accordance with the Constitution and the interpretation of the Constitutional Court.

IFES Conducts Technical Election Observation

IFES/Armenia deployed two technical observation teams on 24 October to assess the administrative capacity of poll workers and to monitor the effectiveness of IFES voter education materials. The IFES team visited 20 polling stations across five regions of the country, including Kotayk, Armovir, Lori, Aragotzotn and Yerevan.

Based upon the observations of IFES' teams, the 24 October election was well organized and conducted in an orderly fashion. In the majority of polling stations IFES visited, poll workers followed procedures assiduously. However, observers did notice the persistent inaccuracy in voter lists in many precincts. For example, in some precincts IFES observed, dozens of voters were added to the voter lists. In accordance with the UEC, voters whose names were missing from voters lists went to the courts, obtained a quick decision and came back to vote. The quick turn around was reportedly due to the increase in the number of judges for registration

hearings.

IFES voter education materials including posters and copies of the UEC were visible in the vast majority of polling stations visited by IFES and other observer groups. In fact, in many precincts, these materials, and voting procedure posters from the May 1999 Parliamentary elections, were actively utilized by both election administration and voters alike.

IFES Concludes Voter Education Campaign

In late October, IFES concluded its voter education campaign in support of the local elections. Designed and executed by IFES consultant Steve Telford, the campaign urged voters to check the voter lists prior to election day and informed the public of proper election day procedures. The campaign included both electronic and print media.

A total of 10 television and radio public service announcements, developed in collaboration with the CEC, were broadcast on national and regional channels throughout the month of October until Election Day. IFES also printed 4 posters: "Check the Voters Lists", "Corrections and Appeals", "Electoral Offenses" and "Voting Procedures". Two thousand copies of each poster were distributed to local officials by regional election officials. By agreement with the CEC, these posters were displayed in polling station prior to and on election day.

As in past IFES voter education efforts in Armenia, distribution of materials proved especially daunting. To ensure timely and even distribution of voter education materials by regional officials, IFES teamed with the local civic organization, "It's Your Choice," to monitor distribution. Throughout October, regional representatives of the organization provided IFES periodic reports on regional distribution. In cases when the posters failed to be appear, IFES contacted the CEC who in turn contacted the RECs to correct the situation.

Public response to the voter education materials was predominantly positive. On 18 October, IFES Project Manager Andre Bouchard met with USAID Consultant Stan Stanevski to discuss the results of focus groups that Stanevski organized to assess the effectiveness of the IFES voter education campaign methodology. Stanevski reported that focus group audience response to the IFES public service announcements was very enthusiastic and indicated that the IFES approach to conveying election-

related information might be adopted to the USAID social reform program.

Impact Summary

IFES assistance for the local elections made significant impact in the field of voter education and information. In cooperation with the CEC, IFES produced informational materials that resulted in voters that were better informed. The multi-media campaign provided the Armenian electorate with clear and concrete election most importantly on checking the voter lists and on proper election day procedures. The involvement of the CEC and the RECs in the distribution of the posters is also significant in terms of institutional capacity building.

AZERBAIJAN

IFES Executes Voter Education Campaign

IFES Azerbaijan voter education consultant Brenda Oppermann is developing an extensive education campaign for the 12 December municipal elections. IFES coordinates the efforts of a number of NGOs and is also working in conjunction with UNDP to produce a unified education and information campaign in collaboration with the Central Election Commission (CEC). Arrangements have been made with state and the major privately owned media for free media time and space to be provided for IFES produced voter education products.

The first of a series of 10 video PSAs commenced on air on 27 October. On the same day major national newspapers carried the first of a series of over 30 print media advertisements. The initial advertising focus is on the concept and functions of municipalities—a new institution in Azerbaijan. Later advertising in November/December will focus on voter's rights and procedures associated with voting. Planning and design work also underway for the production of two voter information pamphlets, and giveaway products reinforcing the messages carried by other advertising.

IFES Assists CEC

In October, IFES provided advice to the CEC on the development of instructions for the conduct of voting and ballot counts, the format and contents of ballot count result protocols for Precinct and Territorial Election Commissions (PEC and TEC), and the design of the ballot paper for the 12 December municipal elections.

IFES has been closely coordinating its work in this

area with OSCE/ODIHR, to present joint comments and proposals to CEC management. Some of these proposals have been accepted by the CEC. It is expected that the CEC will approve these documents and instructions early in November.

IFES Monitors Election Processes

Nomination of candidates for municipal elections in the 2665 municipalities commenced on 18 October. At the end of October, more than 28000 applications for nomination as a candidate had been received by TECs. The CEC expects that the final number of nominations will be close to 200,000 when the candidate nomination period closes on 12 November. Registered candidates are to be announced by 18 November, after which date the official campaign period for the municipal elections will then commence.

IFES is continuing to monitor, as it has done for the processes of selection of the 74 TECs and 4683 PECs, reports from political party and independent NGO observers on the progress of candidate nominations. English translations of observer press statements and reports are being made available by IFES to all interested organizations. IFES is also acting as the distribution center for translations of election instructions, legislation and related documents.

October saw the passage of the first of the legislation detailing municipal functions and structures under the law on Municipal Status, passed in July 1999. Two laws – on Municipal Service, and Municipal Charter – have been passed by the Milli Majlis, and a third, on Local Referendums, has been drafted and is ready for parliamentary consideration.

IFES Assists NGOs with Election Observation Preparation

IFES continues to provide assistance to domestic NGO's that are currently recruiting and training observers for the municipal elections. In conjunction with NDI, OSI and Eurasia Foundation, IFES has been providing technical assistance, for the drafting of training materials and conduct of observer training sessions, to the independent NGO "For the Sake of Civil Society." Materials and presentations on observation methodology and international standards in election observation have been provided to youth and other groups who are intending to participate in monitoring election activities. IFES has also been participating in seminars for journalists on methods of effective reporting of election activities.

While it would appear that there will be very few international observers present for the 12 December municipal elections, there will be strong contingents of observers from political parties and local NGOs. The relevant election law requires that observers must be accredited individually, and can only be nominated by registered political parties and public organizations. Independent NGO “For the Sake for Civil Society” is intending to field up to 4500 observers; the Motherland Party affiliated NGO Democratic Election Centre has already applied for accreditation of around 1000 observers. Major political parties are also intending to apply for accreditation of observers in the range of 2500 – 4500 each.

IFES Invited to Present Comments on Reform of CEC Law

In early October a bill amending the current law on the CEC was introduced into the Milli Majlis. The bill makes some amendments to the terms of office of CEC members, specifying a 6-year term with one third of the 24 members being replaced every 2 years, and defines and amplifies a number of other issues - including the functions of the CEC. The bill does not address the method of appointment or composition of the CEC.

OSCE/ODIHR is organizing a roundtable on this bill, in mid-November for government officials, political parties and other interested organizations, in mid-November, at which IFES has been invited to present its comments on the proposed changes to the law.

Impact Summary

IFES continues to solidify its position as the nexus of election support in preparations for the 12 December municipal elections. IFES has coordinated with NGOs and UNDP to develop a unified education and information campaign in collaboration with the CEC. Working with local groups, IFES has provided planning and design work in creating PSAs and education campaigning and in creating the accompanying materials and messages. In addition, IFES and OSCE, have been closely coordinating its work with OSCE/ODIHR, to present joint comments and proposals to CEC management and to contribute to the reform process of the CEC law.

GEORGIA

Parliamentary Elections in Georgia

The 1999 Parliamentary election in Georgia were

held on 31 October and represented a step forward in the democratic process of Georgia. Thirty-three parties and electoral blocs and 5000 candidates competed for 235 seats in parliament, and 2.9 million voters (67.8 percent) voted in the election. In addition, 195,000 internally displaced persons from Abkhazia and Tskinali voted for candidates from the party lists.

The voting process was conducted in a relatively peaceful manner. In a substantial number of polling stations, election officials administered the election process in a professional way, following provisions prescribed by the legislation. Georgian voters were generally able to cast their ballots freely and without intimidation. There were reports, however, from the OSCE/ODIHR Observation Mission of irregularities and violations, particularly in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, and during the second round of voting, in precincts throughout the country.

First Round of Elections

IFES/Georgia organized a small technical observation mission consisting of four teams covering a total of 47 polling stations in different regions, both in urban and rural areas of Georgia. IFES observation efforts focused on the following aspects of the election process:

- ***Election Official Training:*** the effectiveness of the training program delivered to 5000 Precinct Election Commission (PEC) officials – their overall performance on election day, their duties and understanding of the election procedures.
- ***National Voter Education Program:*** the impact on the electorate of the joint IFES/CEC national voter education program on the electorate – the voters’ awareness of the electoral process and their familiarity with the voting procedures.

IFES observers noted a considerable improvement in performance of PEC officials in the administration of the election, compared to the 1998 local elections. The IFES teams did not witness any major intentional fraud. In some polling stations technical irregularities were observed, including:

- ***Inaccurate voters lists:*** ten percent of the voters were not included on the voters’ lists.
- ***Complex identification procedures:*** depending on whether the voter’s name appeared or not on the voters’ list, identity documents required to vote were different which created confusion



Leon Weil, IFES Board Member, observes Georgian voting, October 31st, for the OSCE/ODIHR Observation

among both voters and election officials.

- **Uncontrolled flow of voters in the polling stations:** in a majority of polling stations visited, too many voters were allowed inside the voting area at the same time. As a result, the flow of voters inside some stations was without control and voters were not following a step-by-step process.
- **Lengthy ballot authentication procedures:** the newly introduced authentication procedure of applying holograms to the ballots created confusion and lengthened the voting process in some polling stations.

Preliminary Results

On 7 November, following a week of unverified projections and complaints by the political parties, the CEC broke its self-imposed silence and announced preliminary results. The decision earlier in the week by the CEC not to announce preliminary results until the count was complete stemmed from several parties hovering at the seven percent threshold -- passing it several times and falling back. According to George Zezashvili, Deputy Chairman of the CEC, "...[this] create[d] a very unhealthy atmosphere...." For the proportional system, with a voters' turnout of 67.8%, only three political groups were able to overcome the 7% parliamentary threshold:

- Citizens' Union: 41.75%
- Election block, Revival of Georgia: 25.18%
- Election bloc, Industry Will Save Georgia" 7.08%

Other parties, which did not make the threshold, included:

Labor Party: 6.59%

National Democratic Alliance – the Third Way: -5%
People's Party: 4.11%

The CEC itself was not united in its confirmation of the first-round results, indicating a lack of consensus of some members. The announcement document itself was not a formal CEC resolution and, according to the CEC, it could not be appealed to the Supreme Court. The Labor Party, however, filed an appeal with the Supreme Court to cancel the results.

The Second Round of Elections

The second round was conducted on 14 November in 20 districts where no candidates were elected at the first round. In addition, re-voting took place in five districts where, due to serious irregularities and violations, the CEC invalidated the October 31 vote under the majoritarian system. Unlike the first vote, OSCE/ODIHR Observation Mission reported that the elections were well conducted in some districts, but were "marred with serious irregularities and violations" in a significant number of precincts. The total number of voters who turned out for the second round: 405,720. Although the results of the second were not released as of 24 November the CEC reported that 22 members of parliament were elected during the second round.

IFES Election Support

In support of the Parliamentary Elections in Georgia IFES provided technical assistance to the Central Election Commission including:

IFES/CEC Election Official Training

The comprehensive program developed and administered with the CEC by IFES Trainer Antonia Dolar, trained precinct election officials throughout Georgia in the conduct of parliamentary elections. This was the first time in the region that training of election officials of this magnitude had been undertaken. Twenty-two Georgian trainers were recruited, trained, and delivered 110 training sessions to a total of 5072 precinct election officials. IFES also drafted an election day manual, adopted by the CEC and used in the PEC training and on election day by election commissions throughout Georgia.

IFES/CEC Voter Education and Information Program

IFES and the CEC developed and executed a vigorous and comprehensive joint voter education and information campaign for the parliamentary elections through the work of Voter Education Consultant Catherine Barnes. The program included:

Phase I: Voter Registration: the IFES/CEC program concentrated on citizens checking the lists and filing amendments to the list. The campaign included general and targeted public service announcements (PSAs), leaflets and posters.

Phase II: Voter Education: this campaign was designed to help educate voters on why they should vote, make sure they were prepared to vote, and familiarize them with the procedures on election day. The far-reaching program included PSAs, brochures and polling site posters.

The IFES observation teams included the following:

1. Catherine Barnes, Project Manager IFES/Bosnia Ed Morgan, and Program Assistant Sasha Gurevich
2. Project Manager Hugh Stohler, IFES/Bosnia Trainer Nermin Nisic, and Program Assistant Nino Sharvashidze
3. Voter Registration Expert/Sr. Technical Advisor Antonio Spinelli and Program Assistant Maya Gogoladze
4. Senior Advisor/Caucasus Phylis Greenfield, IFES/Bosnia Trainer Miroslav Stjepanovic, and Office Manager Shalva Kipshidze.

In addition, IFES Board members, Leslie Israel and Ambassador Leon Weil were part of the OSCE/ODIHR Observation Mission to Georgia during the first round of the elections.

Impact Summary

IFES provided technical support to the CEC in the immediate run-up to the parliamentary elections through training 5,072 precinct election officials; through developing and printing the official Precinct Election Commission Guide; through preparing and supporting a program of voter education; and through providing commodities. IFES/Georgia also carried out a limited observation of elections for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of its programs in support of the elections.

KAZAKHSTAN

Curriculum Development

In October, IFES/Kazakhstan completed preparations for its curriculum development project. All supporting materials related to the IFES curriculum course for secondary schools including a textbook, supplementary anthology of readings, and teacher guidelines were translated into Russian and Kazakh languages

and published. The entire package, were ready for distribution to selected pilot schools nationwide for use as early as the first week of November.

IFES/Kazakhstan Country Coordinator Marat Bigaliev met with Mrs. Nagzhan Rakhimzhanova, the Head of Methodological Committee of the Ministry of Education (MoE). Bigaliev familiarized her with the Kazakh language version of the textbook and anthology and presented for review the new teacher's manual and evaluation forms for teachers. Following final review and approval, Rakhimzhanova pledged to issue a letter to the 34 pilot schools instructing them to begin the course starting in the second quarter, on or about 15 November. In addition, IFES agreed to submit all materials to the Altynsarin Methodological Institute for review. At the request of the MoE, Marat Bigaliev presented an update on the IFES student mock elections initiative taking place in the pilot schools, also approved by the Ministry. While most of the mock elections took place in parallel with the genuine elections being conducted for the Majilis and Maslikhats, included among them the particularly successful efforts in Aktobe, Astana and Almaty, some mock elections were expected to continue into the month of November and lead into the beginning of the new IFES-sponsored course on civics and democracy.

Civic Education Study Tour

USIS approved the following nominees suggested by IFES to participate in a civic education study tour of the U.S.: Lidiya Rybakova, teacher and IFES civic education specialist from Almaty; Maria Pthezer, civic education teacher from school # 30, Astana; and Shamen Akhimbekova, the Head of the Association



IFES Program Officer Anthony Bowyer and Aktobe School #9 Teacher Galina Smertnyuk display posters created during the mock student election project sponsored by IFES and the Kazakhstan Ministry of Education

of Innovative Schools from Taldy-Korgan. The group departed for the U.S. for two weeks in October to study methods of instruction on civic education and citizenship.

IFES Pilot Schools Conduct Mock Student Elections

A majority of the 34 pilot schools conducted student mock elections parallel to preparations for the nationwide elections to the Majilis of the parliament and local Maslikhats, which took place on 10 October. Using materials developed by IFES as part of the new curriculum on democracy, teachers instructed their students in the exercise of developing political parties, preparing platforms, designing campaigns, executing voter information initiatives, and voting in a mock election. While students from several classes in the 11th grade divided into various political parties of their own choosing, other students from the 9th-11th classes assumed the roles of voters, election observers, and election officials.

In school-gimnazia #9 in Aktobe, civic education teacher Galina Smertynuk, a participant in the IFES August 1999 3-day teacher training seminar in Almaty, conducted a student election that began with several lessons on elections as an expression of democratic choice and culminated in an all-day student election. Students in 4 classes in the 10th and 11th grades divided into 5 political parties and developed their own platforms to lure votes from the student body "electorate." Platforms and campaign strategies were developed for 5 student-created political parties: the Women's Party, Youth Party, Ecological Party, New Kazakhstani Party, and the Democratic Party, with the Women's Party emerging victorious after a particularly creative and successful campaign. The exercise included a group excursion to an actual polling station, a meeting with polling officials, and featured an "election observation" appearance by a member of the Okrug Election Commission. Candidate campaigning was conducted on a number of levels, including hanging campaign posters, distribution of literature, and advertisements on school radio. Students from a nearby college also contributed their time to the project to provide guidance to their younger peers. The exercise even received local television coverage, as an excerpt was shown on an Aktobe evening news telecast.

Many of the students involved in the project later compared the platforms they created for their fictitious parties with the platforms of candidates ballot-

ing for the Majilis, Oblast or city Maslikhat, and found that, in many cases, their own platforms were more concise and on-target. Best of all, students gained an interest in the election process underway in Kazakhstan by holding their own election, which served to further stimulate interest and opinion about the election process taking place for national and local government.

At Aktobe's school #21, a Kazakh-language pilot school, preparations were underway to hold the mock election exercise for students in the 10th grade. Teacher Zlikha Daumbekova indicated that the elections would take place later in October. An exercise challenging students to form political parties and platforms was completed during the last week of September, with four parties formed. The IFES mock elections materials was again deemed very useful, and the school director decreed that one hour per week would be devoted to the IFES-sponsored civics and democracy course, starting in November.

Six pilot schools in Uralsk, Almaty and Ust-Kamenogorsk; and 5 pilot schools from Karaganda oblast also conducted their own student mock elections in October. Garifulla Karimov from Uralsk's school #5 prepared a program for his students, which included a visit with a candidate running for a seat in the West Kazakhstan Oblast Maslikhat. Seventy-five students from three classes in the 11th grade competed as political parties nominating candidates, with students in classes from the 9th and 10th grades voting on Election Day. Lidya Rybakova from Almaty school # 46 conducted several meetings where students met with the local election commission members in terms of preparation of students for the final mock elections at school, which took place in late October. The mock elections were covered broadly by independent school TV stations and by local journalists. Marat Bigaliev monitored those elections as an IFES "international observer" and presented awards to the leaders of 4 winning parties and 4 independent candidates as well as seven members of the school election committee.

Domestic Election Observer Training Project

October was the key month for the IFES domestic election observer training project. More than 2,500 domestic observers, trained by IFES, NDI and domestic NGO partner organizations *Center for Support of Democracy* and *DETAR* received accreditation for observing the first round Majilis and

Maslikhat elections on 10 October and for the run-off elections on 24 October. In all regions, independent regional captains were designated with the responsibilities of establishing a local center for domestic observer teams, conducting additional training for volunteers, coordinating among all independent domestic observers on election day and for final reporting to the domestic observer headquarter in Almaty, which consisted of the heads of the two main local NGO partners.

A preliminary report released from the headquarter office was based on information received from the independent monitoring teams, trained and supported by IFES and NDI, and conducted election monitoring on 10 and 24 October. According to the preliminary report, most of the problems reported were connected with the lack of election transparency. Many members of the polling commissions were apparently unfamiliar with the guidelines on voting set for them by the CEC or did not enforce them. Additionally, turnout as reported by the election commissions often exceeded turnout reported by the observers. The independent observer teams were very concerned about interference in the election process and the work of precinct election commissions. A final report on the observing of the independent monitoring teams is expected by early-November.

Elections

IFES deployed a team of international observers on 10 October: Anthony Bowyer, Project Manager IFES/Kazakhstan in Uralsk; Marat Bigaliev, Project Coordinator IFES/Kazakhstan in Ust-Kamenogorsk; Lola Maksudova, Project Coordinator IFES/Uzbekistan in Aktobe; and Svetlana Eselbaeva, CSD/Almaty in Petropavlovsk. IFES teams in each of the regions worked very closely with the regional captains and independent domestic observers, both having training seminars and on Election Day.

By invitation of the CEC and the National TV Station “Khabar”, Marat Bigaliev attended a televised debate among representatives of the nine political parties fielding party lists in Kazakhstan’s elections to the Majilis. The two-and-a-half hour debate was broadcast live nationwide on 6 October, four days prior to election day. The format of the debate was similar to the format used in U.S. debates. Two of the three moderators were originally trained by IFES and other USAID-funded partners in October 1997, when IFES initiated and helped produce the first-of-its-kind televised candidate debate in Ka-

zakhstani history. The debate afforded voters in Kazakhstan an opportunity to hear representatives of the nine political parties discuss their election platforms and respond to questions in a live forum. The event helped demonstrate the options available to voters when they cast their party list votes on 10 October.

Bigaliev delivered a short presentation at a briefing hosted by OSCE/ODIHR for visiting deputies of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Bigaliev highlighted IFES initiatives in Kazakhstan and, in particular, for the parliamentary and local elections.

Bigaliev attended the monthly Democracy Round Table at USAID/CAR in Almaty. Richard Jones, U. S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan, highlighted the election results after the first round of voting and thanked all U.S. international organizations for sending their representatives to monitor the elections. He also expressed his appreciation to IFES and NDI for their successful work on the domestic observer training and monitoring projects.

Impact Summary

Work conducted in October centered on creating an active interest in elections and civic participation. With a successful domestic observer training series conducted in partnership with NDI, the Center for Support of Democracy and DETAR for the Majilis and Maslikhat elections, election monitors provided a valuable counterbalance on election day that led to greater transparency and accountability on the part of election officials at all levels. Both rounds of the election witnessed high activity and participation on the part of domestic observers, who practiced their rights and used their training materials throughout both election events. A mock election role-playing exercise introduced by IFES, NDI and their local partners proved valuable to the observers as part of the nationwide training regimen. Scenarios were played out at sample polling stations to give each participant a greater feel for the process as a whole, which contributed greatly to their professionalism on Election Day. Similarly, the election role-playing exercise was useful for students at participating pilot schools for IFES’ curriculum development project. Students at most of the 34 pilot schools had the opportunity to gain greater insight and hands-on experience in the election process by forming their own political groupings and selecting student leaders. The project served as the opening lesson in the experimental pilot initiative which will commence in full with the introduction of the com-

pleted textbook, anthology and teacher's handbook in time for the beginning of the second academic quarter in mid-November.

KYRGYZSTAN

Elections to Local Self-governing Bodies

On 17 October, local government elections were held throughout Kyrgyzstan. IFES monitored these elections using four two-person teams. Although election violations were observed, it was noted by all teams and by USAID/US Embassy observers that the IFES-produced election training manual was present in most polling places and had been used in polling staff training. The violations that were observed included family voting and lack of awareness of the rights of observers. These and other violations will be reviewed during polling staff training, prior to the parliamentary elections scheduled for February 2000. The Central Election Commission (CEC) earned high marks for the overall manner in which it approached the recent elections—the first held under the new election code.

Election Dispute Adjudication

IFES and the OSCE conducted a conference for Kyrgyzstani judges, lawyers, media and NGO representatives on election dispute adjudication in Bishkek on 22-23 October. International speakers were invited to Bishkek to share their experience and knowledge. Following the conference IFES, ABA and the CEC immediately commenced working together on a election dispute adjudication training program to be implemented through the Judicial Training Center. It is proposed that this Program will be completed by the beginning of November 1999.

Election Study Tour

Mr. Tabaldy Orozaliev, Chief of Staff from the CEC, departed Bishkek on 25 October and traveled to Canberra, Australia to complete an election study tour with the Australian Election Commission (AEC) in the lead up to the national referendum on the question of Australia becoming republic. He will be working both in the central office of the AEC in Canberra and in both a state head office and divisional office in Sydney, New South Wales. Orozaliev was nominated to take part in the exchange, which was arranged and funded by AED and USAID.

PSA Production in Conjunction with NGO

Through the Election Grant Committee process, the

NGO *TV Crossroads* was successful in obtaining a grant to produce television Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on voter education prior to the local government elections. IFES monitored these productions and assisted *TV Crossroads* in having them broadcast on a popular television channel. IFES is now hopeful of incorporating the experience of *TV Crossroads* into an IFES parliamentary election public education activity.

Impact Summary

The poll worker election-training manual that IFES produced and used nationally in the training program had a positive effect on the operation of the approximately 2000 polling places. IFES has received positive feedback from poll worker chairpersons of precinct election commissions and the CEC on the value of the publication. IFES will again be involved in poll worker training in the lead up to the February 2000 Parliamentary elections and will reprint the Training Manual for this purpose. The addition of a new publication on election violations to be introduced for the parliamentary elections will enhance the election process in Kyrgyzstan. In addition to the training of poll workers, the IFES/ABA judicial training program currently being produced will give the Kyrgyz courts the election knowledge and legal background for election disputes which will be required in the event of election disputes or appeals being lodged following the parliamentary elections scheduled for February 2000.

TAJIKISTAN

Political Party Development

IFES Consultant Phil Griffin arrived in Dushanbe to begin the next phase of IFES's political party development project in Tajikistan. Griffin held introductory meetings with representatives of the Democratic Party (Teheran and Almaty platforms), the People's Democratic Party, Movement of National Unity and Revival, Agrarian Party, Socialist Party, National Movement *Jumbish*, La'li Badakhshan, and others to solicit their ideas and thoughts on the state of multi-party democracy in Tajikistan and to invite them to participate in an ongoing dialogue that seeks to expand on the semi-regular meetings between party officials held throughout the Fall. Central to Griffin's strategy has been to engage members of both pro-governmental and opposition parties to discuss foremost issues of registration and access to sources of communication, and help further develop and solidify the cooperative relationship between competing parties established in Au-

gust at an event sponsored by the Marshall Center. Using specific needs as identified by party representatives, Griffin will develop a manual specifically geared to the developmental needs of the political parties in Tajikistan. Foremost among the needs thus far identified by Griffin, Anthony Bowyer, and IFES' project team in Tajikistan is the necessity to develop party platforms and messages and improve communications capacity. A daunting task faced by parties, particularly those considered belonging to the opposition camp, has been to consolidate their support and make spread information through electronic media sources. Limited access to such sources has hampered these parties to reach a wider audience of potential voters. Griffin was able in his initial meetings to offer some suggestions on how members of competing parties could combine efforts to conduct future voter outreach events by employing the First Press Club, a Dushanbe-based media outlet which assisted IFES in its voter education project for the 27 September Constitutional Referendum. First Press Club is a respected, non-partisan source of information which holds regular press conferences and briefings, and has expressed an interest in serving as an ongoing source of information on political and electoral issues.

Efforts and attention of the political parties was concentrated primarily on the 5 November presidential election in Tajikistan, though all parties were eagerly awaiting the expected release of a draft election law governing the parliamentary elections scheduled for February 2000. Despite challenges in registration issues of political parties and, specifically, of opposition candidates vying to compete in the presidential poll, the parties remained committed to seeking a viable alternative that would allow them to fully compete in the parliamentary elections. The division of the Islamic Renaissance Party into three factions further complicated the party landscape and added a touch of uncertainty to the approach which opposition parties would take for the February 2000 elections, and underscored the need to hold regular discussions and developmental sessions among the party and faction leaders.

Phil Griffin has tapped into the parties' interest to expand their contact and discuss themes of mutual concern, such as party and candidate registration, voter outreach and the election law. Griffin proposed a series of working roundtables on these and other themes including members of the each party's hierarchy, with the first in the series to begin late

this year.

Voter Registration

IFES awaited word regarding the Memorandum of Understanding submitted to the Government of Tajikistan. The MOU governs the proposed computerization project of the voter registry, which would be undertaken in advance of nationwide parliamentary elections set for 27 February 2000. In preparation for the next phase of the project, IFES Elections Technology specialist Michael Yard traveled to Dushanbe to assess the situation for the pilot registration initiative and make recommendations for acquisition of hardware necessary to create the core computer center. It was anticipated that the Government and CEC would recommend changes to the election law explicitly supporting computerized voter registration that would be finalized after the 5 November presidential election.

School of Political Leadership for Women

The IFES-sponsored "Political Leadership" seminar series conducted by local NGO partner *Traditions and Modernity* concluded with events in Kulyab and Khojand, with the seminar in Khorog rescheduled. The events brought together women's leaders at the regional level to develop strategies and generate interest among women to participate in the political process. The series was conducted across Tajikistan and has focused on stimulating initiative not only for women to participate as candidates in parliamentary elections scheduled to take place in 2000, but also in bodies of local, self-administration. The events offered the opportunity for women leaders to enhance contact with each other as well as, in many cases, the work of their individual NGOs.

Candidate Debate Training

IFES/Tajikistan and its partner *The First Press-Club* planned a series of press conferences and candidate debates and forums with presidential candidates after they completed registration. Project Manager Frank Vassallo and Country Coordinator Behzod Mingboev met with Davlat Usmon and Saifiddin Turaev among others to propose the events, which were agreed to and supported pending the resolution of registration and administrative issues.

Domestic Election Observer Training

The project to train a central group of core trainers as well as conduct regionally based training events for domestic election observation was put on hold pending the adoption of legislation guaranteeing the rights and participation of independent, non-

affiliated observers. IFES met with its three primary local NGO partners *Sharq, Traditions and Modernity*, and *Modar* to revise the training strategy and timeline for the regional events. Depending upon the legislation, it was anticipated that the training project could commence as early as November with up to 4000 trained domestic observers eventually receiving accreditation.

Impact Summary

The arrival of IFES consultants to work specifically on political party development and voter registration contributed to a very active October for IFES/Tajikistan, as preparations intensified for the presidential and parliamentary elections. With technical issues of party/candidate registration as well as development of a new election law enshrining electronic voter registration dominating the interest of political parties and the government, IFES focused its efforts on establishing sustained dialogue on all pre-electoral registration issues. With elections to the Majlisi Oli less than four months away, IFES continued in parallel its civic outreach program through the School of Political Leadership for Women series, and prepared to embark on a voter education initiative in November and December. Though activities are currently being undertaken with a look forward to the parliamentary elections, IFES has organized its women's seminars and party development work in a way that will eventually encourage ongoing post-election dialogue and cooperation.

UZBEKISTAN

Public Opinion Survey

The Tashkent-based sociological research firm *Expert* commenced with fieldwork for the IFES Public Opinion Survey in 5 regions of Uzbekistan: Karakalpakstan, Tashkent City, Bukhara, Samarkand and Ferghana oblasts. Preliminary results from the survey are projected to be available in November. The survey seeks to measure understanding of democracy and citizenship with a focus on perception of information being received. Results of the survey, which will be over-sampling young respondents age 16-24, are expected to help IFES target its civic education programs to better meet the needs of the young and emerging electorate.

Teachers' Training Seminars in Nukus

The Karakalpak Ministry of Education (MoE) sent a letter of support and formal approval to IFES and

the Nukus-based NGO partner *Renaissance* regarding its plans to conduct a curriculum development teacher-training seminar in Nukus in November. As a result, the Ministry of Education created a working group of three experts to assist in implementing the curriculum development project and teachers training seminar. The project first received interest from the Karakalpak Ministry of Education in August 1999 following the participation of one of its representatives as an observer at a training event for Kazakhstani pilot schoolteachers in Almaty. Mr. Sultanov of the MoE then agreed to the concept of holding mock student elections prior to the beginning of the course in January 2000 as a way of creating student interest in the December elections to the Oliy Majlis and January presidential elections. *Renaissance* Director Gulnara Dosumova is currently working with IFES/Uzbekistan Country Coordinator Lola Maksudova to organize and coordinate the November training event.

Elections in Uzbekistan

The Central Election Commission (CEC) of Uzbekistan created an Election News Conciliation Council to coordinate the activities of mass media during the election campaign. The main purpose of the Council is to coordinate and ensure political party and independent candidates equal rights to access mass media during their election campaigns.

The CEC began a comprehensive voter education campaign nationwide in October. Special TV and radio programs on voter education were broadcast several times a day. Uzbek TV channels transmit the televised interviews and open broadcasts with CEC representatives, political party leaders and legal experts in relatively a new, more open approach on the history of elections in the country. IFES and others were given the opportunity to comment on the outreach project and were invited to monitor the 5 December vote for seats to the Oliy Majlis.

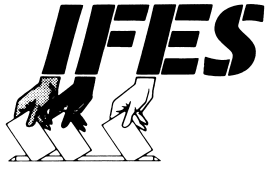
USAID Monthly Round-table Discussions

Lola Maksudova participated in the monthly U.S. Mission Contractor/Grantee Round Table meeting to discuss USAID experience in implementing civic education activities with its partners in Uzbekistan. The regional USAID mission is currently developing a 2000-2004 strategy for Central Asia. IFES will be assisting USAID in its assessment mission by providing an overview of civic education priorities for the coming year.

While at the meeting, most of the participants mentioned the importance of measuring the impact of training programs and roundtable discussions sponsored by international organizations. Projects such as the IFES Public opinion surveys are considered by the international community as an important and relevant way of monitoring NGO sustainability in the region.

Impact Summary

IFES' second public opinion survey in Uzbekistan is expected to generate results critical to the next phases of its civic education program, which seeks to target secondary school students. With the mock elections and curriculum development initiative projected to stimulate interest in elections and citizenship among pilot school students in Karakalpakstan, IFES hopes to use the survey data to better target programs increasing involvement and understanding of young citizens' role in the building of democracy.



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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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