



## Run-off confirms that Ukraine's presidential election meets most international commitments

Strasbourg, 08.02.2010 - Ukraine's run-off presidential election confirmed the international election observation mission's assessment that the electoral process met most OSCE and Council of Europe commitments.

In a statement issued today, the observers noted that the election consolidated progress achieved since 2004. But they also concluded that the lack of mutual trust between the candidates and the deficient legal framework were at the root of the problems observed and constitute an immediate challenge for the new leadership. The professional, transparent and honest voting and counting should serve as a solid foundation for a peaceful transition of power.

"Yesterday's vote was an impressive display of democratic elections. For everyone in Ukraine, this election was a victory. It is now time for the country's political leaders to listen to the people's verdict and make sure that the transition of power is peaceful and constructive," said João Soares, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Special Co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observers.

"Some say the Orange Revolution has failed. I say no. Thanks to the Orange Revolution, democratic elections in Ukraine are now a reality," said Matyas Eörsi, Head of the delegation of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly.

"The pessimistic scenarios put forward before election day were proven wrong by the overwhelmingly efficient and non-partisan manner in which election commissions performed yesterday and by the high turnout. Ukraine is setting a pattern of democratic elections. The Ukrainian people, who have shown their commitment to a democratic electoral process, now deserve a peaceful transition of power," said Assen Agov, Head of the delegation of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

"Any functioning democracy needs not only to focus on the election day itself. What it also needs is a wider legal framework guaranteeing the transparency of the political process including the financing of political parties and candidates," said Pawel Kowal, Head of the delegation of the European Parliament.

"This has been a well-administered and truly competitive election offering voters a clear choice. It will now be crucial to establish unambiguous rules and close the gaps in the law well in advance of any new election in order to avoid the uncertainties that marked this election," said Heidi Tagliavini, Head of the election observation mission of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

### For further information contact:

Klas Bergman, OSCE PA, +380958703700 or +4560108380, [klas@oscepa.dk](mailto:klas@oscepa.dk)

Jens-Hagen Eschenbäcker, OSCE/ODIHR, +380958703697 or +48603683122, [jens.eschenbaecker@odihr.pl](mailto:jens.eschenbaecker@odihr.pl)

Angus Macdonald, PACE, +380938581019 or +33 630496820, [angus.macdonald@coe.int](mailto:angus.macdonald@coe.int)

Ruxandra Popa, NATO PA, +32 473931961, [rpopa@nato-pa.int](mailto:rpopa@nato-pa.int)

Cezary Lewanowicz, EP, +32498983588, [cezary.lewanowicz@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:cezary.lewanowicz@europarl.europa.eu)

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