



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Armenia Election Observers

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 10, 2007

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The United States agrees completely with ODIHR Director Ambassador Strohal's May 7th statement of concern about the refusal by Armenian authorities to admit Turkish election observers to the upcoming Parliamentary elections. This decision violates OSCE norms. It also represents a lost opportunity for further rapprochement with Turkey.

We studied very carefully the statement by a spokesman of the Government of Armenia on May 9th in which they noted that Turkey maintains a closed border with Armenia and refuses to establish diplomatic relations. We fully understand these political realities. But that does not change other realities, including Armenia's obligations to this organization. According to the 1990 Copenhagen Document, all participating States committed to invite "observers from any other (OSCE) participating State, who may wish to do so, to observe the course of their national election proceedings." We also recall very clearly the words of Armenia's Foreign Minister Oskanian when he told the Permanent Council on April 17th that Armenia welcomed short-term observers and would encourage OSCE member states to participate with observers. Foreign Minister Oskanian went on to observe that free and fair elections require the good will and good intentions of everyone. We understand that the Government of Armenia appears to have accredited one Turkish Parliamentarian as a member of the PACE delegation. We urge Armenia, now, to reconsider its refusal to accredit short-term OSCE observers and to seize this as an opportunity for rapprochement with Turkey.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.