



Danish Chairmanship of the OSCE
Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Copenhagen, 2nd September 1997

CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
AND
THE OSCE OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND
HUMAN RIGHTS

As signed by:

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office H. E. Niels Helveg-Petersen
and
The President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Javier Rupérez

CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT

BETWEEN THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY AND THE OSCE OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Since the establishment of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights following the Charter of Paris, both OSCE Institutions have engaged in various aspects of election assistance and observation. Experience has shown that it is both practical and desirable for these two OSCE Institutions to work more closely together on election projects. While the OSCE PA has engaged almost exclusively in the observation of parliamentary elections by short-term observers, the ODIHR has engaged in election assistance, long-term assistance, long-term observation and short-term observation of presidential, parliamentary and municipal elections, as well as referendums. In order to avoid overlap, redundancy, unnecessary expense and confusion it is agreed that the following procedures will be undertaken to enhance the capabilities and effectiveness of both of these OSCE Institutions in the future;

The Needs Assessment Mission

The ODIHR, in consultation with the OSCE PA, will initiate a preparatory Needs Assessment Mission prior to a long-term election observation. This will provide the ODIHR and the OSCE PA with a common reference point when embarking on an election observation project. The OSCE PA may send a representative on the Needs Assessment Mission if the OSCE PA wishes to do so and deems such participation to be appropriate. In any case, the ODIHR will inform the OSCE PA of the results of the Needs Assessment Mission.

The needs assessment will take into account any previous reports by the ODIHR and the OSCE PA regarding the country concerned, including progress made on any recommendations. Such missions will also assess the extent, needs and context of the observation and should serve to establish an early dialogue with the national election authorities.

Exchange of Information

Regular field reports from the ODIHR On-site Co-ordinator and long-term observers will be sent to the OSCE PA. These reports will include information about the conduct of the political campaigns, the role of the media, and the main issues of the campaign, as well as information about the candidates and political parties participating in the election process. In addition to these reports, the On-site Co-ordinator will provide copies of election laws and all relevant information on the election administration to the OSCE PA for inclusion in the briefing materials that the OSCE PA will prepare for the short-term observers. The International Secretariat of the OSCE PA will prepare briefing books well in advance of the election for distribution to short-term observers. Such materials will be shared with the ODIHR On-site Co-ordinator

(each observation mission will have one person specifically charged with the co-ordination of briefing materials) for the benefit of all observers.

The OSCE/ODIHR will inform the OSCE PA of the names and schedules of the short-term observers as well as the participating states willing to send such observers. The OSCE PA will provide the same information to the OSCE/ODIHR and to the On-site Co-ordinator. This information will be shared in advance as soon as information on short-term observers is received by both the ODIHR and the OSCE PA.

Observer Briefing

Recognizing that it is often difficult for parliamentarians to arrive in time for the OSCE/ODIHR general observer briefing, ODIHR will assist the OSCE in providing a separate subsequent briefing for parliamentarians whenever necessary. The OSCE/ODIHR On-site Co-ordinator, as well as when possible some long-term observers, will participate in the briefing. It is understood, however, that this briefing should not be a substitute for the provision of the continuous flow of information from the On-site Co-ordinator and the long-term observers to the OSCE PA for inclusion in the briefing books.

Logistical Support

Since the OSCE/ODIHR On-site Co-ordinator and long-term observers are in the field well in advance of the OSCE PA short-term observers, the OSCE/ODIHR will be in a position to assist the parliamentary observer delegation with critical logistical support, including identifying hotels or other accommodation and the engagement of cars, drivers and interpreters. This information will be provided to the OSCE PA in a timely manner in order that participating parliaments may be informed of the conditions and costs of sending short-term observers. In addition, the OSCE/ODIHR On-site Co-ordinator will provide a security assessment to the OSCE PA and make arrangements for the provision of such security as may be necessary for short-term observers participating in the election monitoring project.

The ODIHR also recognizes the fact that the OSCE PA, being a parliamentary body with short-term observers, cooperates closely during its election monitoring with the local Parliament's staff as regards the preparation of a pre-election programme and logistics. The exchange of information between the ODIHR and the OSCE PA on programme co-ordination and existing logistical arrangements will be mutually beneficial. The OSCE/ODIHR may make suggestions for the programme of the OSCE PA observers but will not interfere with or attempt to change or alter the OSCE PA programme without prior approval of the OSCE PA International Secretariat.

Deployment

With the objective to establish an integrated deployment plan, the ODIHR will inform the OSCE PA in advance about its deployment suggestions and recommendations. The OSCE/ODIHR On-site Co-ordinator will provide the OSCE PA with a detailed deployment plan well in advance of the arrival of short-term observers. In order that the OSCE PA may determine the manner in which their observers will be deployed it is desirable that short-term observer groups co-ordinate their observation activities in an overall deployment plan, in order to avoid duplication and to maximize overall efficiency. Organizations which send larger numbers of observers to participate in an overall effort may need to have their members

distributed across a deployment plan, in order to meet the specific interests or needs of their organization as a whole.

OSCE Special Co-ordinator

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office may designate a political figure as a Special Co-ordinator to lead the short-term OSCE observer mission. This political figure should normally be the President of the OSCE PA or an OSCE PA senior official recommended by the OSCE PA in consultation with the Chairman-in-Office. This Special Co-ordinator will work closely with the OSCE/ODIHR On-site Co-ordinator and will deliver the preliminary post-election statement in conjunction with other appropriate officials. In the event that other international parliamentary bodies are strongly represented in the short-term observer mission, the Special Co-ordinator may designate a Co-Chair or Co-Chairs of the observation mission, as appropriate.

Briefing and De-briefing

Whenever possible, common briefings and de-briefings for all observers should be organized jointly by the OSCE PA staff and the On-site Co-ordinator. It is understood, however, that the OSCE PA will have its own internal de-briefing prior to the common de-briefing for all observers. Such separate preliminary de-briefings may also be convened by other international parliamentary bodies or special groups of observers. The OSCE/ODIHR On-site Co-ordinator and other OSCE/ODIHR officials will normally be expected to attend and participate in such preliminary de-briefings. The Special Co-ordinator or other OSCE PA senior official will be expected to remain until the full de-briefing has taken place (within 24-48 hours).

The Preliminary Post-Election Statement

The preliminary post-election statement will normally be made on the afternoon following the election. This represents a compromise between the time constraints on parliamentarians requiring an early departure, and the technical needs of the ODIHR which often require 24-48 hours after election day for a full de-briefing and the comprehensive assessment of statistical data and vote count process. In the event that the Special Co-ordinator is not the President of the OSCE PA or a senior official, the OSCE PA will reserve the right to issue its own independent statement based on the observations of the delegation from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Final Report

The ODIHR and the OSCE PA will submit to each other preliminary drafts of their final reports for comment. While the ODIHR and OSCE PA reports may emphasize certain aspects of the election process in more or less detail, they should try to avoid direct contradictions without at the same time compromising integrity of their independent observations and conclusions. It would be helpful if the reports could contain agreed upon recommendations from both the ODIHR and the OSCE PA.