



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Macedonian Presidential Elections, Current Issues

As delivered by Deputy Representative Douglas Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 6, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States congratulates the winner of Macedonia's presidential elections, Branko Crvenkovski, and looks forward to working closely with him in his new capacity as Head of State.

We take note of the ODIHR election monitoring mission's assessment that the elections were generally consistent with international standards, despite serious irregularities in certain parts of the country. Reports of voter intimidation, ballot box stuffing and other irregularities in predominantly ethnic Albanian areas are disappointing.

We understand that the Macedonian State Electoral Commission has considered appeals and complaints and has ruled that, even taking into account those appeals that were upheld, the overall result of the second round of elections would not have been affected.

We encourage the Macedonian government, in cooperation with ODIHR, to review and, where appropriate, to strengthen Macedonian electoral laws, procedures and relevant institutions ahead of the Autumn local elections.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we look to President-elect Crvenkovski to continue in the path of stability and progress set by Boris Trajkovski through abiding by commitments to strengthen interethnic relations. We also encourage President-elect Crvenkovski to maintain as priorities the completion of Framework Agreement implementation and the carrying out of reforms necessary to further advance Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic integration.

I thank you.