



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Parliamentary Elections in Armenia

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 10, 2012

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Reports from the OSCE-led International Election Observation Mission and the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan indicate that the May 6 Armenian Parliamentary elections took place in a calm and peaceful atmosphere, with the participation of opposition parties and election observers.

We welcome the joint observer mission's conclusion that the elections were "characterized by a competitive, vibrant and largely peaceful campaign." We nevertheless also share its concerns about the "unequal playing field" during the pre-election period and on election day, and about violations of campaign provisions and the manner in which authorities dealt with election complaints. We are also disturbed by reports of vote buying and undue pressure on voters.

We support and welcome the International Election Observation Mission's finding that the freedoms of assembly, expression, and movement were generally respected and that candidates were, for the most part, able to campaign freely. This represents a significant and welcome improvement over previous national elections in Armenia.

International and U.S. Embassy observers also noted an improved media environment during the official election campaign period, allowing voters to be better informed of candidates' positions.

We will continue to monitor the findings of international and domestic election observers, as well as the adjudication of election grievances during the post-election period.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.