

25th anniversary of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly

This year the IPA CIS celebrates its 25th anniversary. This significant date was marked with several events that took place on 27–28 March 2017 in the Tavricheskiy Palace, the IPA CIS headquarters, in St. Petersburg.

On 27 March, the IPA CIS Council held a meeting chaired by Chairperson of the IPA CIS Council, Speaker of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation Valentina Matvienko. The meeting adopted a statement of the heads of the parliament of the IPA CIS Member Nations «On the 25th anniversary of the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States».



The document notes that the model legislative acts adopted by the Assembly contributed to the building of legal conditions for the establishment of a market economy in the CIS countries. The statement stresses that today the IPA CIS has a considerable potential to expand international parliamentary cooperation, actively working as a platform for bilateral and multilateral cooperation both among the Member Nations and with international organizations. The most important aspects of the IPA CIS activities highlighted in the document include ensuring fundamental human rights and freedoms and the monitoring of the process of forming public authorities after election campaigns in the Commonwealth countries.

The members of the IPA CIS Council considered the results of the monitoring of the referendum on amendments to the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic held in December 2016, as well as the organization of monitoring of the forthcoming 2017 electoral campaigns in the CIS Member Nations. Also on 27 March 27, the 46th plenary session of the IPA CIS was held featuring the adoption

of model laws in the field of state-building and local governance, defense and security, labor protection, etc.

On the same day, the Inaugural Meeting of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly dedicated to the 25th anniversary the Assembly took place in the Dumskiy Hall of the Tavricheskiy Palace. The meeting brought together along with parliamentary delegations from the CIS countries, the Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, and representatives of other inter-parliamentary associations.

Chairperson of the IPA CIS Council Valentina Matvienko stated that, to this date, the Interparliamentary Assembly had adopted 370 model laws and codes. About 80% of them saw a direct application in the national legislation of the Commonwealth countries. The participants noted that the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS was an essential institution for the CIS integration which greatly contributes to the development of the legal framework of integration processes.

Within the framework of the events, more than 60 bilateral meetings of heads of parliamentary delegations, IPA CIS leadership and other participants of the events took place.

On 28 March, the Parliamentary Conference on Combating International Terrorism, organized by the IPA CIS and the OSCE PA, was held in the Tavricheskiy Palace.

The Chairperson of the IPA CIS Council Valentina Matvienko, OSCE PA President Christine Muttunen, PACE President Pedro Agramunt, PAM President Pedro Roque, and Chairman of the Executive Committee — CIS Executive





Secretary Sergey Lebedev, speakers of the CIS parliaments addressed the Conference.

The Conference featured three plenary sessions: International Cooperation on Counter-Terrorism and Security, Humanitarian aspects of Counter-Terrorism Activities, Economic and Social Foundations of the International Security System.

Following the discussion, the co-chairs adopted the Joint Conclusions of the Co-Chairs of the Parliamentary Conference on Combating International Terrorism.

IPA CIS international Observer Team participated in the monitoring of the parliamentary elections in Armenia

On the invitation of Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia Galoust Sahakyan, the team of IPA CIS international observers which included MPs and representatives of the supreme legislative authorities of the IPA CIS Member Nations, as well as staff members of the IPA CIS Council Secretariat led by Coordinator, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus Boleslaw Pirshtuk, performed monitoring of the elections to the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia held on 2 April 2017.

From 3 to 7 March 2017, as part of the long-term monitoring, IIMDD IPA CIS experts visited the Republic of

Armenia, where they met with the leadership of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, the Central Election Commission, the Ministry of Justice and the Administrative Court. The observers were briefed on the preparation of the elections.



Some meetings were held with the candidates and the observers attended the presentation of their election programs.

On 1 April 2017, during the short-term monitoring mission, the IPA CIS Observer Team met with Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia Eduard Sharmazanov, Chair of the Central Elections Commission Tigran Mukuchyan, and representatives of the headquarters of political parties participating in the election campaign.

On the Election Day, IPA CIS observers monitored polling stations in Yerevan, as well as in the settlements of five regions of Armenia (Aragatsotn, Ararat, Armavir, Gegharkunik and Kotayk) at all stages of the election process, from the opening of polling stations to the counting of votes, with over 100 stations visited during the day.

In addition, on 2 April Coordinator of the IPA CIS Observer Team Boleslaw Pirshtuk met with Head of the delegation of OSCE international PA observers Geir Bekkevold



and with OSCE Special Coordinator Ignacio Sanchez Amor to discuss the issues related to the organization of the election campaign, as well as the quality of administration of elections on the E-Day. The parties agreed that the elections were being held without violations.

Following the results of the monitoring, the IPA CIS observers concluded that the elections to the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia were conducted in accordance with the Constitution, the Electoral Code and, generally, complied with universally recognized democratic norms for holding elections, and were multi-party, competitive, free, transparent and open.



IPA CIS observers monitored the elections of the President of the Republic of Serbia

On 2 April 2017 the IPA CIS the team of IPA CIS international observers, led by Team Coordinator, Member of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation Anatoly Lisitsyn, observed the presidential elections in the Republic of Serbia.



On the eve of the vote, the observers met with Member of the Republican Electoral Commission of the Republic of Serbia Vesna Mizdrak, with presidential candidates — Chairman of the Serbian Radical Party Vojislav Šešelj, the independent candidate Vuk Jeremic, and with members of the electoral headquarters of the candidate from the Serbian Progressive Party Alexander Vucic.

On the day of voting, 2 April 2017, the members of the group attended the opening a polling station in Belgrade and visited several sites in the metropolitan constituency.

During the day, the observers monitored the voting process in a number of settlements in the capital district, as well as in the cities of Novi Sad and Sremski-Karlovtsi and in the Autonomous Province of Voevodina, visiting a total of about 20 polling stations.

IPA CIS observers noted the high level of readiness and professionalism of precinct election commissions and a high voter turnout.

The group of IPA CIS observers stated that the preparation and holding of the elections of the President of the Republic of Serbia were held in accordance with the procedure set out in the national electoral legislation and in compliance with international standards of democratic elections.

