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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

SYNOPSIS

Electoral training workshop

organised by the European Commission for Democracy through Law
in collaboration with the Central Election Commission of Azerbaijan

Baku, 8 - 10 September 2003

The Venice Commission organised an electoral training workshop in Baku, Azerbaijan from 8 to 10 September, 2003 in collaboration with the Directorate General of Human Rights, the Directorate General of Legal Affairs, Office of the Secretary General's Representative in Baku and the Central Electoral Commission of Azerbaijan. The workshop was opened by Mr. Mazahir Mahammad Oghlu PANAHOV, President, Central Electoral Commission of Azerbaijan.

The workshop was held over three days. The participants were divided into two groups: the first group was composed representatives of nongovernmental organisations, candidates, political parties and media; the second included members of the Central Electoral Commission, lower commissions and election judges. The afternoon session on the third day was devoted to a simulation of the work done by the electoral commission on election day. Over 50 participants attended the workshop.

The topics dealt with were as follows:

- candidates, voters and election campaign (Bernard OWEN, France, Christophoros CHRISTOPHOROU, Cyprus and Ashok AHIR, United Kingdom)
- what happens at the polls:
 - o from the voters' point of view (Didier VINOLAS, France)
 - o from the point of view of observers and the representatives of the candidates and the political parties (Bernard OWEN, France)
- - vote count and declaration of results (Richard BARRETT, Ireland)
- - electoral dispute (Jeffrey BUENGER, USA and Maria. ROMER, Poland)

This training workshop is the third organised by the Venice Commission (the first in Armenia and Albania in May and September 2003 respectively) and another in Georgia, September 2003. Such workshops are organised during the time preceding the elections and aim at treating in a concrete way the legal questions which arise at the time of the elections.

Information on the seminar was disseminated by the press.

Gianni Buquicchio
Secretary of the Venice Commission