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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

IN CO-OPERATION WITH
THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OF BELGIUM
WITH THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION
THE GOVERNMENT OF LUXEMBOURG
THE GOVERNMENT OF NORWAY

12th EUROPEAN CONFERENCE
OF ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BODIES
“ENSURING NEUTRALITY, IMPARTIALITY
AND TRANSPARENCY IN ELECTIONS:
THE ROLE OF ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BODIES”

Monday and Tuesday, 30-31 March 2015

Conference Centre "Egmont"
Place du Petit Sablon, 8bis – B-1000 BRUSSELS

PROGRAMME

Monday, 30 March 2015

08:45-09:30 Registration of participants

09:30-10:00 Opening session

- Address by Mr Jan Jambon, Vice Prime-Minister and [Minister of Security and Interior](#), Belgium
- Address by Ambassador Astrid Emilie Helle, Permanent Representative of [Norway to the Council of Europe](#), Chair of the [Rapporteurs Group on Democracy](#) (GR-DEM) of the Committee of Ministers
- Address by Mr Gianni Buquicchio, President of the [Venice Commission](#) of the Council of Europe

**10:00-11:00 I. First plenary session:
The essential elements for neutral, impartial and
transparent elections**

Moderated by Mr Frédéric Bouhon, Doctor of Laws and Lecturer at the Faculty of Law, Political Science and Criminology – [University of Liège](#) (Unit of Public Law and Constitutional Law), Belgium

- *Essential criteria for neutral, impartial and transparent elections, Report on the timeline and inventory of political criteria for assessing an election*, by Mr Andreas Gross, Member of the [National Council](#), Switzerland, member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and former Chairman of the Council for Democratic Elections
- *The case-law of the European Court of Human Rights on the right to Free Elections*, Mr Dmytro Tretyakov, Lawyer at the Register of the [European Court of Human Rights](#), Council of Europe
- *The organisation of neutral elections: the Belgium experience*, Mr Régis Trannoy, Head of Elections Unit at the [Directorate General Institutions & Population](#) of the Federal Public Service Home Affairs of Belgium

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-13:00 I. Working groups

I. 1) *International standards with regard to the neutrality of electoral management bodies and public authorities and case-law of the European Court of Human Rights and national courts*, Mr Dmytro Tretyakov, moderator, Lawyer at the Register of the [European Court of Human Rights](#), Council of Europe (*Working group with **English/Russian** interpretation*)

I. 2) *Essential criteria for neutral, impartial and transparent elections*, Mr Andreas Gross, co-moderator, Member of the [National Council](#), Switzerland, member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and former Chairman of the Council for Democratic Elections; Ms Carmen Lúcia Rocha, co-moderator, Justice at the [Supreme Court](#), former President of the [Superior Electoral Court](#), Brazil (*Working group with **English/French** interpretation*)

– *Essential criteria for neutral, impartial and transparent elections, the Brazilian experience*, Ms Carmen Lúcia Rocha

I. 3) *The principle of equality of opportunity in the [Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#): how can electoral management bodies ensure equality of opportunities between candidates?*, Mr Oliver Kask, co-moderator, Judge, Appeal Court of Tallinn, Member of the [Venice Commission](#), Vice-Chair of the Council for Democratic Elections, Estonia (*Working group in **English/Dutch***)

13:00-14:00 Lunch break

14:00-15:30 II. Second plenary session: Functioning of electoral management bodies: good practice

Moderated by Mr Andreas Kiefer, Secretary General, [Congress of Local and Regional Authorities](#), Council of Europe

– *The Chief Electoral Officer of Quebec, at the heart of an efficient transparent electoral system*, Ms Catherine Lagacé, Secretary General of the [Chief Electoral Officer of Quebec](#), Canada, Secretary General of the [Francophonie Electoral Network](#) (RECEF)

– *Good practice: Austrian experiences*, Mr Gregor Wenda, Deputy Head of Elections Affairs Department at the [Federal Ministry of the Interior](#) of Austria

– *Good practice: Georgian experiences*, Ms Tamar Zhvania, Chairperson of the [Central Election Commission](#) of Georgia

- *Public access to documents, open counting and voting processes in Sweden*, Ms Kristina Lemon, Deputy Director, Head of the Elections and Referendums Section, [Election Authority](#), Sweden
- *Good practice and new technologies: the Belgium case*, Mr David Van Kerckhoven, IT Project Manager in the Elections Unit at the [Directorate General Institutions & Population](#) of the Federal Public Service Home Affairs of Belgium
- *Current requirements to ensure openness in electoral processes*, Mr Vladimir Churov, President of the [Central Election Commission](#), Russian Federation

15:30-16:00 Coffee break

16:00-17:15 II. Working groups

II. 1) *Neutrality, impartiality and transparency of electoral management bodies: good practice*, Mr Richard Barrett, moderator, Deputy Director General at the [Office of the Attorney General](#), Member of the [Venice Commission](#), Ireland (*Working group in **English/Dutch***)

II. 2) *How to reinforce the legal status of members of electoral commissions*, Mr Carlos Navarro, moderator, Director for International Studies and Projects at the [National Electoral Institute](#), Mexico (*Working group with **English/French** interpretation*)

II. 3) *The functioning and working methods of electoral management bodies: guaranteeing transparency*, Ms Ana Cristina López López, moderator, Head of the Electoral Cooperation Unit, at [Internal Policy and Electoral Processes](#) of the Ministry of the Interior of Spain (*Working group with **English/Russian** interpretation*)

17:15-17:45 Feedback from the working groups and closing remarks of the first day

17:45-19:00 Evening reception

Tuesday, 31 March 2015

**09:00-10:30 III. Third plenary session:
The complementary tools to the work of electoral
management bodies: electoral disputes, election
observation and media coverage**

Moderated by Mr Cristian Dan Preda, [Member of the European Parliament](#), Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, Coordinator on Foreign Affairs, former Chief Observer for Ivory Coast (2010) and Republic of Guinea (2013), Romania

- *Political campaigns and electoral dispute resolution systems: the case of Mexico*, Mr Manuel Gonzalez Oropeza, Judge at the [Federal Electoral Tribunal](#), Member of the [Venice Commission](#), Mexico
- *International IDEA's new Electoral Justice database*, Mr Abdurashid Solijonov, Programme Officer/Electoral Processes at [International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance \(International IDEA\)](#)
- *Electoral Management Bodies in OSCE/ODIHR's Observations: Common achievements and challenges from the perspective of international standards and good electoral practice*, Ms Tatyana Bogussevich, Acting Deputy Head of Election Department, Senior Election Adviser at the [Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the OSCE \(OSCE/ODIHR\)](#)
- *The role of election observation in strengthening the transparency of the electoral process*, Mr Emanuele Giaufret, Head of the Division for Democracy and Electoral Observation, Directorate of Human Rights and Democracy, [European External Action Service](#) of the European Union
- *Media monitoring during electoral processes*, Mr Rastislav Kužel, Executive Director of Civic Association [Memo98](#)

10:30-11:00 Coffee break

11:00-12:15 III. Working groups

III. 1) *The importance of transparency, impartiality and neutrality while dealing with complaints and appeals by electoral management bodies*, Mr Oliver Kask, Judge at the Tallinn Court of Appeal, Member of the [Venice Commission](#), Vice-Chair of the Council for Democratic Elections, Estonia (*Working group with **English/Russian** interpretation*)

III. 2) *Election observation as a key factor to reinforce transparency and impartiality of elections*, Mr Siaka Sangaré, co-moderator, President of the [Francophonie Electoral Network](#) (RECEF), General Delegate on elections of Mali; Mr Pietro Ducci, co-moderator, Head of the [Democracy and Elections Actions Unit](#), European Parliament (*Working group with **English/French** interpretation*)

III. 3) *Norms regarding media neutrality during electoral campaigns*, Mr Jos Wienen, moderator, member of the Chamber of Local Authorities, Representative of the [Congress of Local and Regional Authorities](#) of the Council of Europe on election observation, Chairman of the Council for Democratic Elections (*Working group in **English/Dutch***)

- *Media monitoring by EMBs and presence of EMBs in the media*, Mr Henk Kummeling, President of the [Dutch Electoral Council](#), Netherlands

12:15-12:30 Debriefing session with the working groups

12:30-13:45 Lunch break

- *Electoral Observation as a mean for greater transparency and impartiality in electoral processes*, Mr Cristobal Dupouy, Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation, Secretariat for Political Affairs, [Organization of American States](#)

**14:00-15:00 Closing session 1/2:
Discussion on and adoption of the conclusions of the 12th
European Conference of electoral management
bodies**

Moderated by Mr Jean-Benoît Pilet, Professor of Political Science, President of the Department of Political Science, [University of Brussels](#), Belgium

Mr Johan Ackaert, Professor of Political Science, [University of Hasselt](#), Faculty of Law (Government and Law Centre), Belgium

Mr Chemavon Chahbazian, Head of the Division of Election Observation and Interparliamentary Cooperation, [Parliamentary Assembly](#), Council of Europe

15:00-15:30 Coffee break

**15:30-16:45 Closing session 2/2:
Discussion on and adoption of the conclusions of the 12th
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