Press release | 13.12.2010

Elections in Kosovo

Lunacek: democratic progress but still serious shortcomings and allegations of fraud

Commenting on the outcome of elections held yesterday in Europe's youngest state, the first since its declaration of independence, **Ulrike Lunacek**, EP rapporteur on Kosovo and member of the EP Election Observation Delegation said:

"Taking into account the extremely short period of time that the Central Election Commission had for their planning, these elections have been well organised and, in comparison to 2007, have taken place in a generally peaceful atmosphere with better overall turnout This definitely shows progress in the democratic development of Kosovo.

"Nevertheless, in the course of Monday more and more allegations of irregularities and even fraud in two municipalities surfaced. In addition it is worrying that until Monday afternoon no preliminary election results have been announced by the Central Electoral Commission. I encourage political parties and citizens to make use of their right to file complaints at the independent Election Complaints and Appeals Panel ECAP within 24 hours. I expect ECAP to respond and decide about the allegations and whether a recount or rerun in a municipality is deemed necessary within 72 hours as foreseen and to deal with complaints with full transparency.

"It is of the utmost importance for the future of democratic progress in Kosovo that the culture of impunity is tackled. Additionally, election commissioners who have already been identified from last year's municipal elections as perpetrators of fraud should be held to account and prosecuted promptly.

"The increased participation of the Kosovo Serb community is definitely a sign of their further engagement with the country's institutions. However I do regret that the Kosovo Serbs of northern Kosovo refused to use the opportunity to exercise their democratic rights. I hope that a new parliament, including members of parties which have run for the first time, will be formed in due course, and that the process of reform and European integration continues."

Notes to Editors

Ulrike Lunacek *was one of a 7 MEP Election Observation Delegation*

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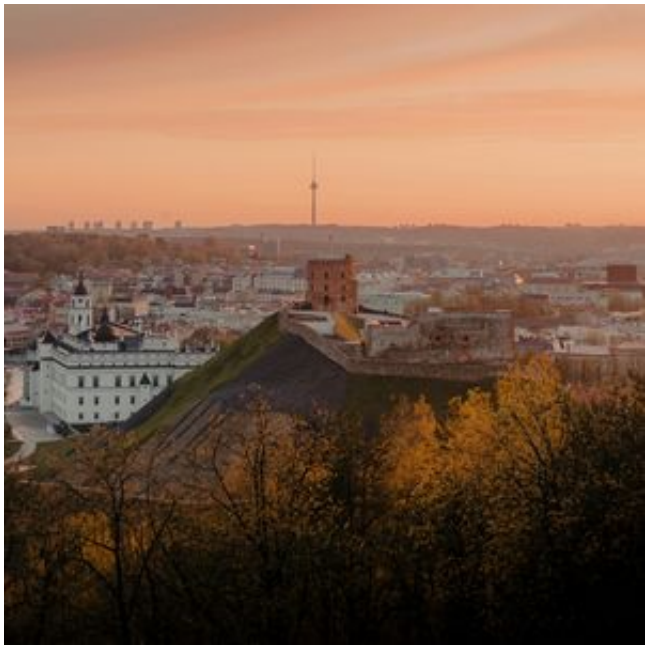
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Ulrike Lunacek

EP Vice-President, Member

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