



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 11 September 2003

CDL-EL (2003) 8syn
Or. fr.

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 Albania

Tirana, 1-3 September 2003

An electoral training workshop was organised in Tirana, 1-3 September 2003, by the Venice Commission, in co-operation with the Central Election Commission of Albania. Mr Ilirjan Celibashi, President of the Central Election Commission of Albania, and Mr Pierre Garrone, Head of the Division of Elections and Referendums at the Secretariat of the Venice Commission, began the debates.

A special session on electoral litigation had already taken place and was intended, above all, to address members of the Central Election Commission and the Electoral Appeal Body of the Tirana Court of Appeal. The high level debate, based on the very detailed report by Mr Eugenio Polizzi (Italy), made it possible to cover a number of concrete procedural questions, since, as with any other legal branch, electoral rights can only be implemented if respect is guaranteed by impartial bodies.

The remainder of the seminar was open to a wider audience, including representatives of the local government election commissions, political parties and nongovernmental organisations. The OSCE office in Tirana also took part in the special session.

Other topics dealt with were as follows:

- electoral litigation (Mr Eugenio Polizzi, Italy);
- composition and functioning of election commissions (Mr Bernard Owen, France);
- election day: candidates, voters and representatives of political parties and observers (Mr Michel Bosshard, Switzerland);
- counting and proclamation of results (Mr Kåre Vollan, Norway).

The debates were legal and technical in character and in general avoided political controversy. This training workshop is the second organised by the Venice Commission (the first one took place in Armenia May 2003) and will be followed by two similar workshops in Azerbaijan and Georgia this September. Such workshops take place during the time preceding elections, and aim at treating, in a practical manner, legal questions arising during elections. Local elections will be held in Albania on 12 October 2003.

The seminar concluded with practical exercises related to the vote.

Information regarding the seminar was disseminated on television and in the press.

Gianni Buquicchio
Secretary of the Venice Commission