

ENEMO

European Network of Election
Monitoring Organizations
International Observation Mission
Ukrainian Presidential Elections 2004

Європейська мережа організацій,
що спостерігають за виборами
Міжнародна місія спостереження
Президентські вибори в Україні - 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 23, 2004

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INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS DETAINED IN BELARUS ON WAY TO MONITOR UKRAINIAN POLL

ENEMO ALSO NOTES PRESSURE FROM KAZAKHSTAN ON OBSERVERS AND DELAYED APPROVAL FOR OBSERVERS TO LAND IN ODESSA

KYIV, UKRAINE – Peter Novotny, head of The European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO) today confirmed that 70 Belarusian ENEMO observers detained last night by authorities in Minsk have been released from custody, but it is unknown whether they all will be able to participate in the 1,000-strong observer mission. Novotny also noted that students in Kazakhstan have been warned not to travel to Ukraine and a charter flight carrying observers from Croatia had its approval for landing delayed.

Novotny explained that 70 Belarusians – members of human rights organizations that recently criticized the Belarussian election – were detained last night during a pre-departure briefing conducted by ENEMO. The observers, from the Partnership and Viasna organizations, were held by police for five hours and were released without explanation – after their train to Ukraine had departed.

At the same time, ENEMO reports that student observers in Kazakhstan were approached by their rectors and told not to travel to Ukraine “for their own safety.” Novotny said, “The majority of our student observers from Kazakhstan have made the brave decision to continue their trip but several have decided to remain in Kazakhstan.”

Novotny notes that a charter flight from Zagreb to Odessa had difficulty receiving permission to land in Odessa, despite the fact that the charter company regularly lands at this airport. After negotiations, the plane has received permission to land. It will carry 60 Croat observers. The majority of Croats scheduled to monitor in Odessa also monitored during the annulled second round on November 21.

ENEMO is an association of civic organizations from 16 countries of the former Soviet Union and Central Europe. The group deployed more than 1,000 observers on November 21, and found that the results “did not reflect the will of the Ukrainian people.” The over 1,000 observers for this revote will include experienced election monitors from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovakia, Russia, Poland, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kosovo, Romania, Georgia, Serbia, Armenia, Montenegro, Estonia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Macedonia.

Novotny explained, “Experienced observers from this region of the world bring a unique ability to understand electoral methods used in Ukraine, but many also must observe knowing that they face persecution upon returning home. It is a credit to these individuals that they have chosen to participate in this process.”