



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

295/2018

NOTE VERBALE

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) presents its compliments to the Foreign Ministries and Delegations of the OSCE participating States and has the honour to state the following:

Following an invitation to observe the mid-term congressional elections in the United States of America scheduled for 6 November 2018, based on the findings and conclusions of the Needs Assessment Mission deployed from 21 to 25 May 2018, and in accordance with its mandate, ODIHR is preparing to deploy a Limited Election Observation Mission (LEOM) for these elections. The ODIHR LEOM is planning to commence its activities in Washington, D.C. on 3 October 2018.

ODIHR relies upon the co-operation of participating States in seconding 100 long-term observers. Long-term observers should arrive in Washington, D.C. on 7 October 2018. Briefing sessions are planned for 8 and 9 October, after which the long-term observers will be deployed to their observation areas on 9 October. The long-term observers should plan to remain in the country until 11 November.

The attached information sheet provides further details. The involvement of long-term observers will permit observation of the administrative preparations for the elections, the campaign, adjudication of complaints, and the media.

In the interest of a broad and balanced representation among participating States in observation activities, ODIHR requests that any individual participating State nominates only up to 15 per cent of the total number of observers requested.

To ensure a better gender balance in its activities, ODIHR strongly encourages the OSCE participating States to continue to second women as long-term observers.

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Foreign Ministries and Delegations of the OSCE participating States the assurances of its highest consideration.

Warsaw, 16 July 2018

To
The Foreign Ministries and Delegations of the OSCE participating States

INFORMATION SHEET

REQUEST FOR LONG-TERM OBSERVERS

MID-TERM CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 6 November 2018

1. REQUEST FOR LONG-TERM OBSERVERS

ODIHR requests the co-operation of the OSCE participating States in seconding **a total of 100** experienced long-term observers (LTOs) to permit the observation of the administrative preparations for the elections, the campaign, adjudication of complaints, and the media. The LTOs should arrive in Washington, D.C. on 7 October 2018 to be deployed according to the following schedule:

7 October	Arrival in Washington, D.C.
8/9 October	Briefing sessions
9 October	Deployment to observation areas
11 November	Departure

The special expertise required includes election administration, election-related legal affairs or comparative election observation experience (English language essential). The LTOs shall perform their duties as stipulated in the attached terms of reference.

ODIHR strongly encourages all observers to undertake the ODIHR comprehensive e-learning course for observers, available at: www.odihrobserver.org.

2. REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION PROCESS

After receiving this information sheet, all OSCE participating States considering secondment are requested to inform ODIHR on the number of LTOs (to the attention of Sylwia Zwolinska or Anna Krzysztofik; e-mail: sylwia.zwolinska@odihr.pl, anna.krzysztofik@odihr.pl) no later than 8 August 2018.

To be nominated by the Seconding States, LTOs are required to create a personal account in the new Election Expert Database, fully complete their profile, and share it with their national focal point. The Seconding States are requested to submit the names of proposed LTOs using the Election Expert Database as soon as possible and no later than 8 August 2018; 17:00 (Warsaw Time).

For the purposes of obtaining entry visa to the United States of America the online mission registration form must be completed and supporting documents attached by **13 August 2018; 10:00 (Warsaw Time)**.

3. INSURANCE

The seconding States should secure for their observers any insurance coverage, including adequate health, accident/disability and life insurance, as it will not be provided by ODIHR. The observers should have a copy of their insurance policy with them.

Each LTO team will be equipped by ODIHR with a laptop and mobile phones. LTOs may choose to bring their personal laptop and mobile phone. It should be noted, however, that ODIHR cannot take

any responsibility for the observers' personal belongings, including computer and mobile telephone, in case of theft or any other incident. The seconding States may consider insuring personal belongings of observers.

4. VISAS

Visas, if required, should be arranged with the Embassy/Consulate of the United States of America. For observers without an embassy in their country, please inform ODIHR in Warsaw (Sylvia Zwolinska or Anna Krzysztofik) as soon as possible.

5. ACCOMMODATION

Hotel reservations will be organized for the LTOs by the ODIHR LEOM upon receipt of the online registration form. The LTOs will be met at the airport by an ODIHR LEOM representative upon their arrival and transported to their accommodation.

6. COSTS

LTOs will be asked to cover directly their expenses for food and hotel accommodation; these costs may vary depending on personal preferences. However, as an indication of possible costs an LTO may incur, please note that the OSCE Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for July 2018 is EUR 301 in Washington, D.C. Costs, DSA included, may be less or more outside Washington, D.C., with a highest rate of EUR 336.

As cash payments should be avoided, the LTOs should bring a valid credit card sufficient to cover all costs indicated above.

Please note that no interpreters, drivers or assistants will be provided by ODIHR. Thus, the LTOs are expected to fluently speak English and shall **be licensed, able, and willing to drive** a vehicle with automatic transmission. **All LTOs should submit copies of valid driver license when submitting their on-line registration form.** All LTOs should verify format of acceptable driver license in the United States.

The LEOM will also make all arrangements for in-country travel to deployment areas, including car rental for each LTO team.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT AND SECURITY

LTOs should strictly abide by the ODIHR Observer [Code of Conduct](#). The security and safety of observers is of the highest priority and will take precedence in EOM management. LTOs will receive a security briefing upon arrival and are requested to strictly comply with security instructions and deployment plan prepared by the ODIHR EOM.

Observers should also familiarize themselves and abide with the [Guide on the OSCE Policy against Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination](#).

ODIHR reserves the right to refuse any candidates to this observation mission who cannot undertake their activities in an impartial and objective manner and to withdraw accreditation in case of any serious breach of the ODIHR Observer Code of Conduct.

LTOs are kindly asked to refrain from commenting on mission-related issues, including via social media. In line with the ODIHR Observer Code of Conduct, media communications regarding the electoral process and the substance of observations should be made only by the Head of Mission, ODIHR Spokesperson, or other responsible ODIHR officials.

8. OTHER INFORMATION

Please note that all ODIHR election observation reports on prior elections in the United States of America are available at the ODIHR website: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/usa>

All observers should familiarize themselves with the contents of:

1. The ODIHR “Election Observation Handbook”, available at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/68439>
2. The ODIHR “Handbook for Long-Term Election Observers” available at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/24678>
3. The ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report available at: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/usa/386292>