



Final Report on the Pre-Election Monitoring of the Parliamentary Elections 2008

The report presents the information on the activities carried out in the pre-election period of May 21, 2008 Parliamentary Elections of Georgia. The International Society for Fair and Free Elections' (hereafter ISFED) pre-election monitoring mission covered 75 electoral districts. ISFED's observers conducted monitoring on 3 major directions. These are:

1. Monitoring of election administration at all 3 levels;
2. Monitoring of updating process of Unified Voters' List;
3. Monitoring of pre-election campaign- facts of voters intimidation and bribery.

ISFED launched pre-election monitoring on March 21- the same date the Parliamentary Elections were appointed. All information presented by ISFED is checked and confirmed by ISFED's long-term observers.

At the plebiscite held on January 5, 2008, 79,174% of voters of Georgia ¹ voted for holding the Parliamentary elections in Spring 2008. Based on the plebiscite's results the date for holding the parliamentary elections was set on May 21, 2008.

ISFED instantly expressed its readiness to conduct the monitoring of elections and commenced motoring of pre-election period through the organization's long-term observers. ISFED conducted monitoring on the following directions: process of staffing of election administration at all levels, sessions of Central Election Commission and District Election Commissions, adherence to the dates set by the legislation by election administration, and conducting pre-election activities. Also, ISFED conducted monitoring of the process of updating voters' lists and pre-election campaigns conducted by political parties and majoritarian candidates and methods used for receiving votes. ISFED regularly presented the monitoring findings to public through electronic information bulletin "Election Update".²

Prior to setting the date of elections on March 21, 2008, amendments to the Constitution of Georgia and organic law "Election Code of Georgia" were introduced. The constitutional amendments set the new rules for electing Members of the Parliament, and amendments to the Election Code regulate a number of issues concerning the pre-election campaign, Election Day and post-election period.

In the monitoring period the election administration registered 23 political parties, out of which 9 political parties and 3 electoral blocks were registered for participation in the Parliamentary Elections;

On April 21, ISFED observed the process of submission of candidates' lists and registration cards by electoral subjects to election administration; the process arose several questions among the public, which have not been properly answered by election administration.

¹ According to the data of Central Election Commission of Georgia

² 3 editions of "Election Update", Statement on Voters' Lists



The total number of voters entered in the special list has significantly increased since January 5, 2008 Extraordinary Presidential Elections.

In the pre-election period ISFED twice checked the electronic database of unified voters' list provided by Central Election Commission. In the voters' list ISFED discovered a number of shortcomings: duplicates, empty graphs, underage voters.

ISFED welcomes the decision of Central Election Commission to the period for entering changes to the voters' list by 3 days.

The pre-election monitoring reveals the following facts: obstructing campaigning of political subjects; distributing material goods to voters; use of administrative resources; intimidation of voters and observers.

Election Administration

On March 21 the Parliament of Georgia adopted the amendment to the Constitution of Georgia, according to which 75 single mandate majoritarian districts were formed and 50% (75) Members of Parliament are elected from these 75 single mandate majoritarian districts. According to the same amendment, the winner is that majoritarian candidate who receives a simple majority of voters participating in the elections in the district, though no less than 30% of those votes. In that district, where none of the candidates will clear the minimal 30% threshold, in 2 weeks the second tour of elections will be appointed, in which two majoritarian candidates with the best results will participate.³

It is important that according to the new system (75 single mandate majoritarian districts) each majoritarian district throughout Georgia will have one representative at the Parliament. This means that each district will have one mandate. For example, Kazbegi district with 5 943 registered voters and Gldani district with 146 300 registered voters⁴ will have one majoritarian at the Parliament of Georgia. Distribution of mandates according to territorial arrangement and not according to number of population questions the principle of equality of voters' votes, proclaimed by the Constitution of Georgia.

On March 21, 2008, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the amendments to the organic law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia". Some of important amendments are listed below:

- The threshold of elections of Parliament through proportional system decreased from 7 % to 5 %;
- The number of members of District Election Commission increased from 5 to 13, and they are appointed according to the rule of forming Central and Precinct Election Commissions;⁵
- The period for voters' to check themselves in the voters' list increased up to 14 days;⁶
- The period for lodging complaints on administrative acts of election administration (including summarization protocol) was defined as 1 day;
- Upon the lodging of complaints, the election administration was prescribed to define the shortcomings identified in the complaint and fix it;

³ Organic Law of Georgia " Election Code of Georgia", Article 105, Sub-Article 5;

⁴ According to data of Central Election Commission (16 May, 2008), newspaper "24 Hours);

⁵ All election commissions are recruited with six independent and seven political parties' representatives;

⁶ On May 5, the period of checking oneself in the voters' list was extended by 3 days;



- The precise procedure in order to request and view the video camera recordings was defined; according to the new procedure, it is allowed to request only 15 minute piece of video recording;
- The form of summarization protocol was changed, namely: the summarization protocol will be only 1 page; the number of special precinct was added; the number of total voters in supplement lists, as well as the number of voters who participated in the elections and total number of valid ballots were removed;
- The procedure of accreditation of local election observation organizations was changed and simplified. It is now similar to the accreditation procedure for international election observation organizations.

During the process of defining amendments to the election legislation, ISFED together with other local non-governmental organizations participated in the meetings with representatives of the Parliament and regularly presented the organization's recommendations on various topics.

Registration of Electoral Subject and Observers

No later than 56 days prior the elections (26 March⁷), the Central Election Commission completed receiving the applications from the political parties for the participation in the parliamentary elections. 60 political parties submitted the applications the parties without representation in the Parliament were given 6 days to collect the lists of 30 000 supporters. On April 1 (no later than 50 days prior the elections⁸), only 23 out of 60 parties were registered for the participation in the parliamentary elections. Other political parties were refused registration on the grounds of deficiencies in the applications or either incomplete or unavailable supporters' lists.

No later than 43 days prior the elections, (8 April),⁹ 5 political parties informed the Central Election Commission for uniting in the political blocks. As a result, for the participation in the elections 9 political parties and 3 electoral blocks were registered:

According to election legislation, no later than 30 days prior to the Election Day, on April 21, the Central Election Commission assigned the numbers to the political parties and electoral blocks for the participation in the elections. ¹⁰ According to the Article 99 of Unified Election Code, three parties with the best results in the previous parliamentary elections- Unified National Movement, "Right Opposition- Industrials, New Rights" and Labor Party of Georgia retained their numbers assigned during the 2004 elections. Other electoral subjects were assigned numbers at CEC session through a random casting of lots. The numbers were distributed as follows:

- # 1 – Citizens political union "Georgian Politics";
- # 2 – Republican Party of Georgia;
- # 3 – "Right Alliance, Tophadze- Industrials (I.S.G, Ertoba, NDP);
- # 4 – "Shalva Natelashvili- Labor Party of Georgia";
- # 5 – Unified National Movement- for Victorious Georgia"
- # 6 – Political Union" Sportsmen's Union of Georgia";

⁷ Election Code, Article 129⁸, Sub article 2.

⁸ Election Code, Article 129⁸.Sub article 3

⁹ Election Code, Article 95, Sub article 12

¹⁰ Election Code, Article 99, Sub-article



- # 7 – "United Opposition (National Council, New Rights)";
- # 8 – " Radical-Democrat National Party of Whole Georgia";
- # 9 – Political Union "Christian-Democratic Alliance";
- # 10 – "Giorgi Targamadze- Christian-Democrats";
- # 11 – " Traditionalists- Our Georgian and Women's Party;
- # 12 – Political Party of Georgia "Our Country".

For May 21, 2008, Parliamentary Elections Central Election Commission registered and assigned observer's status to 58 international and 37 local non-governmental organizations. On April 3, 2008, an observer's status was assigned to International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy.

Election Administration

Central Election Commission monitoring findings

After the announcement of elections, Central Election Commission approved the time-table of election activities. ISFED observed the implementation of activities prescribed by the legislation by the Commission and adherence to the dates. Below are emphasized several monitoring findings:

According to timetable of election activities, no later than 30 days prior to the elections, April 21,¹¹ was the last date for parties and electoral blocks to submit their party lists and majoritarian candidates to the Central Election Commission. On that day, every party/electoral block participating in the elections presented their respective lists to the Central Election Commission. Here it should be mentioned that presentation of the Unified National Movement's list to CEC garnered much attention. The members of CEC appointed by the opposition parties demanded to see the lists as they wanted to verify that the lists were indeed sealed and submitted by 18:00. However, the CEC Chairman refused to let them enter the room where the lists were believed to have been kept. This move by the CEC Chairman was met with a negative reaction from the CEC opposition party members and electoral subjects (political parties). As a result, representatives of political parties, their activists and local organizations gathered at the CEC building. A large number of people present in the building gathered outside of the room, where according to the CEC Chairman the sealed lists presented by political parties were kept. After four hours of waiting, the room was opened, but it became clear that the lists were not in that room but actually kept in an entirely different room. The crowd then moved to the other room where the lists were and during the lists' observation it was noticed that the seal on one file was damaged.¹² Later a detailed observation of files (lists and registration cards of candidates) was conducted. According to ISFED comparison, lists and registration cards of candidates coincided. The process of opening the rooms and observing the lists together with other international and local non-governmental organizations was attended by ISFED's Executive Director- Eka Siradze-Delaunay.

ISFED regrets the incidents of April 21 at CEC and believes that with proper management and transparency, the situation could have been avoided.

¹¹ Election Code, Article 96, Sub-article 9.

¹² ISFED notes that the legislation does not envision sealing the lists submitted by a party.



The above-mentioned incident arose several questions among the public, which have not been properly answered by election administration.

ISFED believes that such incidents considerably effect negatively the image of election administration and decrease public's trust in elections and election administration.

On the date set by the legislation, no later than 30 days prior to the elections, on May 31, ¹³ Central Election Commission for the Parliamentary Elections created special presincts abroad. For participation in the elections, total 49 election precincts in 35 countries have been created for voters of Georgia. The total number of voters residing abroad is 32 838. ¹⁴

The same day, on April 30, voters registrered for adding to special list. For the Parliamentary Elections there is an increase in number of precincts and voters to compare with January 5, 2008, Extraordinary Presidential Elections. ISFED conducted a comparative analysis of special precincts and registered voters for presidential and parliamentary elations. See the table:

Regions	Presidential Elections		Parliamentary Elections		Difference	
	Precinct	Voters	Precinct	Voters	Precinct	% difference
Tbilisi	28	15,749	27	21,628	5,879	37.3%
Ajara	3	704	5	3,449	2,745	389.9%
Guria	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Imereti	8	2,988	11	6,476	3,488	116.7%
Kakheti	1	145	2	663	518	357.2%
Kvemo Kartili	8	6,798	5	4,718	-2,080	-30.6%
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	2	521	4	881	360	69.1%
Raja-Lechkhumi-Kvemo Kartli	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Samtkhe-Javakheti	3	583	3	491	-92	-15.8%
Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti	5	5,630	6	6,074	444	7.9%
Shida Kartli	9	3,901	10	5,411	1,510	38.7%
Total	67	37,019	73	49,791	12,772	34.5%

On May 5, Central Election Commission at its session, extended the period for entering changes to the voters' list by 3 days and set the last date as May 8. ISFED welcomed the Central Election Commission' decision and, as by extending the period, more voters will be able to check oneself in the voters' list, which will positively contribute to the process of improving the voters' lists. By this period 60 963 voters addressed the election administration for checking in the voters' list. 220 voters have been added to the voters' list and 905 diseased voters have been removed. According to the information of May 12, 2008, the total number of voters **3 465 736** ¹⁵.

¹³ Election Code, Article 16. Sub-Article 6.

¹⁴ According to data of Central Election Commission

¹⁵ www.cec.gov.ge



ISFED

On May 6, the Central Election Commission published the brochure for public officials, which includes the rules on use of administrative resources, and official positions during the pre-election agitation. ISFED welcomes the Central Election Commission's initiative. Also ISFED welcomes the translation of election documentation into ethnic minorities' languages (Russian, Ossetian, Armenian, and Azeri) as carried out by the Central Election Commission.

District and Precinct Election Commissions monitoring findings

In the period prescribed by the legislation, on April 5 (no later than 50 day prior elections)¹⁶ Precinct Election Commissions' members were selected in every District Election Commission, except **#35 Khashuri**, **#30 Kaspi** and **#65 Martvili** District Election Commissions. It should be mentioned that according to the information of ISFED long term observers, Precinct Election Commissions' members' selections were conducted by recommendation and suggestions of local-self government representatives (**# 62 Chokhatauti** Election District), National Movement (**# 79 Batumi**, **# 60 Ozurgeti**, **# 61 Lanchkhuti**, **# Poti**, **# 11 Sagaredjo**, **# 12 Gurjaani** and **# 13 Signagi** Election Administration) and the authorities and other political parties.

According to the timetable of election activities, on 6 April (no later than 45 days prior the elections)¹⁷, Election Districts should have published the numbers, addresses, telephone (fax) numbers and other requisites of Election Precincts through the print and mass media. The above mentioned requisites were not published on time at **# 79 Batumi**, **# 83 Khelvachauri**, **# 81 Kobuleti**, **# 60 Ozurgeti**, **# 62 Chokhatari**, **# 61 Lanchkhuti**, **# 46 Lentekhi**, **# 56 Jiatura**, **# 52 Bagdati**, **# 65 Martvili**, **# 66 Khobi** and **# 35 Khashuri** Election Districts.

By 10 April (no later than 41 day prior the elections)¹⁸ the total number of voters in each Election District and all of it's Election Precincts were not published as prescribed by law in the following Election Districts: **# 79 Batumi**, **# 84 Khulo**, **# 82 Shuakhevi** and **# 81 Kobuleti** Election Districts.

Election Districts Commission members of **# 15 Lagodekhi**, **# 16 Kvareli**, **# 17 Telavi**, **# 43 Oni**, **# 69 Chkhorotskhu**, **# 56 Chiatura**, **#57 Tkhivuli**, **# 47 Mestia**, **# 68 Tsalenjikha**, **# 82 Shuakhevi**, **# 83 Khelvachauri**, **# 60 Ozurgeti**, **# 70 Poti**, **# 32 Gori**, **# 36 Borjomi**, **# 38 Adigeni**, **# 85 Liakhvi**, **# 3 Saburtalo**, **# 19 Tianeti**, **# 21 Gardabani**, **# 25 Tsalka**, **# 26 Tetrtskaro**, **# 28 Dusheti** and **# 29 Kazbegi** Election Districts hold paid positions in public sphere. We must note that, according to the Georgian election legislation,¹⁹ election commissions members do not have right to have other job at the same time (except being a teacher).

In the monitoring period, the persons (nongovernmental organizations, media) interested in attending the sessions of District Election Commissions were not able to do so because the exact date and place of sessions was not known in advance. Such problems were observed at **# 21 Gurjaani** and **# 14 Dedoplistskaro** District Election Commissions. According to the DEC's regulation an announcement about the DEC session must be posted preliminarily in election district building.²⁰

¹⁶ Election Code, Article 37, Sub article 1.

¹⁷ Election Code, Article 16, Sub-Article 7;

¹⁸ Election Code, Article 9¹, Sub-Article 2;

¹⁹ Election Code, Article 18, Sub Articles 5, 5¹, 6.

²⁰ DEC regulation, Article 7, Sub-article 2.



ISFED

According to the law, on April 17, no later than 34 days prior to the elections,²¹ the voters' general list is to be signed by the District Election Commission Chair and Secretary and presented to the Precinct Election Commissions. This legal requirement was not met in the following areas: **#56 Chiatura DEC, PEC # 3, #20 and # 55 and #28 Dusheti DEC, PEC # 35.**

Also, no later than 34 days prior to the elections,²² the newly created Precinct Election Commissions had to post the voters' lists and any decisions related to complaints. The lists and decisions on complaints were not posted in the period prescribed by the legislation in: **# 56 Chiatura DEC #3, #20, #23, # 30, # 35, # 43, # 51 and # 55 PECs; # 59 Kutaisi DEC # 83 PEC, # 6 Samgori # 16 and # 24 PECs; # 21 Tetrtskharo DEC # 3 and #19; #37 Akhaltsikhe # 1, # 2, # 3, # 4, # 5, # 6, # 7, # 8, # 28, # 29, # 30, #31 and # 32 PECs; # 15 Lagodekhi DEC # 31 and # 34 PECs; Khulo DEC # 1 and # 18 PECs; # 83 Khelvachauri DEC #28 and #56 PECs; # 81 Kobuleti DEC # 4, # 5, # 8, # 53 and # 54 PECs; # 70 Poti DEC #6, # 20, # 23 and # 24 PECs; # 60 Ozurgeti DEC # 2 and # 4; # 79 Batumi DEC # 3, # 12 # 29, # 48, # 52, # 53, # 55 and # 66 PECs.** In a number of DEC's incomplete information was posted: in **# 67 Zugdidi DEC,** all of the PEC posted the voters' lists, but decisions on complaints were not posted. The decisions on complaints were also not posted in **# 6 Samgori DEC #10, # 13, # 22, # 23, # 25, # 32, # 58 PEC and # 59 Kutaisi DEC # 76 PEC.**

In the monitoring period, the members of the District and Precinct Election Commissions received trainings on methods and principles, election procedures, voters' lists, Election Day procedures, protocols and complaints deliberation.

Voters' lists

ISFED conducted the monitoring of the process of improving the unified voters' list (UVL) carried out by the Election Administration. The CEC and ISFED signed the Memorandum of Cooperation, which means an active cooperation in the process of improving the unified voters' list, including the fact that ISFED will exclusively receive from the CEC the full version of voters' lists.

ISFED carried out checking of the full version of the unified voters' list received on March 14, 2008. There were **3 406 450** voters in the list. Significant portion of the data was not complete - ISFED discovered the following errors:

- Number of entries without voter's first name - **5**;
- Number of entries, where voter's first name was fewer than **2** symbols – **5** cases;
- Number of entries, where voter's first name was fewer than **3** symbols (not name "Ia") – **9** cases;
- Number of entries, where voter's last name is less than **3** symbols- **11** cases;
- Number of entries, where voter's last name is less than **4** symbols- **275** cases;
- Numbers of entries, where voter's last name is less than **5** symbols- **2789** cases.

²¹ Election Code, Article 9, Sub-article 11;

²² Election Code, Article 13, Sub-Article 1;

**International Society for Fair Elections
and Democracy**

**Address: 25 Kostava Street,
0108 Tbilisi, Georgia**

**Tel: (995 32) 98 39 98
Fax: (995 32) 98 98 24**

**E-mail: info@isfed.ge
Website: www.isfed.ge**



ISFED

In addition, there were **121** entries, where voters in the database did not have addresses; in addresses of **124** entries, there were fewer than **3** symbols; in addresses of **595** entries there were fewer than **4** symbols; in addresses of **1564** entries there were fewer than **5** symbols.²³

In entries of **435** voters there were not fixed their birth dates. In **2** entries voters would turn **18** after the Parliamentary Elections of 21, 2008.

There were voters in the list with their ID Numbers: **00000000000, 00000000001, 00000000013, 00000000046.**

After conducting checking of the database of the unified voters' list (March 14 version) received by ISFED from the CEC, the existence of duplicates in the voters' list was observed. According to personal number there were **13** cases when the use of same ID number was observed **4** times; there were **957** cases when the use of same ID number was observed **3** times; there were **52 486** cases when the use of same number was observed **2** times. Total number of duplicates was **53 456.**

On April, 14, ISFED provided the CEC information about the above-mentioned shortcomings. On April 15 CEC disseminated the corrected version to every interested side. On April 17, ISFED checked the corrected version.

In the renewed database there are data of **3 431 908** voters, which means that **25 458** voters were added to the list. The data analyses of the voters' list show that still there are a number of errors in the voters' list. Namely: though decreased (from **435-141**), but still there are voters without addresses; number of voters older than **110** increased from **14** to **21**; number of voters younger than **18** increased and there are **1002** such cases in the list now. There is still **1** case when a voter's personal number is **00 000 000 000**. As for the duplicates, in the renewed voters' list there are not such cases.

According to the election legislation, no later than 41 days prior to the elections,²⁴ on April 10, District Election Commission publishes the total number of voters in election district and its very election precinct.²⁵ ISFED compared the data posted at the District Election Commissions to the data posted on the web-page of the Central Election Commission. The comparative analysis show that the data at most election district differed from those posted at the web-page of Central Election Commission.

It is important that information on number of voters differ not only between election district and CEC web-page, but between election district and the official publication. For example, For example, in # **79 Batumi** Election District, according to the officially requested information, the number of voters is **96 547**, according to CEC web-page, it is **97 300**, and according to information published at the official publication "Adjara" it is **98 065.**

As mentioned above, on May 5, Central Election Commission extended the period for adding changes to the voters' list. On May 12, Central Election Commission held the presentation of voters' lists, where information on the number of people who checked themselves and the changes to the voters' lists was presented.

²³ For example: "c/c", "kmk".

²⁴ Election Code, Article 9¹, Sub-Article 2;

²⁵



Pre-election Campaigning

In the pre-election campaigning the following violations have been observed:

Obstructing to political subjects' campaigning

As a result of interference by the representatives of local self-governantal bodies political parties had the problems with meeting with population in election districts # **44 Ambrolauri**, # **63 Abasha** and # **85 Liakhvi**.

Representatives of opposition parties had the problems with renting the offices in election districts # **84 Khulo**, # **1 Mtatsminda**, # **10 Gldani**, # **38 Gldani**, and # **85 Liakhvi**.

The headquarters of the opposition parties in election district # **14 Dedoplistskaro** were vandalized. This fact is now under the investigation.

In election district # **60 Ozurgeti** teachers and directors of public schools were prohibited from cooperating with opposition parties.

Distributing material goods to voters

In election districts # **29 Kazbegi**, # **Dedoplistskaro**, and # **44 Ambrolauri** the facts of distributing material goods to citizens, including products and sweeties, in the name of Unified National Movement and its candidates were observed.

Use of Administrative Resources

In election districts # **35 Kashuri**, # **64 Senaki**, and # **45 Tsageri** the facts of distributing fuel vouchers within the framework of state program to voters by the activists of the Unified National Movement were observed. During the distribution of fuel and vouchers agitation for supporting the Untied National Movement candidate was carried out.

ISFED welcomes the government' initiative to distribute various benefits to the population , though ISFED believes that such initiatives should not be conducted by party activists. On one hand it creates an unequal atmosphere among the election subjects and on the other hand, such acts are an abuse of administrative resources.

Collecting Voters' Signatures

In the pre-election period, individuals who represented themselves as the representatives of the Unified National Movement, visited population and conducted surveys, collected voters' data, including identification numbers and collected signatures. Such facts were observed in election districts # **28 Dusheti**, # **9 Nadzaladevi**, # **79 Batumi**, # **1 Mtatsminda**, # **8 Didube**, and # **12 Gurjaani**.

International Society for Fair Elections
and Democracy

Address: 25 Kostava Street,
0108 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: (995 32) 98 39 98
Fax: (995 32) 98 98 24

E-mail: info@isfed.ge
Website: www.isfed.ge



Intimidating Voters

The facts of intimidating voters were observed in # 28 Dusheti, # 29 Kazbegi, # 84 Khulo, # 55 Khoni, # Terjola, # 66 Khobi, # 17 Telavi, # 45 Tsageri, and # 70 Poti. In terms of number of facts of voters' intimidation Kakheti Region was particularly distinguishing.

In election district # 55 Khoni, the persons who identified themselves as representatives of Unified National Movement forced small-size entrepreneurs (owners of shops, gambling houses, fuel stations, and LTDs) to work at the Precinct Election Commission, and threatened them losing their business. In election district # 70 Poti, the owners of gambling houses were warned to vote for the National Movement candidate, or threatened with closing their business.

Intimidating Observers

The facts of intimidating ISFED's observers were observed in various regions of Georgia. Due to the objective reasons, ISFED refrains from naming the names of individuals and districts.

Also, in the pre-election period in a number of districts, attitude of employees of District Election Commissions towards ISFED's long-term observers worsened.

ISFED is concerned with the above-mentioned facts and calls on election administration and representatives of various local self-governmental bodies for cooperation. ISFED hopes that such facts would not take place in the future.

Also, ISFED reminds that according to the Election Code of Georgia,²⁶ local election observation organization/ its representative has a right to conduct monitoring at all level of election administration, and it is prohibited to interfere in any way in local election observation organization's/its representative's monitoring activities.

Free and Fair Elections Inter-Governmental Task Force

In the pre-election period ISFED actively participated in the meetings of Free and Fair Elections Inter-Governmental Task Force. ISFED welcomes the fact of forming Free and Fair Elections Inter-Governmental Task Force. ISFED expressed its readiness to cooperate with this body on election related issues. In the pre-election period, ISFED met several times with the representatives of the Task Force to discuss the violations discovered during the monitoring.

Other

In the monitoring period, on May 4, the representatives of youth organizations of various opposition political parties organized a demonstration in front of the house of the Head of Central Election Commission Levan Tarkhnishvili. The demonstration was followed by clashes between Tarkhnishvili's neighbors and the participants. As a result several young people received injuries.

²⁶ Election Code, Article 69, Sub-Article 7¹



Despite the fact that the acting legislation of Georgia guarantees the freedom of expression of speech and thought, and the living place of a concrete person is not considered as a forbidden place for organizing demonstration, ISFED considers that organizing such demonstrations in front of a living place is not appropriate. ISFED considers that it is important to draw a clear line between professional activities and personal life.

In addition, ISFED calls on the law-enforcement bodies to investigate the above-mentioned fact and take the appropriate measures.

Also, during the developments on May 6, 2008, when the representatives of United Opposition tried to seal the entrance door of the building of Central Election Commission, the reaction of Central Election Commission to that was inadequate. ISFED calls on every electoral subject to be constructive and refrain from any aggressive action in the pre-election period.

In order to avoid such conformation and insure holding of elections in a calm environment, ISFED together with other local election observation organizations²⁷ on May 14, 2008, called on each side participating in the elections to acknowledge their responsibilities.²⁸

Conclusion

According to ISFED's findings the pre-election campaign for May 21, 2008 Parliamentary Elections started in a calm environment, though towards at the end of the campaign end significant shortcomings were observed. Namely:

- Intimidation on voters, including public workers and private individuals;
- Pressure on local observers;
- Problems with voters' lists and non-transparent manner of their updating process;
- Ungrounded collection of voters' Identification Numbers;
- Creating unequal opportunities for electoral subjects;
- Non-existence of clear line between the party and the state
- Use of administrative resources.
- Distribution of material goods to voters.

ISFED plans to conduct monitoring of the Election Day through 1400 election present observers, 75 district coordinators, 75 mobile groups and 5 legal teams. On May 22, ISFED will announce the results of Parallel Voter Tabulation which will be carried out on the elections conducted through the proportional system. No later than 1 month after the elections, ISFED will produce the final election monitoring report.

²⁷ Georgian Young Lawyers' Association, New generation-New Initiative, Transparency International-Georgia, public movement "Multinational Georgia".

²⁸ The full text of statement can be accessed at ISFED's web-page www.isfed.ge



ISFED

Monitoring the pre-election period is financially supported by the European Union and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Technical assistance was provided by National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of ISFED and can under no circumstance be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

International Society for Fair Elections
and Democracy

Address: 25 Kostava Street,
0108 Tbilisi, Georgia

Tel: (995 32) 98 39 98
Fax: (995 32) 98 98 24

E-mail: info@isfed.ge
Website: www.isfed.ge