



CIVIC COALITION FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS „COALITION 2007”

4 June 2007

LOCAL ELECTIONS OF 3 JUNE LARGELY DID NOT COMPLY WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

Election-Day

The voting process on 3 June 2007 was generally free; however, a series of irregularities affected the integrity of these elections. To a great extent, the lists of voters were not up-to-date, the set-up for voting within polling stations inadequate, and the capacity of ballot boxes insufficient for the number of ballots cast. Low qualifications of polling station officials at the local level delayed the addressing of complaints by observers within a reasonable time-frame. Throughout Moldova there were cases observed of citizens voting without identification, campaigning on E-day, and electoral contestants accredited as observers.

Election administration

Coalition 2007 viewed the activities of the Central Election Commission as positive and appreciates its openness towards collaboration and transparency. The activity of the Commission was hindered by the fact that this was its first experience in its current composition, and by misunderstandings resulting from the appointment of members' based on political criteria.

Although the Electoral Code was respected, the spirit of law was often violated. Coalition 2007 recommends for the Code to be amended in order to introduce clearer provisions that would narrow the room for interpretation.

The local electoral commissions administration of the election was often biased, especially in terms of registration of contestants, exclusion of contestants from the electoral race, challenging of CEC decisions and delay in examining complaints. Ballots were compiled with several inaccuracies, and the “withdrawn” stamp was not applied in all cases where necessary. By changing the way elections commissions were formed, the conflict of responsibilities between different level electoral commissions was great, and the lack of qualification of commissioners widespread.

Public authorities

In this campaign, administrative resources were widely used, and intimidation of electoral contestants occurred in an unprecedented and alarming proportion. Also, the practice of “purchasing” votes was evident.

Mass-media

The access to public mass-media was not equal for all electoral competitors. The ruling party monopolized the access to audiovisual and the written press. The provisions of the regulation on election campaign coverage in mass-media, adopted by the CEC, were excessive and prohibitive, hindering a free exchange of opinions and ideas between contestants. Abuses and harassment of mass-media during the pre-electoral period and at the beginning of the campaign resulted in a general atmosphere of fear within the media.

Coalition 2007 is a group of non-governmental organizations that continue the efforts of civil society to contribute through assistance, activities, monitoring and analysis to the conduct of free and fair local elections, as one key democratic element for Moldova's European integration. The Coalition 2007 members were also part of the Coalition 2005 for Free and Fair parliamentary elections.



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Campaign of electoral contestants

The conditions for election campaigning were not fair for all electoral contestants. The regulation regarding the electoral advertising was first violated by the Communists' Party, and then subsequently the majority of electoral contestants. The practice of unclear sources of financing for electoral contestants' campaigns continued, while contestants also slandered opposing candidates.

The Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections, Coalition 2007, used as evaluation criteria OSCE standards, the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), and other international documents.

The general conclusion of the Coalition 2007 is that, to a large extent, local elections of 3 June 2007 did not comply with international standards for free and fair elections.

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