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THE CIVIC COALITION FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

PROMO-LEX ASSOCIATION

PRESS RELEASE nr.1

Monitoring of the general local elections of June 19th 2011

Monitoring Period: 06:30 – 11:00 on Election Day (June 19th 2011)

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Opening of the voting stations

The voting stations were opened according to established procedures, at 07.00, and have been working properly. Observers reported no cases of voting stations opening late.

Electoral campaigning in the days immediately prior to voting

On 17 June 2011, in Bubuieci (municipality of Chişinău), cases of continued electoral campaigning in favour of one of the candidates for the office of mayor of Chişinău were reported. In the same locality, observers noted cases of campaign activities being carried out in which insults were aimed *against* an electoral candidate for the office of mayor.

Up to the time of writing on the day of the election, Promo-LEX observers have reported multiple cases of continued electoral campaigning in the vicinity of voting stations. Such situations were noted at VS 34/26 in Leuşeni, Teleneşti rayon; at VS 155 in Chişinău; at VS 27 in Marinici, Nisporeni rayon; and at VS 28/58 in Rădoaia, Sîngerei rayon.

One instance of physical aggression – During the morning of June 19, in the vicinity of VS 288, Stăuceni, 3 young men were caught defacing the campaign posters of one electoral candidate. The young men were beaten with rifle butts, and taken to hospital in a state of unconsciousness. The identities of the three young men, and of those who beat them, are not yet known.

Organised transportation of voters

At VS 55 in rayon-based District Electoral Council (DEC) 36 in Comrat, and at VS 56, in Dezghingea, minibuses were being organised to take voters to the voting stations. From what has been said by voters present in the locality, it appears that both candidates – Petru Tomailî for the party “Casa Noastră-Moldova”, and Stepan Bancu for the PCRM – were doing this. At VS 6/22 in Drepcăuţi, DEC Briceni, two buses (a Ford with registration BR AN 563, and a Volkswagen with registration ED AW 808) had been organised to take voters to the voting station. On one bus, a flier for the PDM party had been affixed to the windshield.

Attempt at multiple voting

At VS 266 in Vatra, Chişinău, Polling-station Electoral Bureau (PEB) member Elena Stamlinascaia released 4 ballot papers to citizen B.P.: two for the office of general mayor and two for the office of local mayor. When this was noted, a written report was drawn up annulling two of the ballot papers (one for either office). It is not known if law enforcement bodies were notified of the incident.

The sale of alcoholic drinks in the vicinity of voting stations

Promo-LEX observers reported at least 10 cases in which alcoholic drinks were being sold in the vicinity of voting stations. Cases of this were observed, for example, at VS 187 in Ciocana, Chişinău; at a VS in Tătărauca Nouă, Soroca rayon; at VS 18/13 in Caşunca, Floreşti rayon, in DEC 36, Comrat; and at VS 17 Ceadâr-Lunga. Electoral material was being displayed and alcoholic drinks were being sold.

Disturbances to public order

At VS 16 in Botanica, 3 individuals arrived in a taxi and a Skoda – the latter with registration C PD 059. They were drinking beer and causing a disturbance. The DEC president Olga Şişchina tried several times to get them to leave, but the individuals in question left only after twenty minutes, and only after they had caused a disturbance within the voting station itself. At the same time, the taxi driver threatened the Promo-LEX observer, telling them “I’LL SEE YOU LATER AND THEN WE’LL TALK”. This despite the fact that the Promo-LEX observer did not try to get involved and did not say a word to the individuals in question. The observer

was simply standing by the PEB president and police officer when the latter were trying to get the individuals to leave.

The electoral rolls

At VS 236 in Rîșcani, Chișinău, voter Maria Ciocan, resident at address str. Romană 2/2, apartment 122, found that someone had already signed next to her name on the electoral roll. She complained, loudly.

At VS 108 in the sector of Buiucani, Chișinău, voter Gheorghe Ciobanu, resident in Chișinău at the address str. Sciusev 105/8, is currently abroad. His wife found out that someone had already signed next to his name, making it look as if he had voted. She told the PEB president that her husband was currently abroad and asked why the signature was there. A written report was drawn up.

At VS 236 in the sector of Rîșcani, Chișinău, voter Veaceslav Dindov, resident in Chișinău at address str. Romană 142, discovered that two other people – Anastasia Florin and Tamara Florin – were listed on the electoral roll as being resident at his address. Mr Dindov did not know the two people listed: the latter, he confirmed, are not resident at his address. Nevertheless, Anastasia Florin appeared as having already voted in the elections of June 5th 2011

At VS 219 in the sector of Rîșcani, Chișinău, voter Guncina Galina, resident in Chișinău at address str. Florilor 12/2, apartment 9, discovered that the electoral roll showed her as having voted on June 5th 2011. However, Mrs Galina did not vote on the 5th of June. (She showed the accompanying sheet to her identity document, which did not show the stamp for the June 5th elections.) Mrs Galina submitted an appeal.

At VS 236 in the sector of Rîșcani, Chișinău, a voter Anghela Oancea appeared on the electoral roll as being resident in Chișinău at address str. Cahul 18. The voter in question, however, is in fact deceased.

Voter secrecy

According to the recommendations of the Venice Commission, states are encouraged not to make changes to the electoral law and to electoral procedures for at least one year before the election. Contrary to these recommendations, the Central Electoral Commission adopted a decision establishing that the Polling-stations Electoral Bureaus (PEBs) are to remove the curtains from the voting booths. On the 18th of June 2011, the PEBs prepared the voting booths, removing the curtains from the voting booths. Also on the 18th of June, however, at 19.00 – and contrary to the same recommendations of the Venice Commission – the Civil and Administrative College of the Supreme Court issued an irrevocable decision which in turn annulled the CEC's decision ordering the removal of the curtains. The CEC was informed of this decision only on the morning of election day, 19 June 2011. The CEC informed the level-2 electoral constituencies about the decision in question, who in turn were to inform all the PEBs in the country.

Up to the time of writing Promo-LEX observers have reported isolated cases of curtains on the voting booths being placed back. Such cases were noted for example at voting stations in Răscăieți, Ștefan Vodă rayon.

Isolated cases of unauthorised people entering the voting booths were noted at Cahul DEC 7, VS 12 and at DEC Rîșcani, VS 27/54.

Errors on the ballot papers

Promo-LEX observers recorded a case in which the ballot papers being issued contained a mistake. In Condrătești, Ungheni rayon, an error was discovered on the ballot papers: Instead of the name of the electoral candidate Gheorghe Busuioc, the name 'Ion Bodrug' appeared.

Improper storage of the ballot papers

At VS 13 in Camenca in the Glodeni rayon, the ballot papers were stored in a safe located in an office that is situated next to the office housing the voting station.

Incorrect stamps

At VS 27/1 in the DEC of Rîșcani, voters were receiving the stamp from the first round of voting, instead of the stamp stating 'Elections June 19, 2011 – second round'. DEC 27, when notified of the problem, distributed the correct stamp to each of the voting stations in Rîșcani

Observer's access obstructed

At VS 244 in the sector of Rîșcani, Chișinău, one Promo-LEX observer was prevented from moving freely through the voting station.