

April 7, 2009

PRESS RELEASE

The Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections „Coalition 2009”

Incorrect and partially free elections

Electoral process vitiated before the Election Day

Taking into consideration the basic principles of free and fair elections, particularly:

- A non-violent electoral campaign climate;
- Possibility to every electoral contestant to present their political programs and without any intimidation;
- Equality of chances for all electoral contestants, which also implies a neutral attitude by the state authorities regarding the electoral campaign;
- A right to vote for all citizens without discrimination;
- Non-discriminatory access to the media for all electoral contestants and unbiased coverage by the media, especially the public media;
- Freedom of the media;
- Freedom of voters to form and express their opinion;
- Accuracy of voters lists;
- Clear separation between the party and the state, in order not allow the use of public resources by those who are governing for the party interests within the electoral campaigns, except the cases provided by law;

According to the “Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters. Guidelines and Explanatory Report” adopted in 2002 by the Venice Commission and the “Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE” from June 29, 1990, signed by the Republic of Moldova on December 10, 1991.

The Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections “Coalition 2009” considers that the parliamentary elections held on 5th of April 2009 are INCORRECT, and taking into account the situation of the Transnistrian region’s inhabitants, were NOT ENTIRELY

FREE, due to the fact that the above-mentioned international standards were not fulfilled.

The electoral campaign for the election of representatives to the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova was marked by numerous violations of electoral Law: **use of public administrative resources** (at least 41 confirmed cases) and **pressure and undue influence on electoral contestants** (at least 21 confirmed cases) and voters (at least 33 confirmed cases).

In their news bulletins, the public TV stations with national coverage “Moldova 1” and “Radio Moldova” **favoured mainly the governing party**, turning the news bulletins into instruments of manipulation and propaganda in favour of PCRM and against the opposition parties. Similar infringements were observed at the private TV stations NIT, N4, EU TV and Antena C, which were limiting in this way the equal opportunities for all electoral contestants to present their electoral program and express their opinions. Thus, we can conclude that during the electoral campaign the political pluralism was not ensured.

„Coalition 2009” also points out that **the electoral campaign continued beyond the legally allowed timeframe**. On April 4th, 2009 several TV stations broadcasted reruns of TV shows featuring electoral campaign materials in favour of or against some electoral contestants: EUTV (9:30 – “Monitor” program, 21:40 – “Media Express” program), N4 (7:10 – “Obiectiv” program), NIT (7:30 – “Curier” program), PRO TV (7:30 – news bulletin), TV 7 (7:30 – news bulletin). Besides that, “State Informational Agency MOLDPRES” favoured PCRM on the Election Day, broadcasted news about the way the first three candidates from the PCRM list - Vladimir Voronin, Marian Lupu and Zinaida Greceanii - casted their ballot. At the same time, the “MOLDPRESS” news agency didn’t broadcast any news about other electoral contestants.

According to official data, received by CEC from the Border Guard Service, there are **627 959 Moldovans permanently residing abroad**. Taking into account that the number of Moldovan citizens abroad constitutes at least 20% from the total number of voters, “Coalition 2009” considers that **33 polling stations opened abroad were insufficient** to ensure appropriate conditions for the expression of the right to vote. “Coalition 2009” reminds that, in the final report regarding the monitoring of the 2005 parliamentary elections these nongovernmental organizations recommended the public

authorities to undertake measures needed to ensure that the Moldovan citizens residing abroad can express their right to vote in future elections.

In the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova these irregularities were much more acute. For more than 10% of the Moldovan citizens (residing in this region), the authorities did not ensure the minimum conditions for allowing them to express their right to vote, no electoral activities being undertaken in that region (debates, meetings with voters, electoral campaigning). The voters residing in the area have neither been informed by the authorities of the Republic of Moldova regarding the polling stations where they can vote, nor about the fact that they have to vote at their place of residence and not where they have their domicile. Another important irregularity is that the number of polling stations opened for the voters from the Transnistrian region was significantly lower than the number of voters in this region.

“Coalition 2009” draws attention to the fact that the irregularities observed at the parliamentary elections of April 5th, 2009 are similar to those mentioned in the 2005 reports published by the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections – “Coalition 2005”, however during the last four years the authorities did not take any actions for the improvement of this situation.

The list of the previous reports as well as the press releases published by the “Coalition 2009” during the Election Day, can be found at www.alegeliber.md.