



**Liga Apărării Drepturilor Omului din Moldova**  
**League for Defence of Human Rights of Moldova**

coaliția 2009



coaliția civică  
pentru alegeri libere și corecte

**CIVIC COALITION FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS**  
**LEAGUE FOR DEFENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN MOLDOVA - LADOM**

## **REPORT**

### **REGARDING THE MONITORING OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS 2009 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS**

**Monitoring period: January 28th – February 24th 2009**



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The opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of the donors.

## INTRODUCTION

*Monitoring period: January 28th – February 24th 2009*

The present report comprises the results of a thorough monitoring of the pre-election situation in Moldova in the period of January 28 - February 24, by the League for Defense of Human Rights of Moldova (LADOM). This report is the third in the series and constitutes part of the effort to monitor the pre-election situation from December 2008 to the election day of April 5, undertaken within the project "Observation of the 2009 parliamentary elections" of the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections - Coalition 2009.

The Coalition 2009 was launched on November 18, 2008 at the initiative of seven non-governmental organizations – the Association for Participatory Democracy (ADEPT), CONTACT Center, the League for Defence of Human Rights (LADOM), the Association of Legal Clinics (APCJM), the National Youth Council (CNTM), the Independent Journalism Center (CIJ) and the Association of Independent Press (API) – that joined their efforts to continue the activities started by the Coalition 2005 and Coalition 2007 to promote free and fair elections. 63 other non-governmental organizations joined the Initiative Group since. The Coalition remains further open to new members.

Domestic election observation is crucial for ensuring the integrity of the election process and the citizens' right to participate in the governing process of their country. LADOM is a non-partisan and non-governmental organization, performing domestic election observation in Moldova since 1996.

The findings presented in this report are collected by a national network of 37 long-term monitors through direct observation. The monitoring is carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Election Code of Moldova, LADOM's Observers' Code of Conduct and international standards of domestic election monitoring.

The conclusions and recommendations in this report are formulated in good faith and are presented in a spirit of professional cooperation with all the stakeholders interested in building up a transparent and fair election process in Moldova.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LADOM long-term election observation mission found that although the election campaign, generally, adhered to the law, the irregularities identified suggest that the campaign fails to meet to the international practices of a competitive electoral process.

The monitored period, from January 28 to February 24, was marked by violent disruption of campaign meetings in several villages in the Orhei rayon, intimidation of a LADOM observer by police during the investigation of these events, pressure on citizens to coerce them to participate at the campaign meetings with the representatives of the Party of Communists (PCRM), attempts to discredit legitimate actions of the civil society, and misuse of public resources.

So far, the election administration followed the provisions and terms stipulated in the Electoral Code. The registration of electoral contestants was carried out according to the law and without obstacles. To avoid multiple voting, the Central Election Commission (CEC) introduced a special stamp to be applied to the national IDs of the voters. The CEC has approved the Regulation on the Coverage of the Campaign by the Media Outlets, creating a more liberal environment in comparison to the previous runs; however, the legality of certain provisions has been challenged by some contestants.

The voter lists are in the process of being compiled and verified. LADOM observation suggests that, due to unclear regulations, local authorities face problems interpreting the procedure for modifying the voters lists with regard to citizens who wish to vote in a location other than their place of residence.

During the monitoring period, the issue of electoral participation of Moldovan citizens living abroad stirred active debates and controversies in society. The fact that the estimated number of Moldovan voters living abroad sums up to 20% of the total number of voters adds relevance to the issue. So far, the way this issue has been addressed fails to offer real solutions but further aggravated the situation.

During the monitoring period, the overall electoral climate was affected by actions of intimidation and violence against peaceful protesters in front of the General Prosecutor's Office building, the freezing of Chisinau City Hall's financial accounts, and hostile and defamatory language used among the electoral contestants.

LADOM will continue monitoring the electoral campaign over the entire territory of the Republic of Moldova through election day. Another two reports on the implementation of the electoral campaign will be published. A special report on the conduct of election day will be made public shortly after the elections.

## **I. FINDINGS**

### **1. The electoral campaign**

#### *Disruption of campaign activities in the Orhei district*

According to our observer in Orhei, lawyer Valeriu Covas, several meetings between electoral candidates and voters from the villages of Isacova and Seliste, Orhei rayon, were disrupted by groups of individuals who deliberately and violently interfered with the campaign activities of the Liberal Party, one of the electoral contestants. Notably, police representatives failed to intervene and were absent from the scene.

As a result several people were charged with assault and disruption of public order in Seliste village: Vicol Vasile from the Zorile village, and Reabuhin Grigorii and Cebotari Mihail, of the Orhei rayon. On February 17<sup>th</sup> 2009 they were fined 40 lei each by the Orhei District Court.

Some interlocutors informed the LADOM observer that some of the individuals causing disturbance were former convicts who, during the meetings between the candidates and the voters, provoked scandals and intimidated the citizens. Some other interlocutors stated that the group of individuals followed the Liberal Party's campaign activities in several other locations.

***LADOM expresses concern regarding the incidents in Orhei and condemns the violent disruption of campaign activities of candidates, as well as the failure of the police to ensure public safety.***

#### *The intimidation of the LADOM observer*

The LADOM observer in Orhei, lawyer Valeriu Covas, investigated on the scene the cases of disruption of campaign meetings in Isacova and Seliste. For his activity the LADOM observer was summoned to the police station and interrogated under an accusation of allegedly kidnapping an individual involved in the intimidations from the village of Seliste.

***LADOM condemns the attempts to intimidate the LADOM observer, lawyer Valeriu Covas.***

### **2. Undue influence on voters**

During the monitored period, the observers reported cases of voters being coerced into attending meetings with some contestants, among which:

- Physicians and professors of the Edinet rayon were forced by the heads of their institutions to attend the campaign meeting with the President of the Republic, Vladimir Voronin, on February 10<sup>th</sup> 2009. The medical staff of the Center for Family Physicians

were required by the Chief of Medicine of the Center, Dr. Guta Oleg, to sign a written guarantee that they would attend the meeting.

- In the Glodeni district, on February 16<sup>th</sup> 2009, representatives of the Ministry of Education and members of the presidential staff, led by Minister of Education Larisa Savga, held meetings in educational institutions of the rayon. The meetings took place during working hours and the organizers used ministry cars for the events. All employees of the rayon educational department were required to attend. Although the topics of the meetings focused on the activity of the Ministry of Education, in reality the meetings had an obvious campaigning character, in favor of the Party of Communists (PCRM). For instance, PCRM candidates B. Stepa and N. Basistii participated at the meeting held at the “Lev Tolstoi” high-school in Glodeni. At the beginning of the meeting students distributed copies of the newspaper “The Communist”.

### **3. Pressure on civil society**

*The Party of Communists (PCRM) accuses the Association of Independent Press (API) of illegal campaigning*

The Party of Communists (PCRM) accused the Association of Independent Press (API) of illegal campaigning as a result of a story published under the “Elections” section of the “Obiectiv” newspaper, published by API.

The “Obiectiv” publication serves a civic and voter education purpose, and is published in Russian and Romanian. It was first issued in December 2008 and it is distributed, as a supplement, in 16 local and regional newspapers. The editors announced that the “Elections” section would also include information and comments regarding some parties other than PCRM.

The article that troubled PCRM, “The day of truth for PCRM,” outlined the electoral promises the party made in 2005 and presented expert opinions on the accomplishment of those promises. The authors of the article suggested that “the candidates should not hope for landslide victories, since both the victory and the process are important matters in legitimizing the power. Electoral promises are nothing else but means of manipulation of the masses, and their analysis is one of the ways to expose the manipulations behind them, manipulations that could annihilate a large part of the effects of free and fair elections. Publishing the analysis of electoral promises and the results of their implementation is nothing else but a means of educating the public.”

Regretfully, on February 20<sup>th</sup> 2009 the Chisinau District Election Council issued a warning to the API and the Coalition 2009 for “regarding an inadmissibility of violating the electoral law.”

***LADOM recommends to the electoral bodies to refrain from actions that may limit the right to freedom of speech.***

#### 4. The use of public resources in the electoral campaign

*High-ranking national officials use public resources for campaign purposes*

Since the beginning of the campaign period, the Moldovan President, the Speaker of the Parliament and the Prime Minister used their office vehicles, the official escort and security staff to travel to their meetings with voters. This is inconsistent with the provisions of Article 46 of the Electoral Code, which states that all electoral candidates should benefit from equal opportunities in the technical and financial support of their electoral campaigns.

In order to avoid state budget expenditures to the electoral advantage of a particular candidate's campaign and to guarantee that all candidates are offered equal opportunity as provided by Article 46 of the Electoral Code, it is recommended that:

***The President of the Republic, the President of the Parliament and the Prime Minister calculate their electoral expenses and repay these expenses to the state budget, from the electoral fund of the candidate they represent – a special bank account opened by every contestant registered for the race;***

***The Central Election Commission regulates the repayment of budget funds used by the state officials for campaign activity, and supervises the abiding by the provisions of Article 46 of the Electoral Code.***

*The law allows the MPs to use public resources in the electoral campaign*

The Law on the Status of the Member of Parliament allows Members of the Parliament (MPs) to make use of public resources, thus favoring certain candidates over others. At the same time, Article 13 of the Electoral Code fails to require the MPs to suspend their activity as such upon their registration as electoral candidates.

***It is recommended that the Members of Parliament withhold from using public resources for the campaigning purposes; in the long term it is recommended that the relevant legislation is amended in accordance with the Electoral Code.***

## II. CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

*The Central Election Commission started the candidate registration procedures*

After announcing the date of the elections, the Central Election Commission (CEC), the institution responsible for candidate registration, began accepting requests from parties and independent candidates to register as electoral contestants. The registration period will end 30 days prior to the Election Day.

From February 10<sup>th</sup> till present, the CEC has registered 11 political parties and one independent candidate. The registration process took place in normal conditions.

### III. VOTER REGISTER

#### *Local Public Administration and the electoral bodies continue updating of voter lists*

The Local Public Authorities, who are responsible for compiling the voters' lists continue the door-to-door update, and are due to post the voter lists at polling stations no later than 20 days prior to the elections. Local public administration and the electoral bodies face difficulties regarding the procedure of declaring the so called "place of stay." The procedure is stipulated in the Electoral Code as a possibility to vote in the precinct area where the person is actually living.

Due to insufficient information regarding this procedure the citizens crowded the mayoralties during the last two days before the deadline for submitting documents on February 18th. The Chisinau City Hall alone received at least 3,500 of such declarations during the last two days. The LADOM observers found that while there is a lack of proper regulation of the process, as a result the local public administration is facing problems regarding the registration of this new category of voters. The local authorities must eliminate these voters from any previous lists, introduce them to the new voter lists and issue back to the voter a confirming document.

Given the circumstances, the CEC decided to stamp the national IDs of the voters after they cast their ballot, in order to avoid multiple voting. Still, this fails to completely eliminate the danger of multiple voting. Thus, LADOM reiterates the need to align the new registration procedure with legal provisions of Article 39 of the Electoral Code, supported by article 1, paragraph 3, of the same Code, which requires the presence of Domicile or Residence stamp in the national IDs.

***It is recommended that, to avoid multiple voting, the CEC develops and adopts a control mechanism of the declaration of stay procedure, to make sure the citizens appear only on one voter list.***

***LADOM encourages the voters to verify their registration on the lists of voters.***

### IV. VOTING ABROAD

#### *The right to vote is not fully guaranteed for Moldovan citizens living abroad*

During the monitoring period, Moldovan citizens who live abroad<sup>1</sup>, and NGOs asked the CEC to open additional polling stations abroad, in areas with large Moldovan communities. According to some conservative estimates based on official statistics and independent sources<sup>2</sup>, about 600,000 voters are constantly abroad. In 2005, over 10,018 citizens

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<sup>1</sup> "The Moldovans in Italy want to vote," Literatura si arta; "US emigrants ask for additional polling stations," Timpul, February 5<sup>th</sup> 2009; The Moldovan Community in Ireland's address to the CEC, etc

<sup>2</sup> BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union – Political, 19 February 2003, p.1; International Migration Papers, Gloria MODENO-FONTES CHAMMARTIN, Fernando CANTU-BAZALDUA "Identification of potential

(approximately 0.6% of the voter turnout) voted at the 23 polling stations opened by the CEC at Moldovan Embassies and Consulates. Presently, the number of voters abroad constitutes 20% of the Moldovan electorate and the requests to the CEC reportedly come from thousands of voters. Considering this, the CEC should take extraordinary measures to accommodate the political rights of those citizens.

There are indeed legal and technical limitations to opening polling stations in addition to the 34 that the CEC intends to set up at the diplomatic and consular missions abroad. Yet, the current situation does not seem to satisfy the voting demands of voters living abroad.

Considering the high number of requests coming from voters abroad and the difficulties they experience in exercising their political rights, we express concern that the CEC may not be treating the matter with due diligence.

***We recommend that the CEC takes all possible measures to open additional polling stations on the premises of official institutions of the country abroad, in addition to those of diplomatic missions; in the long run, we recommend amending the legislation to guarantee the right to vote of the citizens living abroad.***

## **V. ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATION**

The authorities responsible for the administration of elections include the Central Election Commission (CEC), the District Electoral Councils (DEC) and the Precinct Elections Bureaus (PEB). The CEC is a permanent body while the DEC and PEB are temporary organizations formed during elections. During the monitored period, the CEC and DEC were formed. The PEB are to be formed no later than 20 days before the election day.

While administering the electoral process for the 2009 parliamentary elections, the CEC completed a series of activities, according to the CEC elections calendar.

*The CEC takes precautions to prevent multiple voting*

In order to prevent multiple voting and to secure the integrity of the voting process, the CEC introduced the “05.04.2009 elections” stamp to be applied on the voters’ IDs. To be noted that the citizens should be informed about this novelty well in advance.

***LADOM recommends that the CEC widely publicizes the need of the stamp confirming a cast ballot and explain why its use is crucial to preventing multiple voting.***

*Right to vote of the citizens living in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova*

The CEC announced the opening of 10 polling stations specifically for the voters registered

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for increasing employment and productive investment in Albania, Moldova and Ukraine, based on remittances,” International Labour Office Geneva, 2004 Studies also suggest that another 120 000 Moldovan citizens leave the country annually to work abroad.



to the left of Dniester. To secure their right to vote they should be informed through a detailed regional campaign to publicize the location and coverage of these precincts.

***We recommend that the CEC make use of all available resources to inform citizens left of Dniester of the voting procedures and location of the polling stations.***

#### *The Regulation on electoral campaign coverage*

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009 the CEC approved the Regulation of the Electoral Campaign Coverage by Media Outlets. By this Regulation, the CEC allows for a more liberal media behavior than in previous electoral periods. However, some candidates contested the provisions of the Regulation regarding the televised electoral debates.

## **VII. ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT**

The electoral race began on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, when the Parliament officially set the parliamentary election date for April 5<sup>th</sup> 2009. The Parliament formally abided by the provisions of Article 76 of the Electoral Code concerning the announcement of the electoral date. However, the allowed time for the electoral race and for the campaigns of the electoral candidates is barely within the legally set deadlines. Hence, the setting of the date at the 60 day limit does not comply with the more generous practice of previous electoral runs which allowed for a longer electoral period.

Intimidation of and violence against peaceful protesters<sup>3</sup>, hostile interference in the electoral candidates' meetings, the retaining and search of the electoral contestants' vehicles, the misuse of public resources – all these raise concerns. If the practice continues such abuses and irregularities could create a tense electoral atmosphere, provoke fear, which in turn could damage the free and uninfluenced casting of the ballot.

The Parliament's lack of response to the case of the assassination attempt of the Deputy-Speaker of the Parliament suggests an ongoing black PR campaign. The use of hostile language and mutual defamatory labeling among the political contestants seem to have become generally accepted. Such practices could only lead to the creation of a hostile electoral environment, rather than a healthy competition of political programs and ideas.

The freezing of the Chisinau Municipality bank accounts and, thus, an open opportunity for the central authorities to intervene and solve the problem, creates tension and jeopardizes the electoral process. The incident raises questions regarding the mechanisms of the public financing of certain electoral activities. The responsibility for solving financial problems regarding electoral operations lies exclusively with the government and the Central Elections

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<sup>3</sup> On February 3 2009 several NGOs organized a rally in support of democracy and political rights in Moldova, to protest against the abuses of law enforcement agencies. During these peaceful rallies the protesters were attacked with pepper sprays by a group of masked individuals, who started a fight which resulted in injuries among protesters. The altercations which could have degenerated into instances of violence with unpredictable consequences happened in the eyesight of police and prosecutors from the Prosecutor General Office, who refused to intervene to stop the valance and reestablish the public safety.

Commission. Thus the delegation of electoral functions to the local authorities must be worked out in a proper and timely manner.

LADOM observers reported occurrences of undue influence on employees, students and civil servants from Chisinau, Drochia, Edinet, Briceni, and other rayons, to coerce them into attending the campaign meetings with the President of the Republic of Moldova and with the Speaker of the Parliament in their capacity as candidates.

The observers are warning about a libelous and disproportionate behavior of the electoral candidates and of the media outlets during the campaign.

## **Annex 1 – List of incidents**

### **Respect for human rights**

1. On January 29, 2009, when exerting a peaceful protest in front of the General Prosecutor's office Anatol Mătășaru was publicly assaulted by armed police officers by being forcibly taken into police custody and then taken to stand trial in acquitted him.
2. On February 3, 2009 following the abuse exerted by police officers and the Prosecutor's office, several NGOs organized a protest in support of democracy and political rights in Moldova. During this peaceful rally, the protesters were attacked with pepper sprays by a group of masked individuals who then started a fight. As a result, the protesters obtained various bodily injuries. The dispute that might have turned into violence with unpredictable consequences took place in the full view of the police and prosecutors who were in the General Prosecutor's office building, and who refused to intervene and end the violence to restore the public order. The failure of the law enforcement bodies is incompatible with the statute of these authorities. As a result, the given actions have a direct effect on the political rights and freedoms which are stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova but are not assured and guaranteed by the state authorities.

### **The use of administrative resources**

3. The chairman of the Parliament Marian Lupu uses administrative levers to meet with young voters. On February 18 2009 the authorities in Balti city organized for Marian Lupu a meeting with students who reached their 18 anniversary. The Education, Youth and Sport Department of Balti municipality asked by fax, the principals of schools to prepare lists of students who are eligible to vote and to ensure their presence at the meeting with the chairman of the Parliament, which took place at the house of culture and art. Students were dismissed from the last classes, and in order to check the presence the students were sat in accordance with the school they attend.
4. On February 10, 2009, at 10:00 am, at the House of culture of Briceni city the President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin had a meeting with the voters. The President arrived in his office car G069, accompanied employees of the Ministry of Interior (MAI) who were also driving office cars, with licence plates issued for MAI. No fees were paid for the hall rent.
5. In Glodeni, the PCRM rayonal committee has its headquarters in the House of creation for children, a premise that is maintained by the Rayonal department for education, youth and sports. PCRM has been provided with a separate office. In the same time, a separate office was provided for the meetings of the party. A contract of lease was signed and the rent was paid for these offices but only for the electoral period (2 months – during the electoral campaign of 2005, 2 months - in 2007), although the offices is in use permanently since 2003. At the monitoring period, a contract of lease for 2009 has not been signed.
6. On February 10 2009, in Edinet when meeting with voters the President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin arrived in his office vehicle, with licence plates reading G 069, accompanied by security guards in vehicles with registration numbers belonging to the

Ministry of Interior. One of the cars' registration numbers was MAI 0345. The big hall of the House of culture was offered for free by the city hall of Edineț.

7. In Cimislia rayon, the majority of leaders in public services who subordinate to the Government, campaign in favour of the PCRM. For instance, Mr Bivol organized meetings with voters from Suric village during working hours and using the office vehicle of NIVA brand. Mr Prodan, the chief of the forest reservation and Mr Taran, chief of Ecology inspection, etc do the same.

8. The Causeni mayoralty organized a concert on Saint Valentin and Valentina day. The concert was opened by Zaremba Anatolie, the mayor of the city and Boisteanu Svetlana, expert at the city hall, who offered time for speeches to candidates from PCRM, Stena Grigoriev, Munteanu Iurie and Munteanu Nicolaie. The latter congratulated the audience on the Valentine's Day and encouraged them to vote for PCRM - the only party that can change the lives of Moldovans. Also, during the celebration, the City hall organized a competition where the participants were asked three questions and the participants that gave a correct answer got money. In the opinion of the organizers the most important colour in the Moldovan tricolour is the red one and the star on the forehead of the bull depicted on the Moldovan coat of arms. Margareta Ivanus, who was present at the celebration, mentioned that the only party that promotes youth is the PCRM. As proof of that is naming the year 2008 as the Year of youth. According to the information provided by Popușoi Veronica, staff member of PCRM, the participants at the event represented various villages and representatives of all villages where the mayor of the village is Communist were invited. The money to organize the concert and for the hall rent came from the City hall (1000 lei were paid for the hall rent and 4500 lei for the concert).

9. On 13.02.2009 in Causeni was called an evaluation meeting of the Social Assistance and Family Protection Department, which was attended by the minister of Social Protection of the Family and Child, Galina Balmuș, and the MP Ștefan Grigoriev, who said they were candidates on the list of the Party of Communists and encouraged the audience to vote for the electoral contestant PCRM, bringing as arguments the achievements of the party while being in power. The Minister traveled by his office car.

10. On 15.02.09 in the premises of the Social Insurance Department in Telenesti rayon the Speaker of Parliament Marian Lupu met with voters. The speaker traveled by his office car, with a police escort.

11. On February 20, 2009, the Speaker Marian Lupu took part at two campaign meetings in Chetrosu and Pelinia villages in the Drochia rayon. Marian Lupu traveled to these events by office car, escorted by guards and police. To fill the hall, the employees of various organizations were brought by buses to the Chetrosu meeting. The meeting was organized on a Friday, a working day, from 10 a.m. The meeting lasted between 2 and 3 hours.

12. MP G.Morcov (PCRM), who is also a candidate on current PCRM lists repeatedly met with voters during campaign activities. Mr Morcov was accompanied on these meetings by the chairman of the Causeni rayon V.Calaraș. They traveled to the campaign activities by office cars.

13. The Minister of Education, although temporarily suspended being a registered candidate, met after classes with the representatives of the management of educational institutions in the Soldanesti rayon.

14. In Criuleni, on February 18, 2009, the VAZ 2121 "Niva" car, registration plates CRSV002, which is property of the State Veterinary Service from Criuleni, was observed in front of the PCRM premises. The back door was open which allowed to observe PCRM campaign materials in the trunk of the car.

15. On February 20, 2009, the chairman of the Dubasari rayon Grigore Policinski and the minister of Reintegration Vasile Sova organized campaign meetings with voters, at 2 p.m., at the Palace of Culture in Cocieri village, Dubasari rayon. The students of graduating classes of high school were forced to attend the meeting.

16. On February 18, 2009, the President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin spoke at a campaign meeting with voters, at 11 a.m., at the Palace of Culture in Cahul city. The head of agricultural household from Doina village, the principle of the Pedagogical College, Mr Tataru, the chairman of the veterans from the Cahul city council, Mr Lisenco, and others talked to the voters. All the speeches ended with Vote PCRM! The last speech was delivered by the President, raising the problem of the Doina village, where the bad state of 6 km of the road affect the quality of exported fruits. The President promised to solve the problem and repair the road in an urgent manner if  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the Doina voters voted for PCRM in the upcoming elections. The President also said that if there will be only 50% of voters casting ballots for PCRM, Doina village would have to wait for its turn longer. It was mentioned that the villages of Giurgiulești, Brînza, Colibași and other, where the mayors are not members of the ruling party, received some aid from the Investment Fund, but the aid was minimal.

### **Voter bribery**

17. The representatives of the "United Moldova" party, led by Ana Tcaci, during January 20 – February 8 organized meetings with the inhabitants of Fundurii Vechi and Camenca villages from the Glodeni rayon. At the end of these events, the representatives of "Moldova Unita" party distributed humanitarian aid to the persons with disabilities and to the needy. Also, they donated some equipment (printer, photocopier) to the High School of Camenca village.

18. On February 15, 2009, in the Anenii-Noi town, on the Chișinăului St., the representatives of the People's Christian Democratic Party (PPCD) distributed pasta.

19. On February 14, 2009, in Chetrosu village, Ana Tcaci, a candidate on the "United Moldova" party lists, participated at a meeting with the representatives of several NGOs, bringing along some humanitarian aid: soap, detergent and towels. The information gathered a packed hall. But, under pressure from some inhabitants, but also probably because of a tacit presence of the police at the meeting, Ms Tcaci did not distribute the humanitarian aid. This resulted in a series of very vocal complaints. Then, Ms Tcaci took out just one package of humanitarian aid, and gave it to an elderly woman as a birthday present.

## **Intimidation of voters**

20. Physicians and professors of the Edinet rayon were forced by the heads of their institutions to attend the campaign meeting with the President of the Republic, Vladimir Voronin, on February 10<sup>th</sup> 2009. The medical staff of the Center for Family Physicians were required by the Chief of Medicine of the Center, Dr. Guta Oleg, to sign a written guarantee that they would attend the meeting.

21. In the Glodeni district, on February 16<sup>th</sup> 2009, representatives of the Ministry of Education and members of the presidential staff, led by Ms. Larisa Savga, the Minister of Education, held meetings in educational institutions of the rayon. The meetings took place during working hours and the organizers used the Ministry cars for the events. All employees of the rayon educational department were required to attend. Although the topics of the meetings focused on the activity of the Ministry of Education, in reality the meetings had an obvious campaigning character, in favor of the Party of Communists (PCRM). For instance, PCRM candidates B. Stepa and N. Basistii participated at the meeting held at the "Lev Tolstoi" high-school in Glodeni. At the beginning of the meeting students distributed copies of the newspaper "The Communist".

22. An employee of the Social Assistance Department of the Telenesti Rayon Council (member of the Social Democratic Party) was warned by Ala Ursu, an MP, that in case he would campaign in favor of any other candidate but PCRM, he would face some big trouble. The employee asked to remain anonymous.

23. In Drochia every mayor and community leader were obliged to ensure the participation of 15 to 20 people at the campaign meeting of President Vldaimir Voronin. Same thing happened with the campaign meetings of Speaker Marian Lupu.

24. In Orhei, on February 17, 2009, around noon, the LADOM observer was summoned over the phone by the head of criminal investigation of Orhei police department, Mr P. Zmuncila, to the criminal investigation officer Ala Garam, to offer explanations on the case of him allegedly kidnapping of a person, after the meeting of A. Salaru, a candidate on the Liberal Party list. The observer came within several minutes to the Police Department Orhei, and offered his explanation that he did not kidnap anyone. At the Police Department the observer found out that Turcan Oleg submitted a report to the PD, stating that the observer had forcefully taken by car a person that had participated at the meeting with A. Salaru. The case is under investigation by the criminal investigation officer of Orhei PD, Ala Graham. The Orhei observer also stated that three persons who were involved in the conflicts in Seliste, namely Vicol Vasile, born in 1974, Reabuhin Grigorii, born in 1950, and Cebotari Mihail, born in 1988, had been fined by the Orhei Court 40 lei each, for hooliganism in the vicinity of the Palace of Culture in Seliste village.

25. Teachers representing Alliance Moldova Noastra party, from Carabetovca village, Basarabeasca rayon, intimidated their students, advising them against participating at any activities carried out by the Liberal Democratic Party (PLMD). On February 14, 2009, in Basarabeasca town PLMD organized a St Valentine's party. The youth from Carabetovca village chose not to participate, following the advise of their teachers.

26. A group of students from "Ștefan Vodă" High School, the Stefan Voda town, stated that their teachers, representing the Liberal Party, promote the activity of the party during classes.

### **Use of foul language during campaign activities**

27. At the campaign meetings with voters in Rîșcani, Edineț, Taraclia and other rayons, the President Vladimir Voronin used vulgar expressions and labeling, and other foul language, when referring to the mayor of Chisinau and several opposition MPs.

28. In some rayons the campaigning unfolds in a more or less decent manner. Still the representatives of the Party of Communists, the People's Christian Democratic Party, and of the Liberal Party make use of black PR against other contestants when talking to voters.

### **Limiting the access of mass media to campaign activities**

29. At the campaign meeting of President Vladimir Voronin with the voters in the Edinet rayon, the representatives of the TV AVM (Edinet) station were denied access to film the speeches delivered by the President. They were only allowed to film before the beginning of the meeting. Then, the journalists were invited to film outside of the Edinet Palace of Culture.

### **Involvement of the representatives of the church in the campaign activities**

30. On February 13, 2009 over two hundred priests from the northern rayon of the country participated at a meeting with President Vladimir Voronin. The meeting was closed doors, and unfolded in the St. Constantin and Elena Cathedral in Balti. Before the meeting, the priests admitted of now knowing about the purpose of the meetings. Mr Voronin said he would talk about God, repentance and sins. Vladimir Voronin did not specify whether he had invited the priests in his capacity as president or as a candidate.

31. On February 18, 2009, at 8.30 a.m., Vladimir Voronin met with the priests from the Southern region.

### **Campaign posters**

32. In the morning of February 16, 2009 on the majority of stands on the Eminescu St in Căușeni were posted PCRM posters, in the evening some of them were exchanged with those of AMN. On February 18, the majority of posters were those of PLDM and PDM. In the morning of February 19, before the arrival of president Vladimir Voronin, all the posters were those of PCRM. In the evening of the same day three youngsters had been detaching some of the posters and putting up PPCD posters. Many passers by said that the city seems to have witnessed a battle of posters – who damages the posters of other contestants first. In the centre of the city there are piles of torn off paper. The information stands from Ursoaia and Zaim villages are situated on the premises of the mayoralties and the PCRM

campaign posters are guarded by the mayoral employees.

33. In Cahul, many campaign materials of PLDM were posted on trees outside the villages and cities. Otherwise, all the campaign posters are posted on the special stands.

34. In Glodeni, on February 17, 2009, at the indication of Minister of Agriculture, A. Gorodenco (candidate on the lists of PCRM), the representatives of ÎC "Coopcomerț Glodeni" took off the banners of PLDM and AMN. These parties are renting offices on the premises of ÎC "Coopcomerț Glodeni". The banners only stated the names of constants, and were not campaign materials.



## **Annex 2 – List of recommendations**

- 1. LADOM recommends to the electoral bodies to refrain from actions that may limit the right to freedom of speech.***
- 2. The President of the Republic, the President of the Parliament and the Prime Minister calculate their electoral expenses and repay these expenses to the state budget, from the Electoral Fund of the candidate they represent – a special bank account opened by every contestant registered for the race;***
- 3. The Central Election Commission regulates the repayment of budget funds used by the state officials for campaign activity, and supervises the abiding by the provisions of Article 46 of the Electoral Code.***
- 4. It is recommended that the Members of Parliament withhold from using public resources for the campaigning purposes; in the long term it is recommended that the relevant legislation is amended in accordance with the Electoral Code.***
- 5. It is recommended that, to avoid multiple voting, the CEC develops and adopts a control mechanism of the declaration of stay procedure, to make sure the citizens appear only on one voter list.***
- 6. LADOM encourages the voters to verify their registration on the lists of voters.***
- 7. We recommend that the CEC takes all possible measures to open additional polling stations on the premises of official institutions of the country abroad, in addition to those of diplomatic missions; in the long run, we recommend amending the legislation to guarantee the right to vote of the citizens living abroad.***
- 8. LADOM recommends that the CEC widely publicizes the need of the stamp confirming a cast ballot and explain why its use is crucial in preventing multiple voting.***
- 9. We recommend that the CEC make use of all available resources to inform citizens left of Dniester of the voting procedures and location of the polling stations.***