



ISFED Election Update

Fifth Edition

December 17-23, 2007

International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) continues to monitor the election administration activities concerning the January 5, 2008 Presidential Elections in Georgia. ISFED presents the monitoring results as of December 23 in this fourth edition of the “Election Update”.

Election Administration

According to the Central Election Commission (CEC) resolution (#37/2007) adopted on December 17, 2007, for the high mountainous precincts which are not easily accessible, the elections may be held earlier than it is appointed – any day from December 28, 2007 till January 5, 2008. These election precincts are:

1. Dusheti Election District 28: #16, #17, #34, #41, #42 election precincts;
2. Akhmeta Election District 18: #14 election precincts;
3. Kazbegi Election District 29: #4, #8, #9, #10 election precincts;
4. Lentekhi Election district 46: #16 election precincts;
5. Mestia Election District 47: #11, #12, #13, #27, #28, #30, #34, #35, #39, #40 election precincts.

However, the number of high mountainous precincts where elections may be held earlier might increase. Each relevant election district should give the CEC the list of precincts that are difficult to access, where elections could be held earlier.

On December 20, the CEC Chairman visited #4 Precinct Election Commission (PEC) of the Chugureti District, where the simulation of the voting procedures for the two types of voters took place. First, for the voters who are on the unified voters’ list and second, for the voters who will vote through the additional lists on the Election Day. At the same PEC video cameras were presented to the public. The cameras will be installed at PECs in ten cities (Akhalkalaki, Batumi, Bolnisi, Gori, Kutaisi, Marneuli, Poti, Rustavi, Tbilisi, and Zugdidi) to ensure the transparency of election processes. The CEC Chairman stated that the secrecy of vote for each voter will be guaranteed on Election Day.

On December 21, 2007 the CEC started printing election ballots. Five printing houses are in charge of printing election ballot papers. ISFED sent observers to monitor the process in all five of the printing houses. It is notable, that on December 22 at 13:20, ISFED’s accredited observer Kakha Chachua was not allowed to enter in the printing house “Polygraph” because of chief person’s absence. As a result, ISFED contacted the CEC and the CEC then helped ensure that the ISFED observer could continue to monitor the printing process of ballot papers.



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On December 22 according to the CEC resolution #36/2007, election precincts were opened abroad for ensuring the electoral right for Georgian citizens serving in Kosovo and Iraq. Precincts were open in:

1. Iraq, City Baghdad, Green Zone, Base “Union” – 1848 voters;
2. Iraq, Province Vasily, City Alkuti, Base “Delta” – 233 voters; and
3. Kosovo peace region, City Priznani, Military Base “Airfield” – 318 voters.

According to the monitoring results of ISFED long-term observers, many political parties made changes to their representatives at the PECs, and did so before the deadline set under the legislation (December 20, 16 days before elections) of Unified Election Code of Georgia, Article 21, Subarticle 5. Most changes occurred among the representatives of opposition political parties. Herewith, it is unknown for ISFED, what were the specific causes of the large scale changes.

According to the Article 16, Subarticle 3 of Unified Election Code of Georgia and CEC resolution # 110/2007, in some of the election districts new precincts were created. Creation of such election precincts is prescribed under the law if there are more than 50 voter in a military unit, hospital, or other stationary institute. Such election precincts were created in the following districts: Mtatsminda (#1, #34), Vake (#71), Saburtalo (#83, #84, #85, #86), Krtsanisi (#40, #41, #42, #43, #44, #45, #46, #47, #48), Isani (#77, #78, #160), Samgori (#114, #115, #116, #117, #118), Chughureti (#41, #43, #44), Didube (#56, #57), Gldani (#108, #109), Tianeti (#20), Rustavi (#71), Gardabani (#65, #66, #67, #68, #69), Mtskheta (#31, #33), Gori (#24, #87, #88, #89, #90), Khashuri (#47), Akhaltsikhe (#32, #33, #34), Akhalkalaki (#66, #67), Ninotsminda (#35, #36), Liakhvi (#21, #22, #23), Baghdati (#25), Tskhaltubo (#63), Kutaisi (#121, #122, #123, #124), Senaki (#44, #45, #46), Zugdidi (#105), Khelvachauri (#50, #58, #59).

Numbers and contact information (address, phone numbers) of newly created election precincts were not published according to the December 23rd deadline prescribed by the law (Article 16, Subarticle 7 of Unified Election Code of Georgia) in Isani, Samgori, Gldani, Tianeti, Mtskheta, Khashuri and Tskhaltubo election districts.

Voter Registration

Article 10, Subarticle 11 of Unified Election Code of Georgia allows members of the military to vote according to place of registration. On the established date of December 22 (14 days before elections), military member submitted their information for inclusion in the voters lists in the following election precincts: #16, #20 election precincts of Signaghi, #3, #4, #8, #16 election precincts of Lagodekhi, and #34, #41, #42 election precincts of Dusheti election district.

During monitoring period, ISFED did not observe any cases of a voter appealing a precinct's refusal of entering him/her on the voters' list to the court. However, in election precinct #5 of Kutaisi, a voter made an appeal to the court after the deadline prescribed



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by law (December 13) to be included in the voters list. The court ruled in favor of inclusion and the voter information is to be added to the list.

Campaign environment

The ISFED long-term observer of the Khulo district encountered problems while trying to rent an office. The landlord, who works in the private sector, refused to rent the space to ISFED. According to the landlord, he had received a specific warning from local self-government representatives to not rent the office space to the ISFED coordinator. The landlord was told that if he did rent the space to ISFED, then he would have problems and lose his job. According to the ISFED long-term observer, opposition political parties had similar problems in Khulo. More precisely, a landlord abruptly canceled the leases of an office without reason and made the party vacate. The landlords have requested that their names and other directly identifiable information not be cited and ISFED is respecting this wish.

In Sighnaghi, the Sakrebulo Chairman abolished a previous order regarding which public buildings could be used for campaigning purposes and the number of buildings was reduced from eleven to four. The presidential candidates were not told until the day before their event that the building they had selected was no longer on the list. Unfortunately, because of the building change, they could not carry out their planned activities.

According to the ISFED long-term observer in Batumi, National Movement activists distributed food products to the voters that would show their ID card and allow the activists to take down the information. If a voter refused, the activists would not give out the products. The activists told voters that they needed the ID cards' information to gather signatures for registration of a presidential candidate. A representative of the National Movement headquarter declared that they do care about their voters to be in the list. However, ISFED finds this explanation confusing, because the deadline for candidate and voter registration has already passed.

According to the ISFED long-term observer in Kvareli, voters who attended the meeting of an opposite party candidate had problems. More specifically, public sector employees were threatened directly and/or indirectly by their bosses and told they would be dismissed from jobs if they attend any such meetings in the future.

Important Dates and Procedures for the upcoming Week

Below are important dates and procedures that must be implemented by the Election Administration of Georgia during the following week (24-29 December):

December 24, 2007 Deadline for amending the voters' list, except for the following "special" cases: recent travel back into the country, released



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from hospital, or released from detention (12 days before Election Day).

- December 25, 2007** A financial monitoring group is to be created based on a CEC resolution.
- December 26, 2007** Deadline for receipt of the voters' list for the PECs (10 days before Election Day). The PECs shall then post the voters' lists "immediately" upon receipt in a "conspicuous" place in the polling station.
- December 29, 2007** Deadline for international organizations to apply for registration to the CEC. The CEC will decide on the registration within 2 days of receipt of application.

ISFED continues to monitor pre-election procedures and will disseminate monitoring results regularly.

ISFED implements above mentioned project with the financial support of the European Union and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.



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