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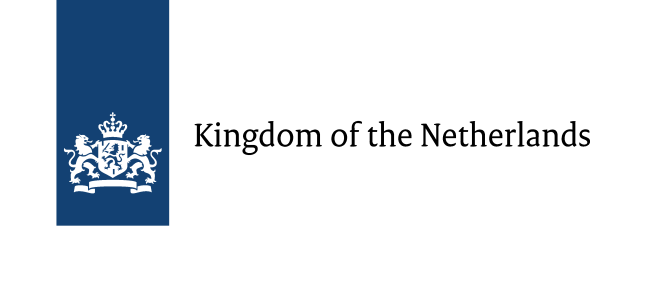
**June 15, 2014 Local Self-Government Elections**

Third Interim Report of Pre-Election Monitoring

(May 12 – June 1)

June 6, 2014, Tbilisi

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**I. Key Findings**

During the reporting period the International Society for Fair elections and Democracy monitored the pre-election environment in all municipalities of Georgia.

Coordinators of ISFED attended 1181 public meetings held by election subjects from May 12 to June 1, 2014, including 586 public meeting held by the coalition Georgian Dream; 271 by the United National Movement; 128 by Nino Burjanadze – Unified Opposition; 46 by the Non-Parliamentary Opposition (Kakha Kukava, Pikria Chikhradze); 36 by the Labor Party of Georgia; 29 by the Georgia’s Way; 28 by the Alliance of Patriots of Georgia; 9 by the Self-Government to People; 6 by the People’s Party; 5 by the Green Party; 5 by Irakli Okruashvili – Georgian Party.

* One important trend identified during the reporting period was alleged pressure on candidates nominated by opposition parties for the self-government elections, as a result of which they withdrew their candidacies. According to the information provided by the CEC, as of June 1 385 candidates in 62 election districts have withdrawn their candidacies. Based on the information reported by political unions and local observers, out of these withdrawals 50 candidates of 6 opposition parties withdrew their candidacies as a result of alleged pressure.

Notably, despite a number of statements made by non-governmental organizations and political unions, investigating authorities never launched a probe into the alleged acts of pressure. Notably, on May 31 the Prime Minister made a statement saying that the Georgian Dream will not allow victory of any other political force in any of the regions.

We believe that a healthy competition is a necessary prerequisite for fair elections, and any efforts of getting rid of competitors at the local level has an extreme adverse effect on formation of fair pre-election environment.

* During the pre-election period ISFED has also found one act of harassment against a candidate for the purpose disrupting pre-election campaign.
* During the reporting period we have also found three dismissals from work on alleged political grounds. Gurjaani Gamgebeli Emzar Jikurishvili dismissed from work two supporters of his political rival employed in the territorial agency of Kachreti. A supporter of the bloc Burjanadze – Unified Opposition was dismissed from work on alleged political grounds in Akhmeta.

We believe that during the pre-election period staff changes in local self-government should be kept to the minimum, in order for it not influence pre-election processes, while authorities should launch a probe into dismissals on alleged political grounds.

* During the reporting period we have found two cases of using public resources for the election purposes; in particular, offices of the Government Chancellery were illegally used by the Prime Minister for pre-election purposes. We welcome imposition of a sanction by the Central Election Commission (CEC) for using public resources in favor of the ruling party, showing that the election administration is independent; however, we believe that the CEC’s choice of the target of the sanction was wrong – the sanction should have been imposed on the Prime Minister instead of the Chief of the Government Chancellery. We have also found one case of campaigning during a state budget-funded event.
* We believe that each individual fact of using public resources for the election purposes has an extreme adverse impact on the formation of fair pre-election environment and appropriate actions must be taken in response.
* We have also found one act of alleged vote-buying by providing foreign humanitarian assistance to constituents by one of the candidates of the Non-Parliamentary Opposition. Article 47 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code prohibits transfer of gifts, money and other material values to citizens free of charge or at a discounted price.
* During the reporting period we have also found three cases where members of the election administration participated in pre-election campaigning. Under Article 45 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code members of the election administration fall under the category of individuals directly prohibited by law from performing and/or engaging in pre-election campaigning. The violation is subject to a sanction of 2 000 laris under Article 79 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code.

Notably, in all three cases district election commissions adequately reacted and imposed corresponding liability on members of the commission participating in campaigning.

* We have also found one act of illegal participation of a public servant in campaigning – employees of Mtskheta Gamgeoba participated in election campaigning in violation of law.

We believe that it is the obligation of every public servant to realize and consider the prohibitions that apply to them during the pre-election period.

* One extreme negative trend detected during the pre-election period was acts of physical confrontation.

We found one act of physical violence on political grounds against one of the leaders of the United National Movement who was assaulted due to his political activities. We have also detected four acts of physical violence between members or supporters of the coalition Georgian Dream and those of the United National Movement. To ensure free and secure pre-election environment it is important for the authorities to protect safety of all persons engaged in pre-election campaigning. We believe that the law enforcement authorities failed to adequately respond to the fact; rather, they imposed the lightest form of punishment, which does not promote prevention of physical assault on political grounds during the pre-election campaigning.

* During the reporting period we identified a trend of damaging campaigning materials of political rivals and improper placement of campaigning materials. ISFED coordinators have found 10 such cases in different municipalities involving campaigning materials of both the ruling coalition and opposition parties. We believe that the authorities did not take any adequate actions in response to these incidents.

Further, we have found three cases of improper production of campaigning materials, two of which involve the coalition Georgian Dream’s candidates and one – a candidate of the bloc Burjanadze – Unified Opposition. The materials lacked all the requisites as prescribed by law.

* One important problem that persists is use of hate speech during pre-election campaigning by candidates. During the reporting period ISFED coordinators have found 3 homophobic statements two of which were made by candidates of the Labor Party and one was made by a candidate of the bloc Burjanadze – Unified Opposition. We believe that these statements incite public hate, which is unacceptable and alarming.
* During the reporting period registration of candidates with the election administration was finished. According to statistical information, there is an alarming gender imbalance and inadequately low number of women in voter lists, suggesting that the gender imbalance in self-government authorities highlighted by ISFED in its research[[1]](#footnote-1) will remain intact following the elections. To change the situation it is important to reform the existing legislation and introduce the election system that will promote women representation in local self-government agencies; further, gender quoting norms must be revised and discussions about mandatory quoting must be launched. Additionally, none of the political parties or political unions have demonstrated any significant efforts to improve women participation in politics.
* During the reporting period ISFED found two cases of interference with journalistic reporting by candidates of the Non-Parliamentary Opposition and the coalition Georgian Dream, as well as one act of interference with monitoring activities by the coalition Georgian Dream and one act of pressure against an observer by the Labor Party.

We believe that free media and monitoring missions are important for objective coverage of the pre-election environment and any type of pressure against them or any attempt to influence their work will have an adverse impact on free election environment.

* The work of the Central Election Commission and the election administration in general has been positive; however, we disapprove the improper registration of election subjects and candidates for offices of Mayor in Rustavi and Poti in particular, as we believe that the election administration wrongfully interpreted legal norms. Further, the CEC adopted a resolution abolishing election registration of party lists, according to which below-the-minimum number of candidates on the list will no longer serve as grounds for abolishing the party list. Notably, the resolution will have a positive impact on the ongoing political and election developments; however, it conflicts with the Election Code from legal point of view.
* The Inter Agency Task Force for Free and Fair Election, established for the purpose of “preventing and responding to violations of the election legislation of Georgia by public servants” [[2]](#footnote-2) should have an important role during the pre-election period. Even though the IATF has no means for enforcement of its own recommendations, we are under the impression that the IATF is not interested in the implementation of its recommendations. The IATF has not presented any report about how its work has contributed to the improvement of the pre-election environment.

**II. Recommendations**

To the law enforcement authorities - Investigate in the shortest timeframe possible alleged pressure against candidates of various political parties, in an attempt to force them into withdrawing their candidacies.

To the Prime Minister - Refrain from making statements that interfere with formation of healthy pre-election competition

To political parties

* Take tightest measures against their members engaging in physical confrontation during pre-election campaigning; also, ensure compliance of their members with internal party discipline in a way that will prevent damaging of a competitor’s campaigning materials;
* Avoid using discriminatory phrases and inciting hatred in the society
* Refrain from interfering with free journalistic reporting and monitoring activities

To the Central Election Commission - In the process of adopting sub-legal acts ensure their full compliance with the Election Code.

To public servants and employees of the election administration - Consider prohibitions of the Election Code that apply to them during pre-election period and refrain from participating in campaigning in violation of law.

To the IATF - Act on violations of law more promptly in frames of its competence, follow closely implementation of its recommendations and let the public know how these recommendations are improving the election environment.

**III. Harassment**

3.1Alleged pressure on candidates into withdrawal

After the election campaign entered its active phase, political parties have been reporting alleged pressure on their candidates. According to these reports, candidates of various opposition parties running in elections through proportionate or majoritarian lists have withdrawn as a result of pressure. In addition to these facts, which have become a trend, the Prime Minister made a statement on May 31 saying that the Georgian Dream will not allow victory of any other political force in any of the regions. We believe that health competition is one of the prerequisites for fair elections, which is why these statements somehow promote getting rid of competitors at the local level by one way or another.

Notably, alleged pressure is exerted on opposition parties by means of harassment, intimidation as well as various agreements. According to party reports, candidates are threatened to have their family members dismissed from work, promised to conclude a plea bargain with their defendant relatives, candidates receive phone calls from blocked numbers demanding that they withdraw. As to victims themselves, they generally choose not to specify who exerted the pressure.

Candidates withdrew as a result of alleged pressure in various districts of Georgia. Up to 50 withdrawals of opposition candidates occurred in the following municipalities:

According to Paata Nadiradze, the UNM’s majoritarian candidate in the village of Samtatskaro, Dediplistskaro, local authorities pressured him into withdrawal, saying that they threatened to cause problems for his brother who works at the Special Forces Unit.

According to Emzar Janashvili, the UNM’s candidate for the office of Gamgebeli, local authorities threatened that if he did not withdraw his spouse who works at Socar Georgia Ltd. would lose her job.

Lali Kacheishvili, independent majoritarian candidate for Amaghleba community in Chokhatauri reported to ISFED that independent majoritarian candidates of the same community Emzar Dolidze and Zeno Gvenetadze demanded that she withdraw, making threats on a systematic basis. According to Lali Kacheishvili, on several occasions these persons put up posters with phrases against the candidate, as an attempt to discredit her.

Givi Ramazashvili, candidate of an initiative group for the office of Sakrebulo Member in Gurjaani informed ISFED that he was approached several times by people communicating the demand of Gurjaani Gamgebeli Emzar Jikurashvili for him to withdraw. On May 6 Gamgebeli met him in person and demanded that he withdraw; otherwise, he threatened to have his friends dismissed from work. In several Days Emzar Jikurishvili dismissed two employees of Kachreti Territorial Agency who are friends and supporters of Givi Ramazashvili.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Out of 15 candidates of the UNM in Dmanisi initial five (Almaz Ramzanov, Elmuraz Gasanov, Shakhvadin Kojaev, Stambul Kurbanov, Makhmud Ovichiev) withdrew; one of the candidates Kurban Mamedov later changed his mind about withdrawal but he states that he and members of his family have been intimidated by phone calls from a blocked caller.

In Dmanisi candidates of the Christian Democratic Party are forced to write letters of withdrawal. Five candidates have already withdrawn (Giorgi Andiashvili, Eldar Pakeliani, Davit Ognadze, Mahmed Mahmudov – majoritarian candidates; Lia Pilpani – candidate on party list).

In Tsalka the UNM’s majoritarian candidates Leon Mikaelian (in Drakovi Community) and Gulara Mamedova (in Sarvani Community) withdrew.

In Tetritskaro the following candidates of the UNM have withdrawn – Janiko Guliashvili and Zurab Badalashvili, who was number 5 on the party list and a majoritarian candidate for Manglisi. Murad Baidarashvili, candidate of the bloc Burjanadze – Unified Opposition in Chikhvta Community has alleged pressure. In Akhaltsikhe Salome Zurabishvili’s political union Georgia’s Way presented a list of 11 candidates. According to the chief of Akhaltsikhe campaign headquarters, in several days three candidates (Manana Iadze, Ioseb Aspanidze, Nino Narimanidze) withdrew. Further, the party has reported that as a result of pressure two majoritarian candidates of the Georgia’s Way (Marine Okromelidze, Aleksandre Tamaradze) declared that they are withdrawing.

The UNM’s majoritarian candidate in Akhaltsikhe and number 12 on the proportionate list Malkhaz Ivanidze also withdrew. The party has stated that he was subjected to pressure.

In Borjomi the UNM’s majoritarian candidate Ivane Gelashvili has also withdrawn, so did another majoritarian candidate of the UNM Ramaz Merabishvili in the community of Uda in Adigeni who is also number 2 on the list.

Three proportionate candidates (Giorgi Gigineishvili, Ilia Osepashvili, Mamuka Makharashvili) and one majoritarian candidate (Davit Osepashvili) of the People’s Party in Mtskheta filed letters of withdrawal with their party. According to Lasha Bolotashvili, representative of the People’s Party in Mtskheta, the candidates were pressured by Majoritarian MP from Mtskheta Dimitri Khundadze. However, the candidates refuse any allegations of pressure in private conversations. Later another candidate on the proportionate list of the party, Davit Guledani withdrew on May 31.

In Lentekhi the UNM’s majoritarian candidate Iulon Tvildiani withdrew under suspicious circumstances.

In Zugdidi the UNM’s member Lasha Damenia has made allegations about pressure, saying that three members of the party were demanded to withdraw.

Vika Toria, majoritarian candidate for Shamgoni of the Non-Parliamentary Opposition – Kakha Kukava, Pikria Chikhradze withdrew, so did Jikhashkari majoritarian candidate of an initiative group Levan Shengelia. It was reported that he was subjected to pressure.

Three majoritarian candidates in Khulo District also withdrew – Zaur Shanidze, candidate of the Non-Parliamentary Opposition – Kakha Kukava, Pikria Chikhradze for the majoritarian district o Pushrujauli N11 and Gigla Surmanidze, candidate of the bloc Burjanadze – Unified Opposition in the same majoritarian district.

An attempt of an agreement was detected in Kaspi. According to the chairman of the campaign headquarters of the Alliance of Georgia’s Patriots, Ilia Kitriashvili, Davit Baisonashvili – majoritarian candidate of the coalition Georgian Dream in the village of Khovaleti - demanded that their candidate in Khovaleti, Vakhtang Khatashvili withdraw; instead, Baisonashvili promised party votes at Khovla District N31 in return.

Notably, according to the CEC estimates as of June 1, 2014, total of 384 candidates have withdrawn their candidacies in various election districts and the CEC, only two of which are candidates of the coalition Georgian Dream. Remaining candidates include 256 independent candidates, 27 candidates of Nino Burjanadze – Unified Opposition, 17 of the Non-Parliamentary Opposition, 17 of the Political Movement of Georgian Law Enforcement Veterans and Patriots, 15 of the Christian-Democratic Party and 11 of the United National Movement.

3.2 Harassment of Candidates in an attempt to Disrupt Pre-Election Campaigning

According to Lia Chigogidze, majoritarian candidate presented by an initiative group in the village of Guturi, Chokhatauri Municipality, coordinator of the coalition Georgian Dream Lasha Tolordava and activists of the coalition are pressuring persons that are affiliated with her.

Lia Chigogidze informed ISFED’s coordinator that coordinator and activists of the coalition Georgian Dream personally visited her campaign headquarters and threatened owner of the space who is a socially vulnerable person that they would take her social assistance away unless she refused to rent her space to Lia Chigogidze.

ISFED’s observer interviewed head of the campaign headquarters of the coalition Georgian Dream, Gela Lomineishvili and their candidate for the office of Chikhatauri Gamgebeli Irakli Kuchava but they dismissed allegations about pressure. As to the owner of the space, she has refrained from commenting.

**IV. Dismissals from Work on Alleged Political Grounds**

4.1 Gurjaani

During the pre-election monitoring ISFED detected two cases of dismissal of public servants on alleged political grounds, in which Gurjaani Gamgebeli dismissed Acting Trustee of Kachreti and a specialist of the territorial agency from work.

In particular, on May 13 under the order of Gurjaani Gamgebeli Emzar Jikurashvili, Acting Trustee of Kachreti Gulo Basilashvili was dismissed from his office.

Gulo Basilashvili informed ISFED’s coordinator that he believes the dismissal has to do with his friendship and support of Givi Ramazashvili, a candidate for the office of Sakrebulo Member nominated by an initiative group. He stated that he had been holding the office for the period of eight months and during this time he had not received a single warning or reproof. He also stated that his relations with Gamgebeli got strained after Emzar Jikurashvili decided to run in the self-government elections as a candidate for the office of Sakrebulo Member in Kachreti Village.

Otar Mirianashvili, specialist of the territorial agency of Kachreti Village, who was dismissed by Gamgebeli on May 15, also alleges that his dismissal was politically motivated. He is also a friend of the independent candidate, Givi Ramazashvili. The order of his dismissal cites inadequate fulfillment of his official duties as grounds for the dismissal; however, he had not received a single verbal or written warning or reproof.

Candidate nominated by initiative group for the office of Sakrebulo Member, Givi Ramazashvili informed ISFED’s coordinator that he was approached several times on behalf of Emzar Jikurishvili with a demand to withdraw. On May 6 he met him in person and demanded that he withdraw from the elections; otherwise, he threatened to dismiss his friends from work.

Relatives of Emzar Jikurishvili – Gela Bazerashvili and Malkhaz Bazerashvili were appointed to the vacant offices at Kachreti Territorial Agency. Jikurishvili himself confirmed this fact in an interview with ISFED.

4.2 Akhmeta

According to Zaza Lepsveridze, supporter of the bloc Burjanadze – Unified Opposition he was dimissed from work on political grounds. On May 14, 2014, division of melioration of the Ministry of agriculture of Georgia signed an agreement with him, for him to occupy the position of chief of Akhmeta District but on May 21 he was informed over the phone that he would no longer be appointed to the office.

Zaza Lepsveridze believes that it has to do with his political beliefs, considering that on May 15 he submitted a letter informing district organization of the coalition Georgian Dream that he was leaving the party. After leaving the Georgian Dream he joined Burjanadze – Unified Opposition.

**V. Use of Public Resources**

5.1 Illegal Use of Buildings by the Prime Minister

On April 22, 2014, members of the election bloc Georgian Dream met with the Prime Minister at the Government Chancellery, for the discussion of mayoral and majoritarian candidates for the local self-government elections, as well as formation of the party list.[[4]](#footnote-4) Representatives of the Non-Parliamentary Opposition filed a complaint to the CEC over the fact. [[5]](#footnote-5)

Based on the complaint of the Non-Parliamentary Opposition, on May 16, 2014, the CEC delivered a decision to draw up a protocol of administrative violation against the Head of the Government Chancellery Maia Tskitishvili under Article 81 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code stipulating that conduct of pre-election campaign on the premises of institutions, where such pre-election campaigns are prohibited by the law is punishable with a fine in the amount of 1000 GEL. Under para.5, Article 45 of the Code, conduct of pre-election campaigning is prohibited on premises of institutions of executive authorities of Georgia. The protocol was transferred to the City Court of Georgia. The latter imposed a fine of 1000 laris on the Government Chancellery.

We welcome imposition of a sanction by the CEC for use of public resources in favor of the ruling party as a positive precedent illustrating independence of the election administration. However, we believe that the CEC’s choice of the target of the fine was wrong, considering that members of the political council were invited to a meeting with the Prime Minister personally. It is more likely that the premises of the Government Chancellery were used for the pre-election purposes with the consent of the Prime Minister. Notably, the Government Chancellery, as a structural unit of the government is headed by the Prime Minister personally[[6]](#footnote-6), while the Head of the Chancellery is subordinated to the Prime Minister.

In this light, we believe that stipulations of the law were violated by the Prime Minister; therefore, the CEC should have drawn up the protocol of administrative offence against the Prime Minister.

5.2 Campaigning during an event funded from the state budget

On May 15, 2014, opening of the kindergarten N9 in Ozurgeti Municipality were attended by municipal public servants. Guests found one of the rooms decorated with campaign accessories of the coalition Georgian Dream bearing the number of the party. It was reported by a media outlet Guria News on its website.[[7]](#footnote-7) The opening of the kindergarten was funded by the local budget.

Para.7, Article 45 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code prohibits pre-election campaigning during an event funded from the local budget, qualifying the action as use of public resources.

The CEC probed the fact and confirmed violation of the Election Code of Georgia. Based on Article 88 of the Code it referred the case to the District Election Commission for the purpose of drawing up a protocol of administrative offence against head of the kindergarten Vera Vasadze.[[8]](#footnote-8)

**VI. Vote Buying**

On May 14, 2014, member of the Non-Parliamentary Opposition – Kakha Kukava, Pikria Chikhradze, Merab Ghoghoberidze who is also a number 1 candidate of the election bloc in Khevachauri list of the party provided foreign assistance to population. Merab Ghoghoberidze is the head of the Information Center for Combating Corruption in Georgia. In an interview with ISFED’s coordinator he noted that he participated in the event in his capacity of the head of the information center. According to Ghoghoberidze, he provided gifts prior to his registration as a candidate; however, he had already declared his election goals in Khelvachauri District at that time.

Article 47 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code prohibits transfer of gifts, money or any other material possessions to citizens of Georgia by an election subject or his/her representative free of charge or at a discounted price. Violation of the prohibition may serve not only as grounds for imposing pecuniary fine on election subject[[9]](#footnote-9) but also for abolishment of registration of the candidate under the decision of a court.

ISFED believes that the candidate provided foreign aid to voters intentionally, to win their support. Such actions constitute vote buying, in response to which the State Audit Service should take adequate measures.

**VII. Participation of Unauthorized Persons in Pre-Election Campaign**

7.1Participation of election administration officers in campaigning

Under Article 45 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code members of the election administration fall under the category of individuals directly prohibited by law from performing and/or engaging in pre-election campaigning. The violation is subject to a sanction of 2 000 laris under Article 79 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code.

During the reporting period we detected a trend of election administration officers participating in pre-election campaigning; however, notably corresponding DECs took adequate actions in response to these violations.

7.1.1 Participation of Gurjaani PEC member in Campaigning

ISFED found that on May 19, 2014, member of Gurjaani PEC N5 Besarion Todiashvili participated in pre-election campaigning in favor of a candidate of the coalition Georgian Dream for office of Gamgebeli, Givi Gergidze.

Chairperson of Gurjaani DEC Natalia Begiashvili filed a protocol of administrative offence and referred it to Gurjaani District Court for examining. The court found Besarion Todiashvili guilty of the offence and imposed a fine based on Article 79 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code.

7.1.2 Participation of Member of Gurjaani DEC in Campaigning

On May 23, member of Gurjaani DEC N12 Tornike Tsintsalashvili, the National Forum’s proxy in the commission, demanded that chairpersons of Kachredi PECs N36 and 37 – Khatia Burduladze and Tamar Lazashvili take photos of voter lists at the polling station in order to estimate the number of voters who would vote in favor of a majoritarian candidate of the coalition Emzar Jikurishvili. Chairpersons of the PECs N36 and 37 have confirmed the fact in an interview with ISFED’s coordinator.

Following the incident chairperson of Gurjaani DEC N12 Natalia Begashvili drew up a protocol of administrative offence against Tornike Tsintsalashvili and referred it to Gurjaani District Court for review.

It is important for members of election commissions to remain independent in their work while election subjects should realize that it is unacceptable to have commission members cater to their interests. The Election Code contains an imperative prohibition of any influence on members of election administration or interference with their work in an attempt to influence their decisions.[[10]](#footnote-10)

7.1.3 Participation of Member of Krtsanisi DEC in Campaigning

As reported by ISFED’s coordinator, Member of Krtsanisi DEC N30, Genadi Khshiani participated in disruption of meeting of the election bloc UNM in the village of Ponichala on May 31.

Pursuant to para.z8, Article 2 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code of Georgia qualifies actions in support of as well as against an election subject candidate as pre-election campaigning.

Krtsanisi DEC Chairman Lasha Shurgaia drew up subsequent protocol of administrative offence on June 1, 2014, on grounds of participation of PEC member in pre-election campaigning and referred it to court.

7.2 Participation of Public Servants in Campaigning

Para.4, Article 45 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code prohibits participation of public servants of state and local municipal authorities during working hours and/or when they are directly fulfilling official functions. Article 70 of the Election Code stipulates that participation in pre-election campaigning is punishable with a fine in the amount of 2 000 laris.

On May 27 at 5:00 in Mtskheta coalition Georgian Dream held a pre-election meeting with population. The Prime Minister of Georgia addressed constituents with a speech and presented candidates for offices of Mayor and Gamgebeli.

Notably, the meeting was attended by public servants during working hours, including head of Mtskheta Gamgeoba Health and Social Services Marina Zurabishvili, employees of Cultural Division Mamuka Makharashvili and Nino LAzviashvili and trustee of Gamgeoba of Chardakhi Territorial Agency Lekso Aslanishvili.

**VIII. Disruption of Pre-Election Campaigning**

8.1 Physical Violence on Alleged Political Grounds

On May 27 at Abashidze Street in Tbilisi, one of the leaders of the UNM Zurab Chiaberashvili was assaulted by Giorgi Mgeladze and Rezo Tabukashvili while in Literature Café together with Nodar Ladaria. The assaliants threw hot tea in the face at Ladaria and injured Chiaberashvili in his head.

Zurab Chiaberashvili stated that he was attacked for his political activities as a member of the UNM.

Criminal proceedings were launched under Article 20 of the Criminal Code, inflicting minor health injuries. Police ordered Rezo Tabukashvili to pay 2 000 laris in bail while the investigation continues and a trial is scheduled to be held on June 14, 2014. As to Giorgi Mgeladze, he will be questioned as a witness in frames of the investigation.

Inflicting intentional damage to health is a crime; however, the situation is further aggravated by the fact that the motive of violence was political beliefs of an individual. To ensure fair and secure pre-election environment, the authorities should provide security for all participants of pre-election campaigning.

Notably, the crime committed on March 31 when another representative of the UNM Nugzar Tsiklauri suffered an injury has not yet been solved. The victim stated that he was assaulted for his political activities. Delay of investigation of such incidents does not promote prevention of politically motivated assaults.

8.2 Confrontation between members of the coalition Georgian Dream and the United National Movement in Village of Ponichala

A concert held in celebration of international children’s day in Ponichala on May 31 was attended by majoritarian candidate of the UNM Khatuna Berdzenishvili and her supporters. Activists of the coalition Georgian Dream threw eggs and verbally abused supporters of the UNM. They called police but according to majoritarian candidate Khatuna Berdzenishvili the police arrived one hour after the phone call was made.

Later video footage made it possible to identify perpetrators[[11]](#footnote-11), including head of the youth organization in Krtsanisi District Mamuka Tsetskhladze and member of the PEC N30 from the coalition Gerogian Dream Genadi Shkhiani. [[12]](#footnote-12)

8.3 Confrontation between members of the coalition Georgian Dream and the United National Movement in the Village of Rukhi

ISFED’s coordinator reported that on May 29 in the village of Rukhi activists of the UNM confronted representatives of the coalition Georgian Dream while putting up the UNM’s pre-election posters. Law enforcement authorities interfered and prevented further aggravation of the confrontation.

8.4 Confrontation between activists of the UNM and the coalition Georgian Dream in Rustavi

On May 24, 2014, there was a confrontation outside Rustavi office of the UNM between members of the UNM and the coalition Georgian Dream, which eventually ended with verbal abuse. Mayoral candidate of the UNM Mamuka Chikovani informed ISFED’s coordinator that on May 24 he was planning to hold a briefing about suspended projects in Rustavi. Before the briefing activities of the coalition Georgian Dream arrived outside the UNM’s office in mini busses, around 40 people.

Organizer of the meetings of the coalition Georgian Dream Tamar Akubardia informed ISFED’s coordinator that on May 24 ordinary citizens staged a rally outside the office of the UNM which was alter joined by several representatives of the youth organization of the coalition, without any agreeing with management of the coalition first.

8.5 Confrontation between members of the Coalition Georgian Dream and the United National Movement in Rustavi

On May 28, in Rustavi, office of a non-governmental organization CIDA was invaded by members of the election bloc United National Movement while training for members of the coalition Georgian Dream was in progress. Verbal confrontation between representatives of the two parties followed. Police diffused the tension but it was no longer possible to continue the training.[[13]](#footnote-13)

The UNM alleged that the coalition Georgian Dream had violated election legislation by having a party training at the office of Civil Development Agency (CIDA) for its proxies at precinct election commissions.[[14]](#footnote-14) ISFED’s representative interviewed lawyer of the Georgian Dream’s office in Rustavi, Nugzar Odilavadze. He stated that similar trainings are held throughout Georgia, in agreement with the CEC. In its statement released on May 29, the CEC noted that it “had not been informed about the training. Further, based on the legislation there could not have been any agreement about the issue. The election administration is responsible only for trainings it organizes.”

According to the communications manager of CIDA Diana Dondua, anyone can use the office of the organization. She also confirmed that the office was invaded by members of the UNM and verbally abused members of the coalition Georgian Dream.

**IX. Damaging and Improper Placement of Campaign Materials**

During the reporting period ISFED detected a trend of damaging political rival’s campaign materials as well as improper placement of election posters, which is true for campaign materials of both the ruling coalition as well as opposition parties. Authorities did not take any adequate measures in response to these incidents.

9.1 Damaging campaign materials

During the reporting period we have found that campaign materials were frequently damaged. Such cases were detected in several municipalities. ISFED’s coordinator has reported that campaign materials were damaged in Chokhatauri during the period from May 26 to May 30 when more than half of the UNM’s posters were torn down.

During the reporting period similar facts were observed in Tskaltubo where campaign posters of Konstantine Mamiseishvili, candidate for the office of Gamgebeli of coalition Georgian Dream were damaged[[15]](#footnote-15), while in several places posters of the UNM’s candidate were covered up.

During the reporting period we have detected damage of campaign materials of Mayoral and majoritarian candidates in Batumi, including those of the UNM’s candidates in Old Batumi – red liquid was thrown at up to 20 posters put up on the fence of a building currently under construction. Representative of the party, Irakli Tavartkiladze urged the Interior Ministry through a media outlet to investigate the fact.

On May 24, in Gori representatives of non-parliamentary opposition were putting up campaign materials on the wall of the Museum of Glory, when they were approached by activists of the political union Georgian Party and tore down the posters. Confrontation ensued. Report and photos of the incident was released by Kvemo Kartli Information Center. [[16]](#footnote-16)

On May 27, at 17:00 in Mtskheta the coalition Georgian Dream held a pre-election meeting with population. During the meeting the Prime Minister presented Mtskheta mayoral candidate and candidate for the office of Mtskheta-Mtianeti Gamgebeli. The meeting was proceeded by preparatory works – in particular, installment and decoration of stage with campaign accessories and flags. Campaign office of the People’s Party is at the square where the stage was installed. There is a banner outside the office with an image of their candidates. According to a representative of the People’s Party, Lasha Bolotashvili at 10:00am the office was visited by law enforcement authorities demanded that they remove the banner from the building. They explained that the banners would be an inconvenience during the Prime Minister’s office in Mtskheta. They also stated that removal of the banners was a categorical demand of the Prime Minister’s office of protocol. The People’s Party refused to take down the banner; therefore, representatives of the coalition Georgian Dream put up their campaign banner on metal fences and completely hid the banner of the People’s Party behind their own banner.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Campaign materials were also destroyed in Lagodekhi, where according to the Georgian Dream’s candidate for office of Gamgebeli Kakha Jamburia their posters were torn down and damaged in the village of Shirma.

Lawyer of the campaign office of the coalition Georgian Dream in Rustavi also talks about damage of campaign materials, saying that in Chkondideli settlement more than half of the posters of majoritarian candidate of the coalition Gocha Shavadze have been covered up by posters of Our Georgia’s mayoral candidate Erosi Kitsmarishvili.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Candidate of Nino Burjanadze – Unified Opposition for the office of Gamgebeli in Tsalenjikha, Giorgi Vekua talks about damage of his campaign materials, saying that his posters have been covered up with posters of the coalition Georgian Dream’s candidate for Gamgebeli Giorgi Gulordava.

On May 18, 2014, near the station of first micro district in Vazisubani District, posters of the UNM’s majoritarian candidate for Vazisubani Giorgi Oniani were covered up with posters of the Georgian Dream’s mayoral candidate Davit Narmania. According to the UNM, such incident also occurred at the station outside Tbilisi public school N90. They allege that activists of the coalition Georgian Dream are intentionally tearing down the posters. In an interview with ISFED, representative of the campaign office of the coalition Georgian Dream Gia Rukhadze dismissed the allegations.

As reported by ISFED’s coordinator, majority of posters of majoritarian candidate of the coalition in Rustavi, in Chkondidi settlement are covered up with posters of Our Georgia’s mayoral candidate.

Para.z8 of Article 2 of the organic law of Georgia, the Election Code qualifies a poster, a flag and any other material bearing an image of an election subject/election subject candidate and/or his/her number on ballot papers as a campaign material. Para.71 of Article 46 of the Code prohibits tearing down, cover up or damage of campaign material unless it is not placed on prohibited premises. Election legislation prohibits placement of campaign materials on buildings and premises of religious significance, cultural heritage, on interior and exterior of buildings of state authority, local self-government agencies, courts, office of prosecution service, military units and police as well as traffic signs. [[19]](#footnote-19) Further, local self-government authorities may determine the list of buildings where posting of campaign materials are prohibited.

Considering that these posters had not been placed at prohibited areas, tearing them down or covering them up was prohibited. Disruption of distribution of campaign materials constitutes administrative offence under Article 80 of the Election Code of Georgia, punishable with a fine of 2 000 laris.

9.2Improper production of campaign materials

9.2.1 Coalition Georgian Dream

On May 22, 2013, a complaint was filed in Rustavi Election District against the coalition Georgian Dream’s majoritarian candidate Tengiz Tabatadze. Representative of the UNM;s Rustavi District Ia Giunashvili filed the complaint seeking imposition of fine in the amount of 2000 laris on the candidate and his removal from registration. The claimant alleged that posters of Tengiz Tabatadze, majoritarian candidate of the coalition Georgian Dream, put up in Rustavi had been produced without indicating name of the client, name of the producer, quantity of copies produced and number. Para.5, Article 46 of the Election Code stipulates that printed campaign materials must indicate names, addresses of the organizations ordering and producing them, as well as information on the edition quantity, number and the date of issue. Dissemination of printed agitation materials without indicating the information is prohibited.

Rustavi DEC examined the complaint on May 23 and rejected the claim stating that it identity of individual that put up the posters could not be established. In his statement Tengiz Tabatadze refuses to have produced or put up the posters.

ISFED’s coordinator reported that the campaign materials were certainly placed in some areas but were later removed.

9.2.2 Election Bloc Burjanadze – Unified Opposition

Campaign materials of mayoral candidate of the bloc Nino Burjanadze – Unified Opposition was distributed in Rustavi among population. Front of the campaign poster shows a photo of mayoral candidate Koba Dzlierashvili, his election motto and election number, while back of the poster displays information about 10 candidates for membership of Rustavi Sakrebulo.

The poster does not feature the following information mandated by law - names, addresses of the organizations ordering and producing them, as well as information on the edition quantity, number and the date of issue.

9.2.3 Election Poster of Davit Narmania

Information on posters of the coalition Georgian Dream’s mayoral candidate for Tbilisi, Davit Narmania is in a very fine print and impossible to read with a naked eye.

We believe that the foregoing legal norm providing the list of mandatory information to be featured on campaign materials aims at having campaign materials display legible information. Therefore, we believe that Davit Narmania’s campaign materials were produced in violation of stipulations of para.6, Article 46 of Georgia.

**X. Homophobic Remarks during Pre-Election Campaigning**

One alarming trade identified during the pre-election period is discriminatory remarks. In its second interim report of the pre-election monitoring ISFED highlighted xenophobic remarks made by a member of the Labor Party. [[20]](#footnote-20) During the reporting period the same party made homophobic statements on two occasions. Homophobic remarks were also made by a candidate of the bloc Burjanadze-Unified Opposition. These remarks were made during discussion of anti-discrimination legislation.

* 1. Labor Party

Rustavi

Leader of the Labor Party Giorgi Gugava noted during a pre-election meeting on May 29 in Rustavi about LGBT persons that “the caste has been granted a special priviledges” and that they are no longer subject to any restrictions, which they will use “in their favor” in the future and live “as ordinary people.”

Terjola

During a meeting with population of Terjola on May 31, Shalva Natelashvili made homophobic remarks saying that “today’s ruling party adopted a law legalizing homosexuality.”

* 1. Bloc Burjanadze-Unified Opposition

Rustavi mayoral candidate from Burjanadze-Unified Opposition, Koba Dzlierashvili highlights during almost all meetings held with constituents in Rustavi that he and people holding same political views as he were against adoption of the anti-discriminatory law, emphasizing that the law “is an insult and profanity for Georgian ethnicity, Christianity and the Patriarch” and that self-government elections are “a battle of Christians”.

**XI. Gender Imbalance among Registered Candidates**

The Central Elections Commission prepared gender statistics for the 2014 local self-government elections reflecting gender balance between candidates for offices of Gamgebeli and Mayor as well as candidates running in the elections through a party list.

According to the CEC estimates, there are 14 mayoral candidates registered for Tbilisi for the local self-government elections, 12 of which are men and only 2 are women. There are total of 73 mayoral candidates for self-governing cities, 65 of which are men and only 8 are women. As to candidates for the office of Gamgebeli of a self-governing community, total of 261 candidates have been registered, only 10 of which are women.[[21]](#footnote-21) As to the elections of representative municipal agencies, total of 1 129 candidates have been registered for Tbilisi Sakrebulo elections, 702 of which are men and only 427 are women. Total of 5 707 subjects have been registered as candidates for the office of a majoritarian member of Sakrebulo (outside Tbilisi), 4 861 of which are men and 846 are women.[[22]](#footnote-22)

There are total of 1 550 members of Sakrebulo in 59 municipalities and 5 self-governing cities of Georgia today, 88,9% of which are men, while the share of women is only 11,1%. [[23]](#footnote-23)

The information above proves once again that there will be more women in representative municipal agencies through proportionate system compared to majoritarian system of elections. In order to improve the situation, existing legislation should be amended and the kind of election system should be introduced that promotes women participation in local self-government agencies. However, legislative changes only will be insufficient; it is equally important that political parties treat women equally and provide them with an opportunity to engage in political processes.

**XII. Disruption of Journalistic Reporting and Monitoring Activities and Acts of Pressure**

12. 1. Pressure on a journalist of Odishil TV and Radio Company

According to the head of news service of Odishi TV and Radio Company, Nana Kobalia she has been threatened by head of the campaign office of the Non-Parliamentary Opposition (Kakha Kukava, Pikria Chikhradze) in Zugdidi Municipality, Bezhan Gunava.

According to Nana Kobalia, Gunava demanded that he be included in debates between candidates for the office of Gamgebeli from the UNM and the Non-Parliamentary Opposition; otherwise, he threatened that he would stage a rally and invade the TV Company while the program was live on air.

Head of the news service of Odishi TV and Radio Company explains that currently they do not have the material and technical capacity to host all six candidates together for the TV debates.

12.2 Disruption of Journalistic Activities in Zugdidi

On May 27, in the village of Rukhi, journalist of New Media Association Merab Rodonaia was attending a pre-election meeting of representatives of the coalition Georgian Dream in Zugdidi. In an interview with ISFED’s coordinator Rodonaia stated that activists of the coalition demanded that he delete video footage he had recorded during the meeting, which he refused to. The activists forced him out the meeting, took his video camera away and deleted the footage themselves; they threatened to put him in a trunk of a car.

12.3 Disruption of Monitoring Activities in Aspindza

On May 21, during a meeting of the Georgian Dream’s candidate for the office of Gamgebeli, Levan Tsabadze with voters, Tsabadze approached ISFED’s coordinator and informed that he does not want her present at his meetings. The coordinator explained that ISFED’s monitors attend as many meetings of election candidates as possible in frames of the pre-election monitoring; nevertheless, Levan Tsabadze demanded that she leave the meeting, saying that ISFED had reported negative information about him.

ISFED’s coordinator met with head of the campaign office of the coalition Georgian Dream in Aspindza, who said that the incident was a misunderstanding and asked us to continue cooperating with them.

12.4 Pressure on Observer in Terjola

On May 31, the Labor Party of Georgia held a pre-election meeting in Terjola, which ISFED’s coordinator was informed about in advance by the party. During the meeting leader of the party Shalva Natelashvili asked ISFED’s coordinator about the reason why she was attending the meeting. The latter explained that she was attending public meetings of election candidates in frames of the pre-election monitoring. Shalva Natelashvili continued talking about the work of non-government organizations and stated that NGOs and ISFED in particular are receive foreign grants and therefore, their work is biased.

We believe that such remarks made by a representative of a political party hinders the work of NGOs, creating misconceptions among population about the work of ISFED and other organizations.

**XIII. Work of the Election Administration**

13.1 Work of the Central Elections Commission

During the pre-election period the CEC has been actively cooperating with political parties and election stakeholders in frames of various working meetings and round tables, during which the CEC presents a report of its activities and receives information from parties and NGOs.

Meetings of the CEC representatives with ethnic minority high-school students in Gardabani District are important for increase engagement in election processes. Another meeting was held in Bolnisi with representatives of NGO and school teachers. Further, the CEC hosted NGOs representing ethnic minorities.

The CEC also met with a group working with persons with disabilities to discuss issues pertinent to the involvement of persons with disabilities in election processes.

We welcome the fact that part of the polling stations will be adapted to needs of persons with disabilities and such polling stations will be pinpointed on a map posted on the website of the CEC. We also remain hopeful that all polling stations will be adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities in the future.

Notably, the so-called magnifying lens will be available for voters with impaired vision at all polling stations.

On May 31, members of election commissions from all levels of the election administration signed the Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics provides for the principles of abidance by law, observing impartiality and independence, transparency and professionalism.

13.2 Improper Registration of Election Subjects

By its Resolution N20 dated May 17, 2014, Chairperson of Rustavi N20 DEC registered a candidate of self-governing city of Rustavi Davit Jikia for the elections. Notably, Davit Jikia was abroad for the last two years. He was studying in Great Britain from May 30, 2010 to November 26, 2012, and had been included in the consular registry since September 10, 2012, and for the 2012 parliamentary elections “consular registration” was marked along his name on the unified voter list.

On May 17, 2014, by the resolution of the chairperson of Poti DEC N70, Poti mayoral candidate from the coalition Georgian Dream, Irakli Kakulia was registered for the elections. In 2009-2012 Irakli Kakulia served as a director of one of the Kazakh companies and had a Kazakh permit of residence with the right to work. He had been included on the consular registry since August 29, 2012 and for the 2013 presidential elections “consular registration” was marked along his name on the unified voter list.

Pursuant to Article 167 of the organic law of Georgia, any citizen of Georgia who has lived in Georgia for at least five years and has been permanently living in Georgia for the last 2 years prior to the day of scheduling the election can be elected as a mayor. Notably, for the election purposes meaning of the “place of residence” is not defined by the Election Code. Under para.1, Article 20 of the Civil Code, an individual’s place of residence is a place of his/her choice of habitual residence. Under Article 12 of the Law of Georgia on Registration of Citizens of Georgia and Foreigners Residing in Georgia, Issuance of Personal Identification Card and Passport of Georgia, a personal identification card confirms identity of a citizen of Georgia, Georgian citizenship and place of residence. An individual may have several places of residence but s/he must be registered according to one of the places of residence. Permanent place of residence means a place where the person lives permanently.

We believe that the law mandates permanent residence for two years as opposed to submitting a registration documents. The noted condition certainly does not mean permanent physical presence of an individual on the territory of Georgia but rather, permanent residence in Georgia, including going abroad for a reasonable period of time, and involvement in public and political life in Georgia. Therefore, when over a period of two years a citizen has been living outside the country ¼ of the time, s/he may not be considered to be permanently living in Georgia.

One of the candidates, Davit Jikia has cited Article 34 of the Tax Code[[24]](#footnote-24) in his statement, which provides for a definition of a resident for tax purposes. We believe that the cited provision is irrelevant for election purposes.

Furthermore, on April 19, 2014, by the resolution of the chairperson of Gori N32 DEC, Irakli Okruashvili was refused to be registered as a mayoral candidate for the city of Gori pursuant to the law. It was confirmed both by the CEC as well as the city and the appellate courts. The appellate court explained that a candidate must have been physically present for the period of last two years prior to the day of scheduling the elections, personally participating in daily habitual life of the country. The court explained that the law does not allow any exceptions in this regard. Therefore, long-term tenure abroad to study or for a vacation (exceeding a reasonable period of time during which temporary tenure abroad does not violate the requirement of permanent residence) is not an exception.

Decision of Poti and Rustavi DECs were appealed with the CEC but the latter not only failed to adequately interpret the two-year requirement of residence but it also did not take advantage of the situation to provide a precise interpretation of applicable Article. Pursuant to para.2, Article 30 of the Election Code, the CEC can adopt a resolution in exceptional cases, from the beginning until the end of elections, if necessity emerges to resolve issues not defined by law and required for conducting elections.

13. 3 Resolution of the CEC on abolishment of election registration of party lists

Para.6, Article 145 of the Election Code of Georgia regulates abolishment of election registration of party lists. In particular, subparagraph “f” stipulates that one of the grounds for abolishment of the election registration is when “no later than two days prior to the elections, number of candidates on the registered party list is below the legal minimum.”

Recently there have been frequent withdrawals of proportionate candidates of opposition parties, posing the risk of abolishment of registered party lists in a number of cases.[[25]](#footnote-25) On June 3, 2014 Vice Prime-Minister Kakhi Kaladze urged the CEC to amend the norm that regulates abolishment of election registration of party lists when number of candidates on the list falls below legal minimum. [[26]](#footnote-26)

In response, On June 3, 2014, the CEC adopted a resolution[[27]](#footnote-27) determining the list of cases when a party list can be abolished if number of candidates on the list falls below minimum. Pursuant to the resolution, voluntary withdrawal may not serve as grounds for abolishment of the registration, which has mediated the risk of abolishment of proportionate party lists of some of the opposition parties, which will promote competitive election environment.

Even though the resolution will have a positive impact on ongoing political and election processes, it conflicts with para.6, Article 145 of the Election Code that directly stipulates grounds for abolishing election registration of a party list, without allowing any exceptions. Therefore, such exceptions must be established by the Election Code as opposed to a resolution of the CEC, which is a sub-legal act and must comply with the Election Code as to a superior normative act.

Further, adoption of the resolution does not free the law enforcement authorities from the responsibility to investigate alleged acts of pressure on candidates into their withdrawal, and provide public with substantiated arguments as to whether such acts of pressure occurred or not.

**XIV. The Inter-Agency Task Force for Free and Fair Elections**

The International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy has been actively monitoring the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Free and Fair Elections (ISFED) and has been providing it information relevant to its activities.

On May 16, 2014, ISFED applied to the IATF to probe alleged acts of using public resources, broadly discussed in the first interim report of the pre-election monitoring; however, the IATF did not examine increase of salaries of medical staff announced by the Prime Minister during pre-election campaigning, compliance of the business promotion initiative in Adjara launched during the pre-election period with election legislation, increase of Batumi budget, increase of salaries of Dedoplistskaro pre-school teachers during the pre-election period, and it did not discuss whether these decisions constituted direct or indirect use of public resources.

Further, on May 27, 2014, ISFED provided the IATF with reports about dismissal of public servants on alleged political grounds in the territorial agency of the village of Kachreti in Gurjaani District but the IATF has not yet taken any further actions.

The work of IATF is merely limited to recommendations and suggestions. Even though the IATF has no means for enforcement of its own recommendations, we are under the impression that the IATF is not interested in the implementation of its recommendations. The IATF has not presented any report about how its work has contributed to the improvement of the pre-election environment.

Even though the IATF recommended that parties ensure internal discipline, we have still detected cases of interfering with campaigning and damaging agitation materials. Notably, the IATF urged police and courts to ensure that sanctions sought and applied for administrative offences related to the pre-election process are proportionate to violations, serving the purpose of preventing any such violations in the future. However, we believe that the decision to order a bail in the case of beating one of the members of the UNM Zurab Chiaberashvili was completely inadequate, and did nothing to promote prevention of physical violence on political grounds. Further, the Interior Ministry has failed to probe hundreds of alleged acts of pressure on candidates into withdrawal, which NGOs have reacted to a number of times with their statements.

**XV. Public Meetings and Promises Made by Election Subjects**

Coordinators of ISFED have been monitoring pre-election campaigning of political parties in all municipalities. ISFED statistically registers only those meetings that are attended personally by coordinators.

During the reporting period, from May 12 through June 1, 2012, political parties have become noticeably active in their work compared to previous reporting periods. Election subjects are holding pre-election meetings with voters in almost all of the regions, for the purpose of introducing candidates and their election programs. Meetings are also held by independent candidates for Sakrebulo membership.

ISFED’s coordinators attended 1181 public meetings held by election subjects during the reporting period, including 586 public meeting held by the coalition Georgian Dream; 271 by the United National Movement; 128 by Nino Burjanadze – Unified Opposition; 46 by the Non-Parliamentary Opposition (Kakha Kukava, Pikria Chikhradze); 36 by the Labor Party of Georgia; 29 by the Georgia’s Way; 28 by the Alliance of Patriots of Georgia; 9 by the Self-Government to People; 6 by the People’s Party; 5 by the Green Party; 5 by Irakli Okruashvili – Georgian Party.

ISFED’s coordinators are recording promises made by candidates or political parties during their public meetings. Below we have listed promises made by election subjects during the public meetings.

Promises made by the coalition Georgian Dream:

1. Address the problem of passengers and increase the capacity of public transportation;
2. Provide roofing for apartment building, rehabilitate damaged houses; improve main entrances, sewage systems; change road surface; address the problem of parking;
3. Rehabilitate streets, squares, leisure parks; equip sports facilities and children’s playgrounds;
4. Provide assistance for the socially vulnerable;
5. Infrastructure projects; solve the problem of sewage and water supply; provide drinking water; complete gasification in the regions; build internal roads in villages;
6. Development of local tourism;
7. Open and operate local enterprises;
8. Implement health projects; build hospitals;
9. Restore libraries and clubs in the regions;
10. Create recreational and green zones.

Promises made by the United National Movement:

1. Cheaper municipal transport;
2. Rehabilitation of houses affected by earthquakes;
3. Infrastructure projects: build internal roads for villages; solve the problem of irrigation and potable water; address the problem of garbage disposals; open kindergartens; solve the problem of cultivating land plots in rural areas;
4. Implement social and healthcare programs;
5. Launch enterprises;
6. Equip stadiums and playgrounds;
7. Develop tourism;
8. Decrease excise and income taxes.

Promises made by the Non-Parliamentary Opposition

1. Preferential loans for small and medium businesses;
2. Improve infrastructure: build roads, solve the problem of sewage system and drinking water, rehabilitate damaged districts, build new kindergartens, solve the problem of parking;
3. Provide assistance for the socially vulnerable;
4. Solve problems of vendors;
5. Create cultural and educational areas, equip children’s playgrounds;
6. Provide interest-free loans for small and medium businesses;
7. Help self-government authorities solve healthcare problems;
8. Greening cities;
9. Promoting employment.

Nino Burjanadze - Unified Opposition

1. Implement infrastructure projects: reconstruct damaged buildings, improve roads, solve the problem of drinking water and sewage systems, provide outdoor lighting; equip playgrounds;
2. Implement social projects: pension supplement in the amount of 25 laris; promote/assist young families; provide assistance for war veterans, pensioners and the socially vulnerable;
3. Purchase means of municipal transportation and adapt them to the needs of persons with disabilities;
4. Launch small enterprises and create jobs;
5. Provide information about budget spending and spending of funds to public on a weekly basis;
6. Support agricultural projects.

Promises made by Shalva Natelashvili – Labor Party of Georgia

1. Improve social situation: increase pensions, provide assistance to the socially vulnerable; minimize taxes for vendors;
2. Free healthcare;
3. Free education;
4. Solve the problem of unemployment;
5. Increase funding for agricultural program;
6. Return savings and defer loan payments;
7. Build municipal hospitals in all cities
8. Increase the volume of infrastructural works ten times;
9. Return to population lands that have been taken away;
10. Open trade pavilions.

Promises made by Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia

1. Improving kindergartens;
2. Creating jobs by promoting various fields of agriculture
3. Developing and rehabilitating city infrastructure; improving rural roads; solving the problem of drinking water

Promises made by the Movement of the Law Enforcement Veterans and Patriots of Georgia:

1. Judiciary reform
2. Buy back lands and other facilities;
3. Restore sovereignty of the country;
4. Solve social problems: increase pensions up to 250 laris, provide unemployment benefits, restore benefits for veterans of war.

Promises made by the Alliance of Georgian Patriots

1. Solve the unemployment problem;
2. Implement infrastructure projects;
3. Provide assistance for the socially vulnerable;
4. Minimum wage – 800 laris;
5. Promote women participation;
6. Develop infrastructure;
7. Provide dignified living conditions.

Promises made by Irakli Okruashvili – People’s Party

1. Implement social programs: gradual increase of pension supplements; assistance for large families – monthly 1000 laris for four children, 1500 laris for five, 2000 laris for more than five; provide 25 laris-worth of vouchers for IDP families in winter, for the period of four months;
2. Supplements for teachers;
3. Cheaper utilities;
4. Put up Stalin’s monument near the museum;
5. Prohibit gambling

Promises made by the party Self-Government to People

1. Improve infrastructure: solve problems of gas and water supply
2. Cheaper transport
3. Build kindergartens and schools;
4. Build sports complexes for children;
5. Rehabilitate squares;
6. Create a cheap drug store chain;
7. Promote employment and small business.

**XVI. About ISFED’s Monitoring Mission**

Under the April 10, 2014 Executive Order of the President of Georgia, elections for representative and executive bodies of local self-government were scheduled for June 15, 2014.

ISFED launched monitoring of the local self-government elections on April 1; however, the monitoring report also covers all the developments or incident that occurred before the official announcement of the date of elections, which may have had a negative or a positive influence on the election environment. ISFED has been carrying out pre-election monitoring for the presidential elections in all election districts of Georgia through 73 long-term observers (LTOs). The LTOs have undergone training in preparations for the monitoring. In the process of monitoring ISFED’s LTOs are guided by international standards for monitoring organizations[[28]](#footnote-28), implying comprehensive, objective and transparent monitoring of elections. ISFED’s pre-election monitoring covers the following areas:

* Monitoring of election administration, which mostly entails monitoring composition of election administration and its activities;
* Monitoring public meetings of political parties/election subjects and their other political activities, as well as their election promises;
* Detecting and studying abuse of state resources;
* Detecting and acting on political pressure/threats, obstruction of political activities and alleged vote-buying.

1. ISFED’s research on gender imbalance, available at[: http://www.isfed.ge/main/670/geo/](http://www.isfed.ge/main/670/geo/)

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Para.3, Article 48 of the Election Code of Georgia [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For detailed information about dismissals from work, please refer to Chapter IV of the report [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See the information at: [http://news.ge/ge/news/story/86573-koalitsia-qartuli-otsnebis-politsabchos-tsevrebi-premierministrskhvdebian.](http://news.ge/ge/news/story/86573-koalitsia-qartuli-otsnebis-politsabchos-tsevrebi-premierministrs-khvdebian)  [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See the information at: [http://news.ge/ge/news/story/89523-saqartvelos-mtavrobis-kantselarias-daajarimeben.](http://news.ge/ge/news/story/89523-saqartvelos-mtavrobis-kantselarias-daajarimeben)  [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See Article 13 of the Law of Georgia on the Structure of the Government, Powers and the Rules of Operation

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   [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See the information at: http://goo.gl/pwgXaV [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See the information at: <http://cec.gov.ge/uploads/other/27/27931.pdf>

   [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Under Article 252 of the Law of Georgia on Political Union of Citizens, “a party is prohibited from transferring to a citizen by means of a candidate, a representative or any other person, directly or indirectly, money, gifts or non-material possessions.” Pursuant to the sanction provided in para.6, Article 342 of the law, accepting illegal gifts, income or service from a natural person envisaged by the law, for the election purposes, provided the value of the property (service) or agreement does not exceed 100 laris, shall result in imposition of fine on party, party representative, legal entity as prescribed by law. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Pursuant to para.21, Article 8 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code, A member of the election commission is not the representative of his appointer/voter. He/she shall be independent in his/her activities and shall act only in accordance with the Constitution of Georgia, law and relevant legal acts. Any pressure upon the member of the election commission, or interference in his/her activities, with the aim of influencing his/her

    decision shall be prohibited and is punishable by law.” [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See the video material at

    https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=1452513694996211&set=vb.100007127829887&type=2&theater [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. 12 See Chapter 8.1.3 of the report [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See the information at: <http://www.tabula.ge/ge/story/83749-enm-saubno-komisiis-tsevrebistvis-partiuli-treningis-chatarebit-kanoni-dairghva> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. See the statement at: http://www.cec.ge/ge/mediisatvis-4-ge/pres-relizebi-13-ge/ceskos-gancxadeba-samoqalaqoganvitarebis-saagentos-rustavis-ofisshi-momxdar-faqttan-dakavshirebit.page [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See the photo material at: <http://www.isfed.ge/main/678/geo/> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See the information at: <http://qartli.ge/web/19226> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. See the photo material at: <http://www.isfed.ge/main/679/geo/> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See the photo material at: <http://www.isfed.ge/main/680/geo/> [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. See Article 46 of the organic law of Georgia the Election Code [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. See the information at: <http://www.isfed.ge/main/607/geo/>

    [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See the information at: http://cec.gov.ge/uploads/other/27/27802.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. See the information at: <http://cec.gov.ge/uploads/other/27/27802.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See the information at: http://www.isfed.ge/main/653/geo/

    [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Article 34 of the Tax Code of Georgia: 2. During the entire current tax year, a physical person shall be recognized as a tax resident of Georgia if it was actually located on the territory of Georgia for more than 182 days in any continuous 12-month period ending in this tax year, or was in the Georgian state service abroad during the tax year. 3. A time shall be considered as the time of actual location on the territory of Georgia during which a physical person has been located on the territory of Georgia, as well as the time-period which he spent outside the Georgian territory for medical treatment, vacation, business trip or study. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. See Chapter III of the report, Alleged Acts of Pressure on candidates [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. <http://www.isfed.ge/main/677/geo/> [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. See the resolution at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/index.php?option=com_ldmssearch&view=docView&id=2362713&lang=ge> [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. In the process of monitoring ISFED follows Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations, available at http://www.gndem.org/declaration-of-global-principles; while in evaluation it is guided by and shares spirit of OSCE Copenhagen Document. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)