



Public Movement
Multinational Georgia

Final Report of the monitoring programme of the Presidential Elections in Georgia, 2018



Tbilisi, Georgia
2019

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The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of the PMMG and do not reflect the opinions of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Georgia, the National Endowment for Democracy, USAID, National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada.

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1. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PMMG ELECTIONS MONITORING PROGRAMME

The present report reflects the results of the PMMG monitoring programme of the presidential elections of 2018 in Georgia, which includes analysis of the Election Day, pre-election and post-election periods in the first and second rounds of elections.

The target area of the pre-election monitoring included # 21 Gardabani, # 22 Marneuli, # 23 Bolnisi, # 24 Dmanisi (Kvemo Kartli region), # 36 Borjomi, # 37 Akhaltsikhe, # 38 Adigeni, # 40 Akhalkalaki, # 41 Ninotsminda (Samtskhe-Javakheti region) and # 11 Sagarejo (Kakheti region) electoral districts. The monitoring programme was implemented through the involvement of the 6 long-term observers.

At the first round, the Election Day monitoring programme included 16 electoral districts, namely: #20 Rustavi, #21 Gardabani, # 22 Marneuli, #23 Bolnisi, #24 Dmanisi, #25 Tsalka, #26 Tetrtskaro (Kvemo Kartli region), #36 Borjomi, #37 Akhaltsikhe, #38 Adigeni, #39 Aspindza, #40 Akhalkalaki, #41 Ninotsminda (Samtskhe-Javakheti region), #11 Sagarejo (Kakheti region), as well as #5 Isani and #4 Krtsanisi (Tbilisi) electoral districts.

190 short-term observers were involved in the monitoring programme, including those attached to the precincts, mobile groups, DEC and the CEC.

At the second round, the Election Day monitoring programme covered #21 Gardabani, # 22 Marneuli, #37 Akhaltsikhe, #40 Akhalkalaki, #41 Ninotsminda and #5 Isani electoral districts.

234 short-term observers were involved in the monitoring programme, including those attached to the precincts, mobile groups, DEC and the CEC.

The PMMG undertook the post-election monitoring in all target electoral districts.

Since 2003 the PMMG has been involved in promoting transparency of elections and effective implementation of the electoral procedures in Georgia. It has monitored all elections held in Georgia including in Adjara and the so called South Ossetia region.

The PMMG evaluated the processes in the pre-election and post-election periods, as well as on the Election Day in reference with the following legal instruments: Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE Participating States, Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters (Venice Commission), OSCE Copenhagen Document of 1990, other international democratic electoral standards and the Georgian legislation.

2. SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS MONITORING PROGRAMME

General overview

The election process of the President of Georgia in 2018, including on the Election Day, as well as in the pre-election and post-election period proceeded in line with the national and international standards of democratic elections, which in the end created a favourable environment for holding the impartial, transparent and fair elections.

Fundamental rights and obligations were not violated during the elections. Administration of the election process and the CEC's work in this regard could be assessed positively. The CEC efforts were timely, effective and transparent.

The setting up of the election administration was open and transparent.

The CEC organised different meetings with the political parties, NGOs and international organisations, which facilitated meaningful discussions between the sides and building the result-oriented partnerships.

Pre-election period

Political campaign in the target electoral districts of the monitoring programme proceeded in the competitive environment in the first, as well as in the second rounds of the 2018 presidential elections of Georgia.

During the pre-election campaign the fundamental freedoms were generally observed and the presidential candidates were able to campaign freely and to meet with the voters.

It is noteworthy that electoral environment in the target electoral districts of the monitoring programme was characterised with less legal gravity of revealed electoral incidents and low number of violations.

Despite the mentioned, prior to the first round of the presidential elections, the PMMG long-term observers identified a number of incidents in the pre-election period in the target electoral districts of the monitoring programme, namely three incidents of violating the established rules of posting agitation material at #37 Akhaltsikhe, #40 Akhalkalaki and #21 Gardabani electoral districts, as well as one incident of misuse of institutional administrative resources at #41 Ninotsminda electoral district.

Prior to the first round of elections, mainly the following presidential candidates ran active political campaign: David Bakradze representing "European Georgia", Grigol Vashadze representing the united opposition and Salome Zourabichvili as an independent candidate, supported by the ruling party. As for the other candidates, either they were not represented in the target electoral districts of the election monitoring programme, or their political and electoral activity was very weak.

Therefore, the level of awareness in the population was rather low about the activities of

other presidential candidates and respectively, the ethnic minority voters had little option to choose.

It must be noted that the negative pre-election campaigning ran by David Bakradze, Grigol Vashadze and independent candidate Salome Zourabichvili and sharp polarization between the candidates was vivid, which threatened the entire election process.

It is noteworthy that unlike the first round, there was a sharp increase in the intensity of the pre-election campaigning prior to the second round. Negative and in some instances violent rhetoric dominated in the interactions between the supporters of the presidential candidates, which posed the entire political campaigning process on the verge of encouraging the xenophobia and hate speech.

Publicly sensitive issues were the main focus of the meetings with the voters, which left little room for a detailed presentation of main programme initiatives and visions. This led to limited possibilities of the voters to make an informed choice.

In the scope of the monitoring programme, activities implemented by the election administration to facilitate inclusiveness of ethnic minority voters in the electoral processes were also evaluated, which deserves a positive appraisal.

With this regard the CEC implemented a number of activities including: development and dissemination of informational as well as various elections related material in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages, hot line service was available in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages, Election related documents were posted at the CEC web-page in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages, CEC translated and published various elections related material for the Armenian and Azerbaijani speaking members of the PECs etc.

Election Day: 28 October (first round):

In the framework of the PMMG monitoring programme, the short-term observers identified 35 incidents on the Election Day, including:

- Delayed opening of the polling station and unprepared polling station (5 incidents)
- Improper performance of the PEC members (7 incidents)
- Presence of unauthorised person at the polling station (3 incidents)
- Unlawful restriction of the right to vote (1 incident)
- Violation of procedures of distribution of functions among the PEC members (7 incidents)
- Violation of inking procedures (1 incident)
- Voting without presenting an ID card (1 incident)
- Attempt to vote with an invalid ID card (1 incident)
- Agitation at the polling station (2 incidents)
- Restricting rights of an observer (4 incidents)
- Unlawful termination of voting (1 incident)
- Violence (3 incident)
- Violation of the mobile ballot box voting procedures (2 incidents)
- Incomplete PEC results protocol (2 incidents)

On the Election Day the PMMG filed 13 complaints at the PECs within its monitoring programme, 9 of which were satisfied and 4 were left without any follow-up.

The PMMG filed 7 complaints at the DEC's within its monitoring programme, namely: 1. 4 complaints were filed at the #40 Akhalkalaki DEC, 1 of which complaint was satisfied, 1 – partially satisfied, 1 – left without deliberation and 1 was rejected; 2. 3 complaints were filed at #22 Marneuli DEC, 2 of which were satisfied and 1 – rejected.

Election Day: 28 November (second round)

In the framework of the PMMG monitoring programme, the short-term observers identified 42 incidents on the Election Day, including:

- Violation of procedures of distribution of functions among the PEC members (2 incidents)
- Restricting rights of an observer (6 incidents)
- Violation of the vote secrecy (12 incidents)
- Attempt to vote without proper documentation (5 incidents)
- Attempt by a voter to disrupt voting (2 incident)
- Recurrent voting/attempt to vote (3 incidents)
- Violation of voting procedure (4 incidents)
- Presence of an unauthorised person at the polling station (2 incidents)
- Agitation at the polling station (2 incidents)
- Unprepared polling station (1 incident)
- Advance signatures in the voters' lists (1 incidents)
- Incomplete results protocol (1 incident)
- Other (1 incident)

On the Election Day the PMMG filed 5 complaints at the DEC's within its monitoring programme, 2 of which were satisfied, 1 was left without deliberation, 1 was satisfied partially and 1 - rejected.

Based on the reports by the PMMG short-term observers, it may be concluded that the elections on the Election Day in the first, as well as the second rounds of the presidential elections of 2018 in Georgia proceeded in an overall calm, fair and competitive environment in the target electoral districts of the monitoring programme, which is in line with the national and international standards of the democratic elections.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that the elections on the Election Day in the second round proceeded against the backdrop of sharper competition at the #21 Gardabani and #22 Marneuli electoral districts, which was also seen in the confrontations between the supporters of the presidential candidates.

It is noteworthy that unlike the first round, there were attempts on the Election Day of the second round to limit the lawful rights of the PMMG observers at several polling stations.

Also, in the second round, destructive attitudes of the non-governmental organizations affiliated to political parties supporting both presidential candidates were particularly visible that obstructed effective functioning of the PECs, as well as the implementation of the PMMG monitoring programme.

In the second round of elections, a tendency of physical and verbal confrontation between the supporters of the presidential candidates following the tabulation at several polling stations

in the Kvemo Kartli, which threatened to disrupt the election process.

In general, fundamental rights and obligations were not violated on the Election Day in the first, as well as the second rounds. No major electoral violations were identified on the Election Day. Despite the mentioned, there were some procedural irregularities identified at the polling stations, which did not affect the final results of the elections.

As concerns the procedural irregularities, they were mainly caused by the lack of professional preparedness of certain PEC members, as well as by the low level of political and electoral culture of the voters, in general.

It must be mentioned that all PMMG short-term observers, with some exceptions, were allowed free access to the polling stations as well as observe freely the setting up and opening of the polling stations, voting process, closing of the polling stations and ballot counting process.

Analysis of the results of the Election Day shows that the elections in the target electoral districts of the monitoring programme were administered in a qualified manner. The CEC actions were timely, effective and transparent.

3. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ELECTIONS

According to the N01/08/02 Decree of the President of Georgia countersigned by the Prime Minister, the presidential elections were announced to be held on 28 October in 2018.

Voters were to elect the President of Georgia for a term of 6 years.

The CEC registered 25 presidential candidates for the presidential elections of 2018 in Georgia, 19 of which were nominated by the political parties and 6 were running as independent candidates nominated by the initiative groups.

The presidential elections of 2018 in Georgia were administered by a three-level election administration: Central Election Commission (CEC), 73 District Election Commissions (DECs) and 3705 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs), including 11 polling stations set up in exceptional cases.

The total number of voters made up 3 513 729 persons, including 1 886 863 women and 1 626 866 men.

346 precincts were set up for the presidential elections of 2018 in 12 electoral districts densely populated with ethnic minorities in

Georgia, namely:

- 209 precincts for Georgian-Azerbaijani language speaking voters
- 133 precincts for Georgian-Armenian language speaking voters
- 4 precincts for Georgian-Armenian-Azerbaijani language speaking voters.

Ethnic minorities were represented only in 5 DECs (Isani, Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda and Tsalka) as members, out of all electoral districts falling within the geographical scope of the PMMG monitoring programme.

During the presidential elections of 2018, there were 1188 selected/appointed PEC members belonging to ethnic minorities at 159 target polling stations of the monitoring programme (7 persons on average per polling station). Apart from the mentioned, there were 114 persons (71, 7%) belonging to ethnic minorities, who held managing positions at the PECs (secretary or/and chairperson).

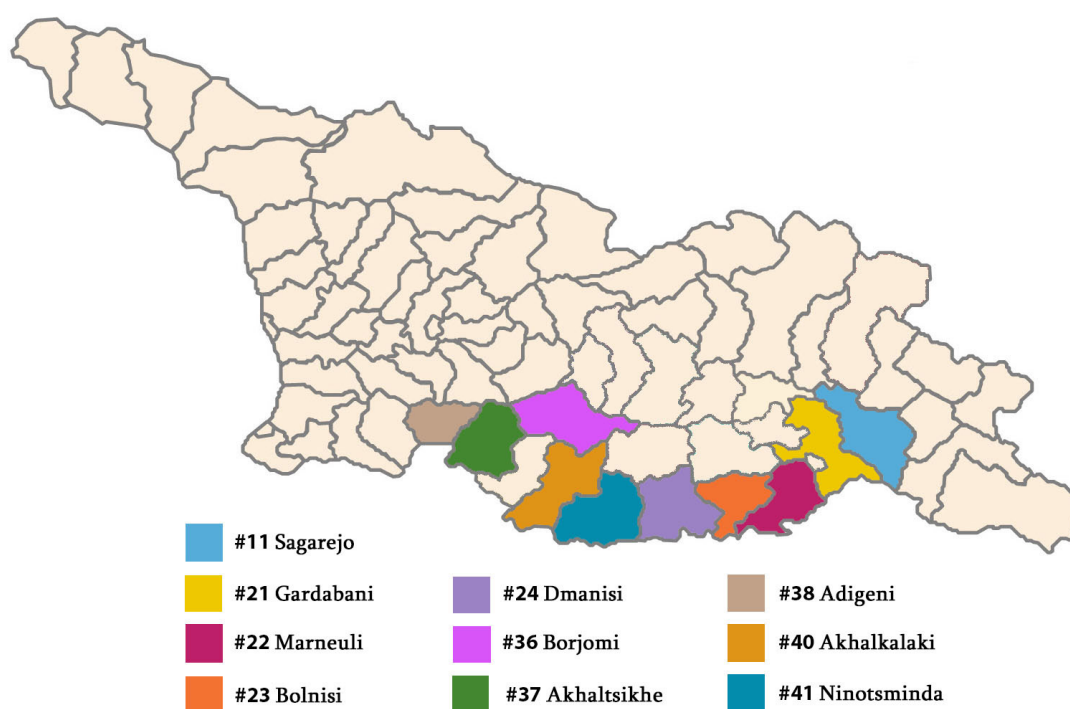
The CEC registered 62 local and 58 international observation missions to monitor the elections.

4. PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

4.1. Methodology

The PMMG started observation of the presidential elections of 2018 in Georgia on 1st of August.

The target area of the pre-election monitoring included: #21 Gardabani, #22 Marneuli, #23 Bolnisi, #24 Dmanisi (Kvemo Kartli); #36 Borjomi, #37 Akhaltsikhe, #38 Adigeni, #40 Akhalkalaki, #41 Ninotsminda (Samtskhe-Javakheti) da #11 Sagarejo (Kakheti) electoral districts.



The monitoring programme was implemented by 6 long-term observers, who continuously monitored existing conditions and electoral trends in the respective electoral districts of the target regions with a focus on the following aspects:

- General political and electoral context;
- Level of awareness of ethnic minorities about political programmes of the presidential candidates, election rules and procedures;
- Aspects of campaign run by the presidential candidates;
- Practice of reflecting ethnic minority-related problems in the programmes of the presidential candidates;
- Practice of observing ethical standards (including usage of hate speech on ethnic or religious grounds) by the presidential candidates while campaigning;
- Practice of involving ethnic minority representatives in the political processes (including in party structures and political nominations);
- Setting up the election administration;
- Misuse of institutional administrative resources for election purposes;

- 10**
- Misuse of regulatory administrative resources for election purposes;
 - Misuse of enforcement administrative resources for election purposes;
 - Misuse of financial administrative resources for election purposes.

Prior to the start of the monitoring programme the long-term observers took special training programme aimed at developing monitoring skills. Respectively, the monitoring programme was implemented according to the methodology specially developed for the long-term observers.

All incidents identified by the long-term observers were subject to further analysis and verification.

4.2. Main findings and trends

Political campaign in the target electoral districts of the monitoring programme proceeded in the competitive environment in the first, as well as in the second rounds of the 2018 presidential elections of Georgia thus enabling the presidential candidates to campaign freely and to meet with the voters.

It is noteworthy that the electoral environment in the target electoral districts of the monitoring programme was characterised with less legal gravity of revealed electoral incidents and low number of violations, namely: three incidents of violating the established rules of posting agitation material at #37 Akhaltsikhe, #40 Akhalkalaki and #21 Gardabani electoral districts, as well as one incident of misuse of institutional administrative resources at #41 Ninotsminda electoral district.

A poster of the presidential candidate of the United National Movement was posted at the Akhaltsikhe railway freight station in violation of the electoral rules. The place, where it was posted, was not on the list of objects in the possession of the Akhaltsikhe municipality, applicable to be used for posting election agitation material (incident was identified on 21 September).

At the #21 Gardabani electoral district the PMMG long-term observer identified that posters of the presidential candidate Grigol Vashadze were posted over the posters of another presidential candidate David Bakradze incident was identified on 21 September).

At the #40 Akhalkalaki electoral district the PMMG long-term observer identified that a poster of the presidential candidate of the United national Movement was posted on the Shota Rustaveli monument in the entrance of Akhalkaki, in violation of the rules. The place, where it was posted, was not on the list of objects in the possession of the Akhalkalaki municipality, applicable to be used for posting election agitation material (incident was identified on 10 October).



According to the PMMG long-term observer at the #41 Ninotsminda electoral district the Mayor of Ninotsminda gathered the activists of the Georgian Dream in the office of the Mayor and

gave them instructions regarding the support campaign of Salome Zourabichvili, which represents the misuse of institutional administrative resources incident was identified on 21 September).

The PMMG addressed all four incidents to the Inter-agency Commission for Free and Fair Elections to take respective measures. The Commission prepared and submitted the recommendations to the relevant public structures to study and react on the mentioned incidents.

It is noteworthy that a union of 10 opposition parties “Strength is in Unity” nominated Grigol Vashadze as a common presidential candidate. Simultaneously, four qualified subjects in this Union registered their own presidential candidates: Mikheil Antadze (Movement “State for People”), Zviad Baghdavadze (civil platform “New Georgia”), Zviad Mekhatishvili (Christian-Conservative Party of Georgia) and Zviad Iashvili (National-Democratic Party).

Hence, all four parties, having registered presidential candidates, could apply for the financing from the state budget, nominate representatives at the PECs and DEC, as well as benefit from the free advertisement airtime.

Despite the fact that such a political manoeuvre is not prohibited by the law, it did caused imbalance among the presidential candidates in general, as the so called technical candidates of the Union “Strength is in Unity” received five times more funds from the state budget and could use five times more free airtime for advertisement compared to other presidential candidates.

On 11 September, 2018 the DEC elected the PEC members. It must be noted that elections of the PEC members in the target electoral districts of the PMMG monitoring programme proceeded in a calm atmosphere and in full compliance with the electoral legislation. As a result, 6 members of each PEC were elected by majority of vote.

4.3. Political campaign

Analysis of the pre-election period, prior to the first round of the presidential elections, in the target electoral districts of the monitoring programme clearly showed that the following electoral subjects were most active in political campaigning: David Bakradze, presidential candidate of the “European Georgia”, Grigol Vashadze presidential candidate of the united opposition and Salome Zourabichvili as an independent presidential candidate, supported by the ruling party.

As for the other presidential candidates, either they were not represented in the target electoral districts of the election monitoring programme, or their political and electoral activity was very weak.

Consequently, the level of awareness in the population was rather low about the activities of other presidential candidates and respectively, the ethnic minority voters little option to choose.

Political campaigning generally proceeded in the form of meetings with the local voters, presentations of political programmes and future visions, presentation of candidates for

12 mayors and majoritarian/party list candidates, as well as by holding media briefings.

It must be noted that negative pre-election campaigning ran by David Bakradze, Grigol Vashadze and independent candidate Salome Zourabichvili and sharp polarization between the candidates threatened the entire election process.

It is noteworthy that unlike the first round, there was a sharp increase in the intensity of the pre-election campaigning prior to the second round. According to the tendency identified by the PMMG long-term observers in the target electoral districts in the preparatory period prior to the second round, negative and in some instances radical and violent rhetoric dominated in the interactions between the supporters of the presidential candidates, Salome Zourabichvili and Grigol Vashadze.

The sides extended statements, which intentionally affiliated the presidential elections with the civil war and contained calls to harm the opposite camp. Consequently, the entire political campaigning proceeded on the verge of encouraging the xenophobia and hate speech.

In this context, the PMMG long-term observers identified single incidents of violent confrontations between the activists of the Georgian Dream and the United National Movement. Several public rallies were held in support of the ruling party as well as the opposition, which further escalated the tension between the presidential candidates.

When addressing the public, the presidential candidates supported by the Georgian Dream and the United National Movement tried to draw the voters' attention to concrete messages of their political campaign.

Despite the mentioned, candidates' efforts to mobilise the voters were often overshadowed by escalated negative campaign and grave accusations exchanged between the ruling party and the opposition union formed around the United National Movement.

The public rallies held in the run up to the second round of the presidential elections were the integral part of the pre-election campaign and were widely used for negative campaigning. Publicly sensitive issues were the main focus at the meetings with the voters, which left little room for a detailed presentation of main programme initiatives and visions. This led to limited possibilities of the voters to make an informed choice

4.4. Activities implemented by election administration to foster electoral inclusiveness of ethnic minorities

In the scope of the monitoring programme, activities implemented by the election administration to facilitate inclusiveness of ethnic minority voters in the electoral processes were also evaluated, which deserves a positive appraisal.

The CEC implemented a number of activities to raise awareness of ethnic minority voters in the run up to the presidential elections of 2018 in Georgia, namely:

- An information video was translated into Armenian and Azerbaijani languages and broadcasted on regional TV channels;
- A special video was prepared about the services available for the ethnic minorities;

- Voters were able to receive election related information through the CEC hot line service in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages;
- Armenian and Azerbaijani voters living in the regions densely populated with ethnic minorities could verify their data in the unified voters list at the CEC's official web-page by using mobile phones/tablets and pay-box terminals;
- Election related documents were posted at the CEC web-page in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages;
- The CEC organised a number of events to raise awareness of ethnic minority voters about elections and to enhance the level of their participation in the electoral processes;
- The CEC translated and published various elections related material for the Armenian and Azerbaijani speaking members of the PECs;
- To facilitate participation of ethnic minority voters on the Election Day, the CEC translated and published (in Georgian-Armenian and in Georgian-Azerbaijani languages) various elections related material for Armenian and Azerbaijani speaking voters.

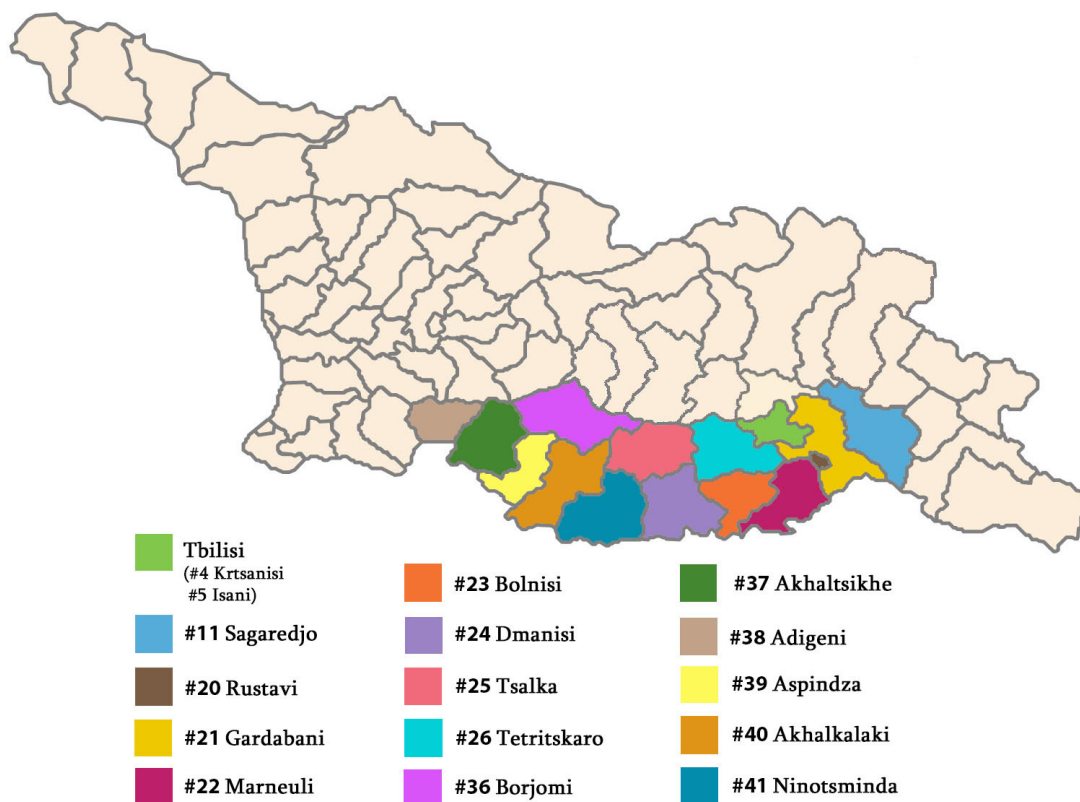


5. ELECTION DAY: 28 OCTOBER (FIRST ROUND)

5.1. The PMMG Election Day monitoring programme

The PMMG implemented the Presidential Election Day monitoring programme on 28 October 2018.

On the Election Day the monitoring programme included 16 electoral districts, namely: #20 Rustavi, #21 Gardabani, #22 Marneuli, #23 Bolnisi, #24 Dmanisi, #25 Tsalka, #26 Tetrtskaro (Kvemo Kartli region), #36 Borjomi, #37 Akhaltsikhe, #38 Adigeni, #39 Aspindza, #40 Akhalkalaki, #41 Ninotsminda (Samtskhe-Javakheti region), #11 Sagarejo (Kakheti region), as well as #5 Isani and #4 Krtsanisi (Tbilisi) electoral districts.



190 short-term observers were involved in the monitoring programme, including those attached to the precincts, mobile groups, DEC's and the CEC.

An incident centre was set up at the PMMG central office to support the implementation of the monitoring programme on the Election Day. Operators of the centre worked in an extraordinary mode, they received and analysed election-related information collected by the short-term observers.

In addition, the PMMG launched a hot line service, which was available for anyone to report on electoral findings.

The Election Day monitoring programme was supported by the lawyers involved in the programme.

Throughout the day, the PMMG was actively disseminating information through media on incidents and electoral trends identified during opening and setting up of the polling stations, voting, closing of the polling stations and vote counting processes.

5.2. Methodology of the monitoring programme

Based on previously developed instructions, the PMMG monitoring programme applied the following methodological instrument: a) processing and analysing information collected from the selected precincts within the monitoring programme; b) Impartial assessment of the entire election process on the Election Day, namely opening and setting up of the polling station, voting, closing of the polling station, vote counting and tabulation; c) identifying irregularities and violations during opening of the polling stations, voting and vote counting; d) verifying the official results of the Election Day.

It must be noted that on 26 October the PMMG conducted a full simulation exercise of the Election Day for the short-term observers selected and trained within the monitoring programme in order to define and check the following functional criteria:

- Effective communication with the short-term observers;
- Proper, consistent and timely feedback received from the short-term observers;
- Proper functioning of the election reporting database and SMS notification system on the Election Day;
- Efficiency of the incident centre operators in implementing their obligations and tasks

The simulation exercise of the Election Day was successful as the absolute majority of the short-term observers could cope with their tasks and obligations. The Incident Centre, as well as the election reporting database and the SMS notification system proved effective.

On the Election Day the Incident Centre operators worked in an extraordinary mode at the PMMG central office. They regularly received information from the PMMG short-term observers on all relevant issues that may have affected democratic, fair and objective electoral environment.

It must be noted that on the Election Day the short-term observers reported to the Incident Centre according to the schedule as well as on an ad hoc basis. At scheduled reporting, the short-term observers undertook monitoring of the Election Day based on a special reporting form and reported to the Incident Centre by SMS notes according to pre-determined schedule. In total, on the Election Day, 5 SMS notes were sent by each short-term observer to the Incident Centre.



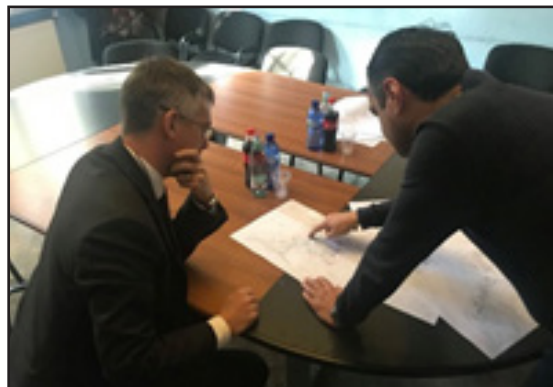
The ad hoc reporting took place only in case of extraordinary situations/violations were identified; reporting was made through a phone call to the Incident Centre operators.

The received information was stored in a special database, which, if need be, was checked by the operators. The verified information was then processed and analysed by the programme lawyers.

It is noteworthy, that the Incident Centre operators were assigned according to their proficiency in different ethnic minority languages, which allowed the short-term observers to report in their native languages.

Information about the incidents was submitted to the lawyers of the organisation, who, if necessary, would provide qualified consultations. After consulting with the lawyers, the observers reacted in respective manner on each violation identified at the precinct or in the electoral district falling under their mandate. After being verified and processed by the lawyers, the information was entered into the incident database, which included data not only on violations, but also on complaints filed at the precinct and in the electoral district.

Throughout the day mobile groups of the organisation moved across the area within the scope of the monitoring programme and monitored the precincts, where the PMMG had no initially stationed observer. In addition, if necessary, the mobile group provided logistical and other support to the short-term observers in the course of the monitoring.

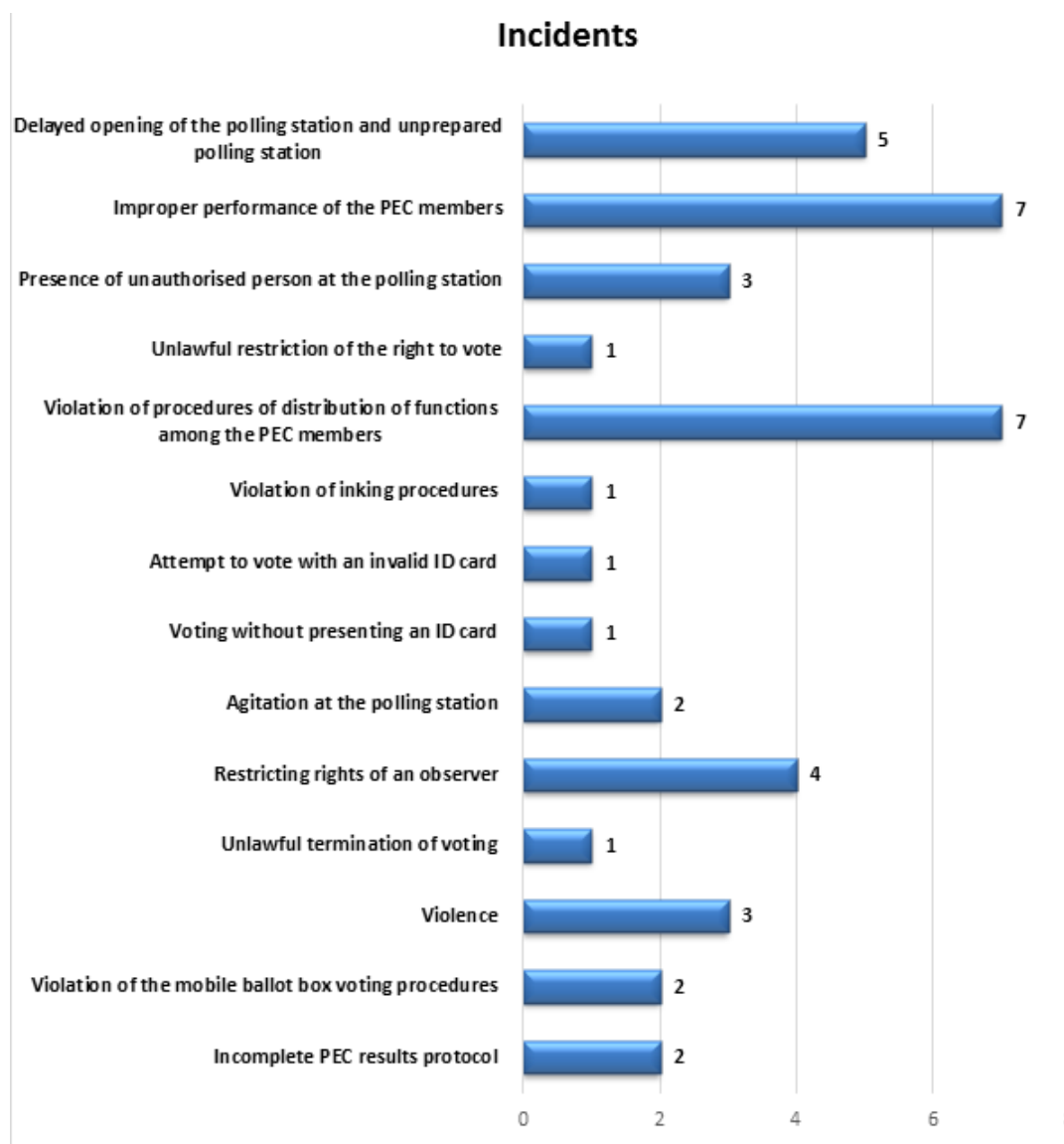


On the Elections Day PMMG has disseminated the main electoral findings and tendencies as identified within the frames of the monitoring program among the media sources, international observer organizations and foreign missions and consequently assessed the process of setting up and opening of the polling station as well as voting counting and tabulation.

On the next day, PMMG has made the public the Preliminary Assessment of the Elections Day in the Media Center.

5.3. Incidents revealed and complaints drawn up on the Election Day

In the framework of the PMMG monitoring programme, the short-term observers identified 35 incidents on the Election Day, including:



- Delayed opening of the polling station and unprepared polling station (5 incidents)
- Improper performance of the PEC members (7 incidents)
- Presence of unauthorised person at the polling station (3 incidents)
- Unlawful restriction of the right to vote (1 incident)
- Violation of procedures of distribution of functions among the PEC members (7 incidents)
- Violation of inking procedures (1 incident)
- Voting without presenting an ID card (1 incident)
- Attempt to vote with an invalid ID card (1 incident)
- Agitation at the polling station (2 incidents)
- Restricting rights of an observer (4 incidents)
- Unlawful termination of voting (1 incident)
- Violence (3 incident)
- Violation of the mobile ballot box voting procedures (2 incidents)
- Incomplete PEC results protocol (2 incidents)



Incidents:

On the Election Day the PMMG short-term observers identified the following incidents within the monitoring programme:

Delayed opening of the polling station and unprepared polling station (5 incidents)

59 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED opened with a delay.

59 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED was not ready to receive the first voter by 08:00. The first voter was admitted to the polling station by 09:30.

The PEC attempted to open # 89 EP (village Kizilajlo) of # 22 Marneuli ED at 6:48. Following a verbal objection of the PMMG observer, the polling station opened on time at 07:00.

At # 59 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED a display protocol was not filled in. The incident was resolved as a result of verbal objection of the PMMG observer.

At # 59 EP (village Imiri) of # 22 Marneuli ED, the spaces for the total number of voters in the display protocol were not filled in by 8:14. The secretary of the PEC corrected the violation following the verbal objection of the PMMG observer.

Improper performance of the PEC members (7 incidents)

At # 66 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED, the member of the PEC responsible for the regulation of the voters' queue was not fulfilling duties in due manner as stipulated by the law and was sending more than two voters to the registrar. Despite the several verbal objections of the PMMG observer the mentioned person continued the same way. To rescue the situation, the PMMG observer filed a complaint to the PEC. As a result, the incident was resolved.

At #74 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED, the member of the PEC responsible for the regulation of the voters' queue was letting the voters into the polling station without checking their IDs. Despite the numerous warnings of the PMMG observer and the chair of the PEC the mentioned person continued the malpractice. The incident was challenged by the PMMG

observer requesting to replace the mentioned person by another member of the PEC.

The registrars at # 9 PEC (village Vale) of # 37 Akhaltsikhe ED were giving the bulletins to the voters without the seals and signatures. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer, after which it was resolved.

At # 11 PEC of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED, the member of the PEC responsible for regulating the voters' queue stopped to regulate in agreement with the PEC chair, which resulted in a number of voters entering the polling station without checking the inking. The PMMG observer wrote a complaint and the incident was resolved.

The member of the PEC responsible for regulating of the voters' queue was not performing the duties properly at # 67 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED. The PEC Chair replaced the person with another member of the commission upon the verbal objection of the PMMG observer.

The members of the commission were eating and drinking alcohol while voting proceeded at # 27 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED, which hampered the voting process. Moreover, the main ballot box was left unsupervised. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer and the respective complaint was filed to the DEC.

The PEC chair did not cast lots to select members for vote counting at # 32 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer and it was resolved.

Presence of unauthorised person at the polling station (3 incidents)

There was an incident at # 62 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED that involved presence of an unauthorized person at the polling station. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer and it was resolved; the unauthorized person left the polling station.

The PMMG observer identified unauthorized persons at # 89 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED, which he reported to the PEC chair. The PEC chair forced the persons leave the polling station upon the verbal objection of the PMMG observer.

The PEC member responsible for regulating the voters' queue allowed the unauthorized person to enter the polling station at # 54 EP of # 23 Bolnisi ED, who eventually freely moved inside the EP. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer. As a result it was resolved and consequently the mentioned PEC member was replaced by another member of the commission.

Unlawful restriction of the right to vote (1 incident)

The voter was unlawfully denied the voting right at # 2 EP of # 5 Isani ED. The voter found the signature alongside his name and surname in the voters' common list. It is also noteworthy that when checked upon entering the polling station, no traces of inking were found. Despite this fact, still he was not allowed to vote. The PMMG observer filed a complaint. As a result, the incident was resolved and the voter was allowed to vote.

Violation of procedures of distribution of functions among the PEC members (7 incidents)

The functions were not distributed among the PEC members through casting lots at # 62 EP

20 of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED. The PMMG observer filed a complaint. As a result, the incident is resolved.

At # 69 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED, the commission secretary did not enter the information about the distribution of functions among the PEC members in the commission notebook. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer, who filed a complaint. As a result, the incident was resolved and the respective notes were made into the notebook.

At # 10 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED, information about the temporary swapping the functions among the PEC members was not included in the commission notebook. The incident was resolved upon the verbal objection of the PMMG observer.

Casting the lots proceeded in violation of the rules to distribute functions among the PEC members at # 89 EP (Kizilajlo) of # 22 Marneuli ED. The incident was resolved upon the verbal objection of the PMMG observer and lots were cast anew.

At # 01 and # 37 EPs of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED the PEC members appointed by the “Unified National Movement” refused to take part in the casting the lots to distribute the functions among the PEC members. The PMMG observer filed a complaint on the fact.

At # 37 PEC of # 41 Ninotsminda ED, the PEC members appointed by the “Unified National Movement” refused to take part in the casting the lots to distribute the functions among the PEC members. The PMMG observer filed a complaint on the fact.

Violation of inking procedures (1 incident)

At # 10 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED, the PEC member responsible for the regulation of voters’ queue was inking the voters, which is not prescribed by the law. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer and it was resolved.

Voting without presenting an ID card (1 incident)

At # 49 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED the PEC member responsible for regulating the voters’ queue allowed the voters to enter the polling station without checking their IDs and in this way the voters proceeded to vote. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer who filed a complaint.

Attempt to vote with an invalid ID card (1 incident)

A voter attempted to vote with invalid ID at # 60 EP of # 21 Gardabani ED. The incident was verbally challenged by PMMG observer. The incident was resolved (the voter was asked to leave the polling station).

Agitation at the polling station (2 incidents)

There were activists of one of the presidential candidates, namely Salome Zourabichvili identified holding agitation material at the entrance of # 42 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED. The incident was resolved upon the verbal objection of the PMMG observer. The PEC chair asked the activists to leave the polling station.

An incident of agitation was reported at # 59 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED, namely a person was identified wearing a supportive T-shirt of the presidential candidate Salome Zourabichvili. The incident was resolved upon the verbal objection of the PMMG observer. The person was asked to leave the polling station.

Restricting rights of an observer (4 incidents)

There was an incident involving the restriction of an observer's right at # 26 EP (village Orojalari) of # 41 Ninotsminda ED, namely, the PMMG observer was asked to provide the ID as well as the observer registration certificate. After providing the requested documents, the PEC member appointed by the "United National Movement" declared that the documents were fake and refused to return the documents to their owner. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer, whose protest was met with a rude reaction from the PEC member (the documents were returned to the observer in an incorrect manner). The PEC chair interfered in the incident, however, it was not resolved. The PMMG observer filed a complaint to the PEC.

There was an incident involving the restriction of an observer's right at # 2 EP of # 5 Isani ED, namely the observer was not allowed to take the photo of the commission's display protocol. The PMMG observer filed a complaint on the fact.

The PEC member did not allow the PMMG observer to enter # 74 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. The incident is resolved upon verbal objection of the observer, who was eventually allowed to enter the EP and carry out the monitoring.

49 EP of # 22 ED was not properly prepared for vote counting. Moreover, the PMMG observer was restricted the right to make notes in the PEC notebook. In addition, the PEC deputy chair threatened the PMMG as well as GYLA observers. The later was also subject of physical violence (he was pushed). The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer and a complaint was filed to the DEC.

Unlawful termination of voting (1 incident)

The PEC members at # 70 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED closed the polling station at 08:42 for a break. Consequently, the voters standing in the queue were not able to vote. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer. As a result, the incident was resolved – the PEC chair opened the polling station to let the voters in.

Violence (3 incident)

There was an incident of physical violence between the supporters of the presidential candidates outside # 59 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. The PMMG observer notified the law enforcement authorities on the incident. The PMMG head office also informed Nino Tsatsiashvili, representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, about the incident. As a result, the case was taken by the ministry under its control.

There was an incident of verbal assault between the representatives of different parties at # 54 EP of # 23 Bolnisi ED. The PEC chair forced the mentioned persons to leave the polling station. However, confrontation among 20-25 persons continued outside the polling station. One of the PEC members left the polling station to try calming down the situation by

reasoning the sides, however, without any success. Later on, the Police Patrol as well as the DEC chair were called. As a result, the order was restored at the polling station.

There was an incident of confrontation between the chairman of # 40 Akhalkalkai DEC and the member of the commission appointed by the “United National Movement”. Both sides of the incident called the Patrol Police that temporarily suspended the work of the DEC.

Violation of the mobile ballot box voting procedures (2 incidents)

After leaving the polling station with a mobile ballot box, the members of the # 50 PEC of # 22 Marneuli (village Kizilajlo) ED assigned to follow the mobile ballot box returned to the polling station for a break without the box. According to the mentioned members, they left the mobile ballot box in the car. The incident was challenged by the PMMG observer, following which the members of the commission went back to continue mobile ballot box voting.

The mobile ballot box was returned unsealed to the # 48 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. The PMMG observer filed a complaint to the PEC and the DEC.

Incomplete PEC results protocol (2 incidents)

An incident was identified at # 13 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED, which involved data corrected in hand in the spaces assigned to the electoral subjects of the precinct summary protocol. The fact of correction was not supported by the Protocol on Corrections. The respective complaint was filed at the DEC on the fact.

The balance was not attained in the summary protocol of # 4 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED. Notably, according to the signatures in all kinds of voters’ lists, the number of voters having cast their vote was less by 6 compared to the sum of the votes received by the electoral subjects and the annulled ballot papers. The respective complaint was filed at the DEC on the fact.

Complaints:

On the Election Day the PMMG filed 13 complaints at the PECs within its monitoring programme, 9 of which were satisfied and 4 were left without any follow-up.

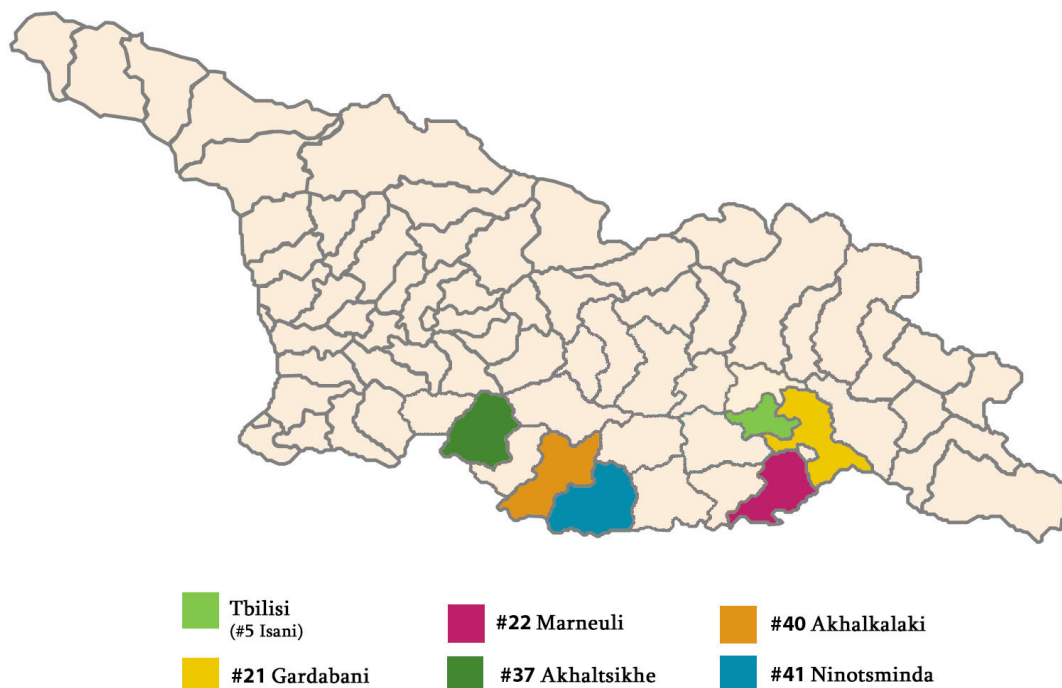
The PMMG filed 7 complaints at the DEC within its monitoring programme, namely: 1. 4 complaints were filed at the #40 Akhalkalaki DEC, 1 of which complaint was satisfied, 1 – partially satisfied, 1 – left without deliberation and 1 was rejected; 2. 3 complaints were filed at #22 Marneuli DEC, 2 of which were satisfied and 1 – rejected.

6. ELECTIONS DAY: NOVEMBER 28 (2ND ROUND)

6.1. The PMMG Election Day monitoring programme

Public Movement Multinational Georgia (PMMG) has conducted Elections Day monitoring for the 2nd round of 2018 Presidential Elections.

The Elections Day monitoring program covered # 21 Gardabani, # 22 Marneuli, # 37 Akhaltsikhe, # 40 Akhalkalaki, # 41 Ninotsminda and # 5 Isani electoral districts.



The Elections Day monitoring program was implemented by 234 short term observers deployed by the PMMG including static observers, mobile group observers, district election commission observes and Central Election Commission observer.

For the purpose of effective realization of Elections Day monitoring program PMMG mobilized incidents' center stationed at its head office. Incidents' center operators received and processed the electoral findings in the emergency regime as reported by the short term observers.

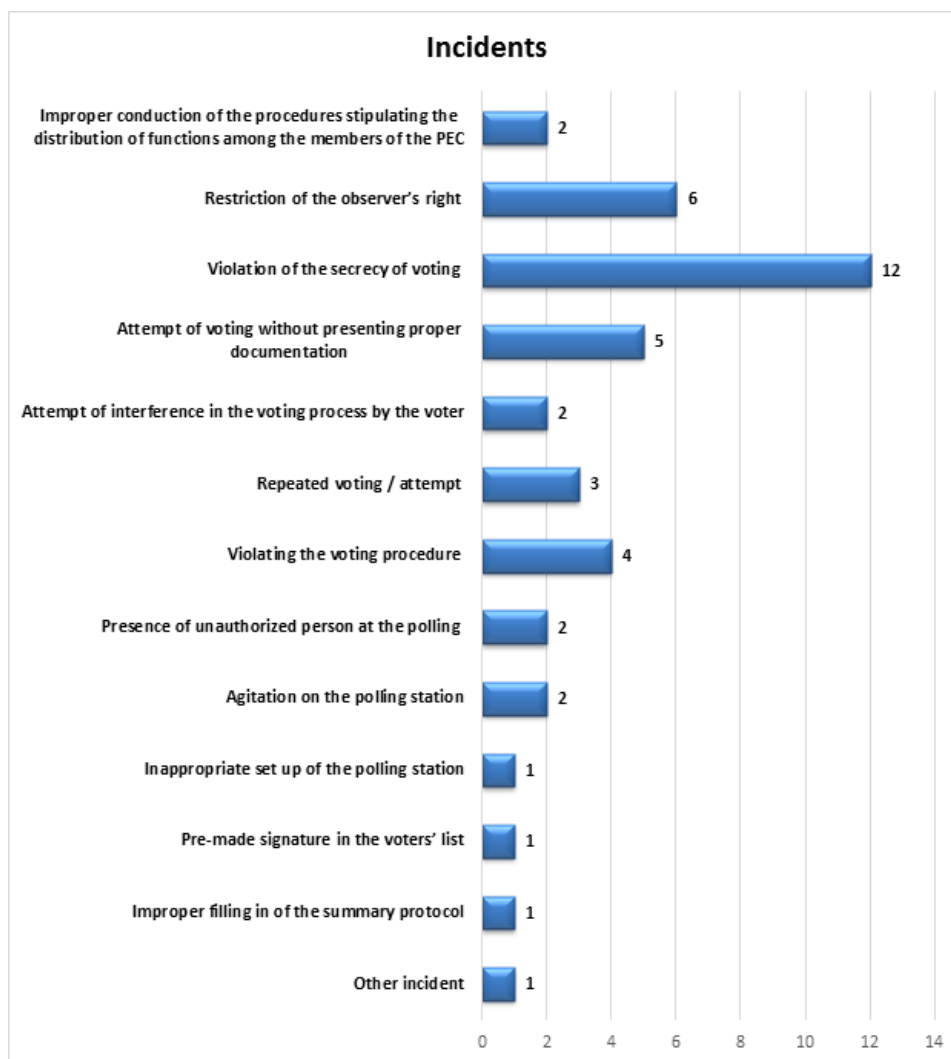
Along with the aforementioned, the hot line was functional at the PMMG office thus enabling all the interested parties to report electoral findings to monitoring program on the Election Day.

The Elections Day monitoring program was supported by the lawyers engaged into the program.

On November 28, the PMMG during whole day actively circulated information through media sources on the opening of the polling stations, voting, closure of the polling stations and incidents and electoral character tendencies identified during the procedures of vote counting.

6.2. Incidents revealed and complaints drawn up on the Elections Day

In total, within the framework of the monitoring program 42 incidents have been reported by the PMMG short term observers including:



- Improper conduction of the procedures stipulating the distribution of functions among the members of the PEC (2 incidents)
- Restriction of the observer's right (6 incidents)
- Violation of the secrecy of voting (12 incidents)
- Attempt of voting without presenting proper documentation (5 incidents)
- Attempt of interference in the voting process by the voter (2 incidents)
- Repeated voting / attempt (3 incidents)
- Violating the voting procedure (4 incidents)
- Presence of unauthorized person at the polling station (2 incidents)
- Agitation on the polling station (2 incidents)
- Inappropriate set up of the polling station (1 incident)
- Pre-made signature in the voters' list (1 incident)
- Improper filling in of the summary protocol (1 incident)
- Other incident (1 incident)



Incidents:

Improper conduction of the procedures of distribution of functions among the members of the PEC (2 incidents)

There was an incident reported from # 49 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED, namely, the process of voting on the distribution of functions between the PEC has been conducted with shortcomings. The shortcomings have been removed as a result of verbal objection raised by the PMMG STO.

The incident has been detected during process of conduction of the procedures of voting was reported from # 9 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. Notably, the members of the PEC representing the United National Movement (UNM) and “European Georgia” refused to carry the mobile ballot box.

Restriction of the observer’s right (6 incidents)

The incident was reported from # 52 EP of # 21 Gardabani ED according to which the PMMG STO was not allowed into the polling station to observe the opening and setting up of the polling station.

There was a threat issued by the member of # 49 precinct election commission of # 22 Marneuli ED towards the PMMG STO during the opening and setting up of the polling station.

The incident was reported from # 52 EP of # 21 Gardabani ED according to which PMMG STO was not allowed to make notes into the notebook of the precinct election commission which is the violation of the Article 90 of the Election Code of Georgia stipulating the rights of the observer. The incident was challenged by the STO by filing a complaint.

The incident was reported from # 42 EP of # 21 Gardabani ED according to which PMMG STO was expelled from the polling station without any legal justification. It should be underlined that PMMG STO was expelled on the ground of appeal submitted by the unauthorized – non

26 registered person (observer) at the polling station.

The incident of restriction of PMMG STOs right was reported from # 11 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. PMMG STO was stripped off the right to freely move inside the polling station and hence conduct the monitoring. The incident was removed as a result of communication with the chairperson of # 22 Marneuli district election commission.

The incident of restriction of PMMG STOs right was reported from # 48 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED by the member of the precinct election commission responsible for regulating the queue of voters. The mentioned member of the PEC was hampering PMMG STO to carry out the monitoring over the process of checking the marking.

Violation of the secrecy of voting (12 incidents)

Two incidents of violation of voting secrecy were reported from # 40 and # 42 EPs of # 22 Marneuli ED according to which the voter cast a vote directly at the registrar's table.

Two incidents of violation of voting secrecy were reported from # 3 EP of # 41 Ninotsminda ED according to which the voter cast a vote directly at the registrar's table.

One incident of violation of voting secrecy was reported from # 42 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED according to which the voter cast a vote directly at the registrar's table.

Two incidents of violation of voting secrecy were reported from # 61 EP of # 21 Gardabani ED, according to which the voter took a picture of the bulletin inside the voting booth by the mobile phone.

The incident of violation of voting secrecy were reported from # 42 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED according to which the voter who left the voting booth showed the member of the PEC the filled in bulletin.

The incident of violation of voting secrecy were reported from # 31 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED according to which the voter who left the voting booth showed the member of the PEC the filled in bulletin.

Both incidents have been removed as a result of verbal objection raised by the PMMG STO.

The incident of violation of voting secrecy was reported from # 40 EP of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED according to which the voter instead of casting the vote inside the voting booth actually voted at the main ballot box.

Two incidents of violation of voting secrecy were reported from # 1 EP of # 41 Ninotsminda ED. In the first case the voter has taken a photo of the bulletin. PMMG STO has requested the voter to delete the photo; however, the request of the STO was denied.

In the second case the chairperson of the EP asked the voter who left the voting booth to show the bulletin presumably to check whether the bulletin was belonging to the voter registered to the respective polling station. Such a fact was the violation of the secrecy of

voting as far as the voter was required to open up the bulletin.

Attempt of voting without presenting proper documentation (5 incidents)

The incident of attempt of voting without presenting proper documentation was reported from # 40 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. The incident was promptly removed as a result of verbal objection raised by the PMMG STO.

Two incidents of attempt of voting without presenting proper documentation were reported from # 46 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. The incidents were promptly removed as a result of verbal objection raised by the PMMG STO.

The attempt of voting without presenting proper documentation (trying to vote with driver silence) was reported from # 22 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. The attempt has been promptly detected by PMMG STO and as a result the voter was not granted the right to vote.

The member of the # 44 precinct election commission of # 22 Marneuli ED responsible for regulating the voters' queue has allowed the voter to enter the polling station by using the ID belonging to other person. PMMG STO has challenged the incident and filed a complaint. As a result the underlined voter was expelled from the polling station. Moreover, the member of the commission responsible for regulating the voters' queue was substituted by the other member of the PEC. In addition, PMMG has filed a complaint to the DEC requesting the imposition of disciplinary responsibility towards the underline member of the PEC.

Attempt of interference in the voting process by the voter (2 incidents)

Two incidents of the attempt of interference in the voting process by the individuals have been reported from # 46 EP of # 21 Gardabani ED. In the first case the local residents having the citizenship of the other state were trying to take part in the voting process. In the second case, the voters registered in Rustavi attempted to cast a vote in the same polling station. However, the precinct election commission has lawfully denied them to vote which was followed by the attempt of the underlined individuals to hamper the process of peaceful conduction of the voting process.

Repeated voting / attempt (3 incidents)

The incident was reported from # 48 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED according to which the member of the PEC responsible for regulating the queue of the voters allowed pre-marked voter into the polling station. The incident was challenged by PMMG STO who filed a complaint and requested the substitution of the underlined member of the precinct election commission by the other member of the commission. The complaint was not satisfied by the PEC and as a result the incident was challenged at the District Election Commission by submitting the respective complaint. The complaint was satisfied by the DEC and the member of the precinct election commission responsible for regulating the queue was replaced by the other member of the PEC.

Two incidents were reported from # 89 and # 49 EPs of # 22 Marneuli ED according to which the member of the precinct election commission responsible for regulating the queue

28 of the voters attempted to allow the pre-marked voters into the polling station. The incident was removed as a result of verbal objection raised by the PMMG STO.

Violating the voting procedure (4 incidents)

PMMG STO has reported the incident from # 44 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED according to which the marking checking appliance was not functioning. Despite the malfunctioning of the appliance the member of the PEC allowed the voters to enter the polling station and cast a vote. The incident was challenged by the PMMG STO and as a result the shortcoming was removed. The malfunctioned appliance was replaced by the new one.

There was an incident reported from # 89 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED according to which there was an attempt of voting by presenting the improper documentation. The incident was removed as a result of verbal objection raised by the PMMG STO.

The incident was reported from # 85 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED according to which the voter was given the bulletin without affirmation by the PEC stamp. The incident was challenged by PMMG STO through raising immediate objection. As a result the incident was removed.

At # 30 EP of # 37 Akhaltsikhe ED the voter was given the bulletin without the signature put on it. The incident was challenged by PMMG STO and consequently it was removed.

Presence of unauthorized person at the polling station (2 incidents)

The presence of unauthorized person at the polling station was reported from # 85 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. The incident was challenged by PMMG STO and as a result the mentioned person has left the electoral precinct.

The presence of unauthorized person at the polling station was reported from # 89 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED. The incident was challenged by PMMG STO by a verbal objection and as a result the shortcoming was eliminated.

Agitation on the polling station (2 incidents)

The incident of agitation was reported from # 44 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED during the voting process. The following parties have been involved in agitation process: appointed members of the precinct election commission representing United National Movement and Georgian Dream, appointed representatives by the underlined two political subjects as well as the ordinary voters in the polling station. The incident was removed as a result of verbal objection raised by PMMG STO.

In # 24 EP of # 37 Akhaltsikhe ED the chairperson of the precinct election commission has pointed out the voter (by giving the hand gesture) towards supporting the candidate of the Georgian Dream. The incident was challenged by the PMMG STO.

Inappropriate set up of the polling station (1 incident)

The fact of inappropriate set up of the polling station was reported from # 57 EP of # 22

Marneuli ED. The copier machine did not work. Despite the verbal objection raised by the PMMG STO the shortcoming was not removed.

Pre-made signature in the voters' list (1 incident)

The voter was illegally denied the voting right at # 44 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED due to the pre-made signature across his name and surname in the voters' list. Therefore, he was not allowed to vote. The case was challenged by PMMG STO and the respective complaint was filed. However, as far as the disciplinary responsibilities imposition measures against the members of PEC are being considered by the higher election commission, the respective complaint was filed by PMMG to # 22 Marneuli DEC.

Improper development of the summary protocol (1 incident)

The summary protocol of # 40 precinct election commission of # 40 Akhalkalaki ED was not properly developed. The summary protocol was missing the date and time of development. The incident was challenged by PMMG STO and the respective complaint was filed requesting the imposition of disciplinary measures against the chairperson as well as the secretary of the precinct election commission. The same type of complaint was filed to the district election commission.

Other incident (1 incident)

The excessive quantity of people was identified in the vicinities of # 7 EP of # 22 Marneuli ED by 18:30. Given the findings it appears that there was a mobilization of supporters of both presidential candidates. PMMG believes that such a mobilization can possibly jeopardize the proceedings of the ballot casting process as well as the closure of the polling station in a safe environment and thus provoke the further escalation of the situation.

Considering all of the aforementioned, PMMG requested the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia to promptly apply to the respective legal measures and by acting in its capacities ensure the publicity of the process, taken into account the mounting societal interest towards the electoral process.

Complaints:

In framework of the Elections Day Monitoring Program, the PMMG observers have filed and submitted 5 complaints submitted to the respective DECs. 2 from the submitted complaints have been satisfied; 1 remained unconsidered; 1 was partly satisfied and 1 complaint was not satisfied.

7. SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS MONITORING PROGRAM DURING THE FIRST AND THE SECOND ROUNDS

Given the electoral findings as provided by the short term observers of PMMG it can be concluded that the 2nd round of 2018 Presidential Elections in target EDs were mainly held in calm, fair and competitive environment, which complied with both the national and international standards of democratic elections.

However, it has to be noted that in #22 Marneuli and #21 Gardabani electoral districts the second round of elections were conducted against the background of more intense competition, which on its turn has been characterized with the persisting confrontation evolved between the supporters of the presidential candidates.

It has to be mentioned that for the second round of elections there was an attempt of restriction of PMMG' STOs legally guaranteed rights in some electoral precincts as compared with the first round of elections.

Moreover, the destructive activities have been noticeable for the second round of elections as demonstrated by the non-governmental organizations affiliated to both electoral subjects. Such destructive stance hampered the effective functioning of the precinct elections commissions as well as created obstacles to the realization of PMMG's elections monitoring program.

The tendency of physical as well as verbal

assault has been identified in some electoral precincts in Kvemo Kartli region in the follow up period of results tabulation which on its turn created the risks for disruption of the electoral process.

In general, on the Elections Day, both during the first and second rounds, no fundamental rights and freedoms have been violated. Election violations of main character have not been identified on the Elections Day. Despite the aforementioned, at the number of EPs, procedural shortcomings took place, which has not made effect on the final result of elections.

As for procedural shortcomings; those were mostly reasoned by the inadequate professional training level of some members of PECs, along with the general lack of political and electoral culture in voters.

It also has to be noted that all of the STOs of the PMMG, except of minor exceptions, were able to freely enter EPs and to freely conduct monitoring on each of the stages of polling station opening and development, voting process, polling station closing and vote counting.

Analysis of the Elections Day shows that the election process was administered in the qualified manner at the target EDs. CEC activity was timely, effective and transparent.

8. RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS AND ITS GENDER AND ETHNIC DIMENSION

25 presidential candidates participated in the 2018 Presidential Elections; from which 23 were men and 2 were women; namely, Salome Zourabichvili (independent candidates supported by the Georgian Dream) and Tamar Tskhoragauli (Political Movement Freedom – Zviad Gamsakhursia’s Way).

None of the candidates running for Presidential Elections were representatives of ethnic minorities.

Presidential Elections were won by Salome Zourabichvili with 59,52 % (1 147 701 votes), which, of course is a positive aspect in view of promotion of women participation in political processes.

9. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PMMG

PMMG was registered on June 1, 1999, as a non-governmental organization. PMMG unites Georgian citizens, who belong to different ethnic, religious and linguistic groups living in the country.

PMMG is an umbrella organization, which unites representatives of 19 communities and up to 56 public organizations working in the sphere of protection of rights of different ethnic, religious and linguistic groups living in Georgia.

Since 2009, PMMG enjoys the status of the Council of Europe Partner Organization. PMMG also represents the interests of the International Coalition Fight Against Hate in South Caucasus. PMMG is a member of the Federal Union of European Nations. PMMG also is a member of the Coalition for Independent and Transparent Jurisdiction.

Since 2003, the PMMG has been implementing the Election Observation Program in Kakheti, Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions. Results achieved by the organization, along with recommendations developed by it in framework of the observation program, are regularly circulated to different interested parties, including the

CEC. Recommendations developed by the PMMG, providing for the improvement of the election environment, in their major part have been considered and shared by relevant interested parties, international and local organizations.

Main directions of the PMMG activities are: protection of the rights of and support to vulnerable groups, primarily ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, development of their potential, in addition with creation of appropriate conditions for their active civil engagement at all the levels; Conflicts settlement, support to peace and civil consent; monitoring of human rights standards and protection of human rights protectors; promotion of democratic transformation and European values; Development of local self-governance and local communities; promotion and support to intercultural dialogue and exchange, following the pace of harmonization of interethnic relationships in the society; education of voters, monitoring of elections and promotion of effective political, civil and electoral engagement of vulnerable groups.

For detail information see PMMG official website - <http://www.pmmg.org.ge/>

10. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The CEC must increase its efforts towards achieving effective and sustainable result, which, primarily means deepening of the process of measures oriented at raising professional level of PECs and EDCs for the next election cycles and further development of such positive practice in future.

For the next election cycle **the CEC** must activate the process of raising profession level of ethnic minority members of the election administration.

The CEC must ensure decrease of the validity of the certificates of election administration staff from five to three years.

The CEC must secure high level quantitative as well as qualitative representation of ethnic minorities in district elections commissions in ethnic minorities compactly populated electoral districts, especially in Kvemo Kartli region.

The CEC must pay special attention to the issue of knowledge of the State language by representatives of election administrations in the EDs densely settled by ethnic minorities.

Election Administration must ensure that minimum two members of both EDCs and PECs selected by them based on competition, know minimum two languages – the State language and the language of the ethnic minority populating the specific town/settlement/village, which, in return will promote transparent and efficient realization of their function and improvement of communication between commission members.

The CEC should for the next election cycles introduce such practice in the process of selection of members of the PECs, according to which those, who have been charged with disciplinary sanctions before will not be selected commission members (which will be certain prevention of violations).

The CEC must increase the involvement of the graduates of the Development School in the election commissions.

The CEC must continue working in the regions densely populated by ethnic minorities for developing electoral awareness of local voters, in order for the next election cycles not only to increase quantitative involvement, but also to raise the level of informed participation of ethnic minority voters in the electoral process.

The CEC must ensure protection of the election legislation requirements both during the pre-election process and on the day of elections and following period and to conduct timely and adequate measures against the violators.

Law enforcing bodies must ensure protection of the Law and implement timely and adequate measures against violators.

Election subjects must on the request of the Law ensure allocation and removal of agitation materials. It is also important for administrative bodies defined by the election legislation to

34 effectively monitor the aforementioned process.

Heads of public services must ensure provision of information about their rights and obligations to public servants working in the public sector and raising of their awareness in the given direction.

During pre-election period **election subjects and their representatives** must refrain from violent actions, must respect and protect human rights, must not allow usage of hate speech, along with manipulation with religious feelings during the process of implementation of political campaign.

Political subjects must ensure extensive reflection in their program documents of the specific complains, needs and challenges of ethnic minority communities.

Civil public sector must continuously work for raising political and electoral involvement level among local voters in regions densely populated by ethnic minorities, both during election and non-election periods.

Civil public sector must continue involvement with political subjects, for raising/empowering electoral awareness of representatives of population of regions settled by ethnic minorities.

The legislative body must implement the following changes in the Election Code:

Selection of the members of PECs should be conducted in two stages (processing of submitted applications according to criteria and interviews).

Position of the temporary member of PEC, which is subject to permanent disputes) should be abolished, or transformed into permanent member status.

Administrative liability measures considered by the Election Legislation against members of election commissions for violation of the election legislation should be changed, namely, should be introduced adequate and fair penalty sanctions.

The rule of appointment of commission members by parties in the election administration should be changed and parties having best six results at last parliamentary elections should be granted the right to appoint commission members, which will promote the formation of fair environment necessary for the development of political parties.

THANKS FOR MEDIA COVERAGE

