



ELECTIONS 2016

Weekly Overview

July 18-24



International Center for Civic Culture considers important to periodically summarize political processes ongoing in Georgia during pre-election period. For this purpose, our organization is observing pre-election activities of political parties, governmental and non-governmental sector and presents its weekly review.

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FIRST 20 MEMBERS ON FREE DEMOCRATS' ELECTORAL LIST

July 18



The Free Democrats announced the top 20 members on their electoral list for the October parliamentary elections, at a party congress on July 16. The first person on the list is party leader and former defense minister Irakli Alasania. The list has seven current members of parliament: Viktor Dolidze, Zurab Abashidze, Nino Gogvadze, Irakli Chikovani, Giorgi Tsagareishvili, Davit Onoprishvili, and Shalva Shavgulidze; as well as two former ministers: former Foreign Minister Maia Panjikidze, and former minister for Euro-Atlantic Integration, Aleksii Petriashvili. Others on the list include Tamar Kekenadze, Tamar Amashukeli, Tamaz Shioshvili, Vakhtang Mchedlidze, Tinatin Revazishvili, Tamar Koberidze, Teimuraz Salukvadze, Benjamin Kasimov, Koka Phruidze & Mikheil Avaqian. The top 20 electoral list has 14 men and six women. The Free Democrats will also announce the rest of the members on the electoral list in the near future.

I was offered to leave Republican Party and cooperate with Georgian Dream but it was unacceptable for me – Parliamentary Head of Georgia

July 18



I was told that if the Republican ministers left the party, they would retain their positions, but I said it was impossible, - Georgia's Parliamentary Speaker Davit Usupashvili has told a Kviris Palitra weekly newspaper in an interview.

In response to a question whether it sounded as an ultimatum, Usupashvili say it did not.

According to him relationship between him and Kvirikashvili has not worsened at all.

'If Republicans and Georgian Dream succeed in elections I do not rule out cooperation but I was offered to leave Republican Party and cooperate with Georgian Dream that was unacceptable for me. Competition is necessary in politics... But Georgian Dream initiates to create a joint party that resembles a post-soviet process that will not be profitable at all,' he says.



Georgian Dream begins campaigning for October 8 Parliamentary Elections

July 19

Georgia's ruling party, Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia (GDDG), has officially started campaigning for the upcoming Parliamentary Elections, set for October 8, 2016.

The party's chairman and current Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili travelled to Imereti region in Georgia's west and introduced the region's GDDG majoritarian candidates to locals last night.

The ceremony took place in Kutaisi, the region's largest city and the third largest city in Georgia, which is home to the country's Parliament.

In his lengthy speech PM Kvirikashvili highlighted some of the things the GDDG had achieved since coming into power in 2012.

"We have given people what matters the most – freedom. We have destroyed the fear which had suppressed our society for years. We have created the conditions for a peaceful life and created the feeling of stability." - Kvirikashvili said.

Other top achievements he named were:
The Hepatitis C Elimination Program;
Governmental programs to support agriculture and farming;
Allowing businesses, media, court and police to be free from political pressure;
Ensuring property rights are protected.

Kvirikashvili said these achievements were significant and had been recognised by international organisations and partner countries.

Kvirikashvili also named several projects the GDDG wanted to implement in the future.

"During these past four years we have created strong foundations and today we can already offer our people something novel – the fast development of our country, which means improving the quality of life for each and every person." - Kvirikashvili said.

He then went on to speak about the four-point reform plan the Government had developed to stimulate the business sector, and continue supporting economic development.

Kvirikashvili said the reform agenda focused on one thing; to let people develop and grow their own businesses so they can lead a successful life. To achieve this, Kvirikashvili said the Government would fund new business ideas generated by Georgian citizens.

He also pledged to reform the education system so youth can get all the skills needed to allow them to fully realise their full potential and succeed in the 21st century.

The Government was also working on improving road infrastructure to connect all regions and villages across the country with each other, and this would facilitate trade and travel in different

parts of the country.

After speaking Kvirikashvili introduced 11 candidates who wished to be a Member of Parliament (MP) and represent Imereti in the country's legislative body.

One of the candidates was Koba Narchemashvili, who was Georgia's Interior Minister when the Rose Revolution took place in 2003. Kvirikashvili said Narchemashvili was "a clear example" of a person who made decisions that avoided conflict and protected public safety in critical situations, and made choices that favoured the country and its people.

With these comments he referred to the fact that during the Rose Revolution, police and military units refused to fight against the public and support a government that did not have public faith.

The 11 GDDG candidates were:

Kutaisi #47 district – Genadi Martgvelashvili. He is a local school principal whose students typically win international physics and mathematics Olympiads every year.

Kutaisi #48 district – Dimitry Mkheidze. He is a Kutaisi-based doctor.

Kutaisi #49 district – Koba Narchemashvili. He has a Master's in Law and Economics and was Georgia's Interior Minister when the Rose Revolution took place in 2003.

Tskaltubo – Tsothe Zurabiani. He has a law degree and earned a Master's degree from the University of Bremen in Germany. Currently he serves as head of office of relations with self-governments at Imereti Regional Administration.

Zestaponi – Shalva Kiknavelidze. He is a current Parliament Member and member of GD.

Terjola-Tkibuli – Elguja Gotsiridze. He is a doctor of medicine and the director of Tbilisi-based Chachava Clinic.

Sachkhere – Paata Kvizhinadze. He is a current MP and a veteran of the Samachablo and Abkhazia wars.

Vani-Khoni – Grigol Liluashvili. He is the current Deputy Mayor of Tbilisi and holds a Master's degree in international economic relations. He has worked as chairman of the Supervisory Board at Cartu Bank and deputy head of international relations at Georgia's Custom's Department.

Chiatura – Sul Khan Makhatadze. He is the current Gamgebeli (governor) of Chiatura town.

Baghdati-Kharagauli – Koba Lursmanashvili. He is the current Gamgebeli (governor) of the Kharagauli Municipality.

"THIS IS A CIVIL ISSUE-BASED PRE-ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT" - IAN KELLY

"I think the situation is unfolding in a good way. I think it is important that the campaign is based on issues. This is civil issue-based pre-electoral environment", - said the US diplomat.

“



BURCHULADZE'S PARTY: UNKNOWN PEOPLE ASKING FOR MONEY IN OUR NAME

July 19

The new political party, Paata Burchuladze - The Government for the People, is reporting that unknown people are knocking on people's homes in Tbilisi and elsewhere and asking for donations for their party. At a briefing today, one of the members of the party, Merab Metreveli, also reported that people are being asked to answer politically-themed surveys by unknown persons claiming to represent Paata Burchuladze - The Government for the People. He says it spreads wrong information about the party and harms their reputation:

"These people say they represent our party, but we want to warn citizens: Please don't be mistaken by it, and don't give any money to anyone who says that he or she is sent from our party. [Regarding these people asking for money on our behalf, and asking political questions]... It's done to ruin our reputation. It's an organized campaign and makes us think that we are dealing with a government group that is targeted on creating black PR against us... Please don't be influenced by this. If our representatives approach you, it is to talk about the problems in your community, about our development plans, or to gather signatures to register our party for elections.

Paata Burchuladze - The Government for the People has urged law enforcement agents to investigate the cases.



We laid the foundation in these four years and now we can offer our people improvement of life conditions - Giorgi Kvirikashvili

July 19

According to Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili, the Georgian Dream has not taken any step for creating illusive effect to deceive people. Giorgi Kvirikashvili, the Prime Minister of Georgia and chairman of Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia party, reviewed the passed 4 years and future plans while presenting majoritarian candidates in the city of Kutaisi.

The Prime Minister said that the country gained freedom and now it needs a rapid development, which is the aim of the Georgian Dream.

"We saved a lot of people. We provided medical treatment for everyone. How many lives were saved only by the hepatitis C program? We have provided unprecedented assistance to the village; we gave opportunities to farmers, entrepreneurs. We all stood by the people, as far as it was possible.

We will continue all of the programs to make the life of vulnerable people easier. We freed business, media, court and police from government interference. The right to property is protected and inviolable. This has been recognized by all international organizations and partner countries, but it is not enough. We will not stop. The most important thing is each of you to feel a bit better. We laid the foundation in these four years and now we can offer our people improvement of life conditions", said Kvirikashvili.





UNM APPROVES ITS ELECTORAL LIST

July 23

The Political Council of the United National Movement approved final electoral list for 2016 parliamentary elections. The Political Council at the session discussed the program, action plan and renewed logo of the party.

The electoral list of UNM will include following candidates:

1. David Bakradze
2. Elene Khostaria (will run for #2 (vake) district)
3. Roman Gotsiridze
4. Nika Melia
5. Giorgi Tughushi
6. Otar Kakhidze
7. Salome Samadashvili
8. Irakli Abesadze (-#7 district (Krtsanisi))
9. Sergi Kapanadze
10. Sergo Ratiani (#21 District (Gldani))
11. Giorgi Kandelaki
12. Lela Keburia
13. Akaki Bobokhidze
14. Giga Bokeria
15. Tengiz Gunava
16. Irma Nadirashvili
17. Mamuka Chikovani (#29 (Rustavi) District)
18. Tinatin Bokuchava
19. Giorgi Tevdoradze
20. Zurab Chiaberashvili (#23 (Sagarejo) District)
21. Lasha Damenia
22. Khatuna Gogorishvili
23. Nikoloz Nakopia
24. Zaza Kedelashvili
25. Azer Suleimanov (#35 (Marneuli) District)
26. Giorgi Tsereteli
27. Giorgi Ghviniashvili (#24 (Gurjaani) District)
28. Nino Kalandadze
29. Omar Megrelidze
30. Arsen Karapetiani (#46 (Akhalkalaki/Ninotsminda) District)
31. Mikheil Machavariani
32. Badri Basilishvili (#42 (Gori) District)
33. Zurab Chilingarashvili
34. Ekaterine Kherekheulidze
35. LEvan Tarkhnishvili
36. Dimiyti Zagnidze
37. Davit Gogokhia
38. Levan Konjaria
39. Mamuka Saghareishvili
40. Sophio Siukaeva
41. Nino Kvitaishvili
42. Davit Darchiashvili
43. Khatuna Berdzenishvili
44. Lali Raminashvili
45. Besik Kvitsiani (#8 (Isani) District)
46. Besik Tserediani
47. Konstantine Mikeladze
48. Zviad Dushmanashvili
49. Gevork Shushaniani
50. Tamara Dalakishvili
51. Otar Siradze
52. Lasha Imerlishvili
53. Vitali Gogvadze

GD NOMINATES SINGLE MANDATE CANDIDATES IN SAMEGRELO

July 23



Ruling party, Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia (GDDG), named on July 23 its majoritarian MP candidates for Samegrelo region's seven single-mandate constituencies.

Agriculture Minister, Otar Danelia, has been nominated as the ruling party's candidate in a constituency covering Abasha and Martvili municipalities. Danelia will have to quit his cabinet post after he will be officially registered as a candidate by the election commission; deadline for political parties to submit to the election commission their majoritarian MP candidates expires on September 8, one month before the election day.

Chairman of local council (Sakrebulo) of Zugdidi municipality, Merab Kvaraia, will be GDDG's majoritarian MP candidate in Zugdidi, the main town of Samegrelo region.

Head (gamebeli) of the Zugdidi municipality will be GDDG's majoritarian

MP candidate in a single-mandate constituency covering the same municipality, except of the town of Zugdidi.

A majoritarian lawmaker from Khobi, Goderdzi Bukia, will run for re-election in the same single-mandate constituency as GDDG's candidate. In previous elections, four years ago, he ran as a candidate from then ruling UNM party, which he quit shortly after the elections in which UNM was defeated.

GDDG named head of the information and analytical department of the State Security Service, Irakli Beraia, as its majoritarian candidate in Senaki.

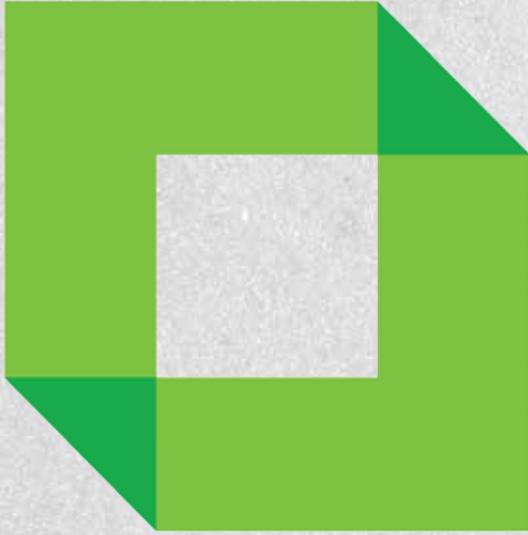
Head (gamebeli) of Tsalenjikha municipality, Goga Gulordava, will be GDDG's candidate in a single-mandate constituency covering Tsalenjikha and Chkhorotsku municipalities.

Irakli Khakhubia, a co-owner of Iceberg 2, a fish processing facility in Poti, has been nominated in this port city. GDDG MP Eka Beselia, who chairs human rights committee in the outgoing Parliament, is currently a majoritarian MP from Poti constituency.

GDDG marked official launch of its election campaign on July 18 with nominating its majoritarian MP candidates in Imereti region's eleven single-mandate constituencies.

Like in Imereti, candidates for majoritarian MPs in Samegrelo region were presented by PM Giorgi Kvirikashvili, who is chairman of the GDDG party, at an outdoor rally. After that he is travelling to each of the constituencies of the region to present respective candidates to locals.

Georgia has a mixed electoral system in which 73 lawmakers are elected in 73 single-member constituencies, known in Georgia as "majoritarian" mandates (a candidate has to win over 50% of votes in order to be an outright winner otherwise a second round should be held), and rest 77 seats are allocated proportionally under the party-list contest among political parties, which clear 5% threshold in nationwide popular vote.



CEC

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION
OF GEORGIA

56 political parties applied to CEC for registration.

By this time, 21 of them are registered, while 2 parties were denied registration.

33 parties are still undergoing registration.

According recent data, the Central Election Commission registered 3 media, 5 international and 33 local organizations for observing upcoming elections.



საპარტიკულო საარჩევნო ომების მართვა

The Chairperson of the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia, Tamar Zhvania and the commission members held meetings with the representatives of the NGOs from Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Samegrelo regions as well as representatives of political parties. The CEC representatives introduced to the meeting participants the instructions elaborated for main and supportive election districts. The activities of the CEC to be implemented during the preparation process for the upcoming 2016 parliamentary Elections were also discussed at the meeting.

“Many election related innovations are introduced this year. Due to the new boundary delimitation, the single mandate majoritarian election districts are newly defined. There are concrete instruction issued for the functions of main and supportive election districts. We aimed to introduce all these nuances to political party and NGO representatives”- stated Ms. Zhvania to media.

The same instructions were also presented to the members of main and supportive election districts. The meeting participants were acquainted to the details of the rights and obligations of District Election Commissions and the activities they should carry out for the October 8, 2016 Parliamentary Elections.

Heads of the CEC legal, financial and electoral process management departments also participated in the workshop.

The workshops were organized in cooperation with the International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) and the CEC plans to conduct similar meeting in other regions of Georgia as well.



The Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia conducts working meetings in the regions. Today, Tamar Zhvania, the CEC Chairperson and the commission members met with the representatives of non-governmental organizations and political parties of Adjara and Guria region. Parmen Jalag-honia, Chairman of Supreme Election Commission (SEC) of Adjara also attended the meeting.

Functions of main and supportive DEC's were discussed at the meeting held in Batumi District Election Commission. Meeting participants, including the members of main and supportive DEC's of Adjara and Guria region got introduced to the instructions developed in this regard. Recent legislative amendments made to the Election Code were also discussed at the meeting.

“We talked about the legislative amendments, functions of main and supportive DEC's, which is important in boundary delimitation context. Number of questions were raised by the NGOs and political parties in regard with the procedures. It worth noting, that perception of all above mentioned issues were uniform from all electoral stakeholders” – stated Tamar Zhvania with the journalists.

JULY 22, MEETING RESULTS

JULY 22



At the July 22 meeting, the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia registered “Embassy of the United States of America to Georgia” and “Elections Commission of the Republic of Maldives” as international observer organizations for the Parliamentary Elections of Georgia, 8 October 2016. “The Center of Democracy”, “Platform for New Political Center”, “Multinational Georgia” and “Union of Unemployed for Employment” were registered as local observer organizations for the upcoming elections.

At the same meeting, on the basis of the CEC decision, non-governmental organizations “Rights and Freedoms – Union” and “Central Union of veterans of War, Labour and Military Forces of Georgia” were rejected to be registered for the upcoming elections. The documents submitted at the CEC did not meet the requirements of the Article 40, paragraph 3, of the Georgian Organic Law – “Election Code of Georgia”.

PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT OF ELECTORAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS



Today, the Central Election Commission of Georgia (CEC) presented the project “Electoral Development Schools”. The CEC Chairperson Tamar Zhvania, Head of the Council of Europe (CoE) Office in Georgia, Cristian Urse and the Deputy Chief of Party of the International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) Ketevan Maisuradze made an opening remarks at the meeting. The CEC Chairperson delivered the presentation of the project for the representatives of local and international organizations.

According to Ms. Zhvania the CEC implements various projects for raising civic awareness and the “Electoral Development Schools” are the most successful among them.

The learning course is designed for the youth at age of 18-24 years and will be launched on July 25. The project will cover 20 municipalities, where 680 youth are already registered to take part in the course.

During the 10 day learning course the participants will receive information on the issues such as: election systems, election administration, democratic electoral principles, elective bodies in Georgia, electoral stakeholders, transparency and accountability of elections, gender equality.

The learning course will be conducted by the members of the District Election Commissions and trainers of the Election Administration. The CEC Training Center conducted the ToT training for 46 trainers.

“The project objectives refer to increasing civil engagement and raising awareness. The most important is that elections will be promoted among youth, and the quality and level of their participation will increase. This will significantly contribute to the development of the future professional resources and development of the country” - stated the CEC Chairperson to the journalists after the presentation.

While making comments for media, Cristian Urse underlined the importance of the close cooperation between the Election Administration and the CoE. He emphasized that the CoE supports the CEC to successfully implement the future three election cycles. “Within the framework of

cooperation on this particular project, we aim at engaging more youth in election processes”- stated Mr. Urse.

The Electoral Development Schools’ project was successfully piloted in 2015 in 10 election districts. Due to the great interest towards the project, three courses were conducted instead of one in 2015. 627 youth participated in the pilot project. Following the success of the project, the number of electoral development schools has been doubled this year and will be conducted in 20 municipalities: Gurjaani, Sighnaghi, Telavi, Rustavi, Gardabani, Marneuli, Dusheti, Gori, Borjomi, Akhaltsikhe, Ambrolauri, Sachkhere, Zestaponi, Kutaisi, Ozurgeti, Senaki, Zugdidi, Poti, Batumi, Kobuleti.

The CEC plans to expand the project and cover whole Georgia. It will give the election administration an opportunity to share electoral knowledge with more youth.

The project “Electoral Development Schools” is conducted with the support of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES).

JOINT STATEMENT OF CSO'S ON FREE AND FAIR ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT

On June 8, the Prime Minister of Georgia signed the decree of the President of Georgia announcing the date of the next parliamentary elections. Upon the promulgation of this decree, the pre-election campaign was officially launched, and the country switched to an extraordinary regime. As the campaign begins, it is important that the country's institutions operate in an orderly manner to ensure that the parliamentary elections of October 8 are conducted in compliance with international standards. To achieve this goal, we appeal to the relevant state and non-state institutions to assume proper responsibility and duly exercise their rights and obligations. In particular, we appeal to:

The central and local authorities of Georgia:

- To take responsibility for conducting the elections in a calm and fair environment; to take into consideration that conducting the elections in an undemocratic and unfair environment is going to affect the country's future prospects, including in terms of Georgia's integration with NATO and the EU;
- To refrain from using administrative resources for electoral purposes, inter alia, from carrying out social initiatives whose main objective is to gain votes and which do not serve the long-term goals of the country's development;
- To ensure freedom of the media, safe working environment and non-interference with journalistic activities as a critical precondition for a fair pre-election environment;
- To refrain from discrediting civil society organizations, especially those that work on electoral issues and make an important contribution to fair and democratic conduct of the elections.

Law enforcement agencies:

- To ensure the safety of all stakeholders and timely and adequate response to violations of law, so that all political parties and independent candidates are able to conduct the election campaign in a calm environment;
- To fulfill their obligations with full observance of political neutrality, inter alia, not to allow and prevent in a timely manner all acts of violence and to observe the public order and safety. The police and the Prosecutor's Office should take fair and adequate measures in relation to persons who take part in criminal incidents.

The State security service

- Not to allow interference with the activities of political parties and/or exerting of influence on the election environment, and, for this purpose, to conduct effective internal monitoring on the activities of its own employees, in order to rule out cases of pressure on and intimidation of members, supporters, and activists of various political parties in Tbilisi and the regions.

The Ministry of Justice:

- To ensure that the Interagency Commission works effectively and impartially, including by means of constructive mediation of discussions held in the Commission;
- Not to create artificial barriers and to ensure that the State Audit Office has access to relevant databases.

The Election Administration:

- To respond to the use of administrative resources for electoral purposes;
- To properly examine the received complaints to avoid questions regarding the impartiality of this agency, as well as to ensure a uniform approach to examination of complaints in the election commissions of all levels;
- To assist monitoring organizations and other stakeholders in their work;
- To pay particular attention to the involvement of ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities in the electoral process.

The State Audit Office:

- To exercise effective and impartial monitoring of the funding of political parties and to periodically notify the public of the results of the monitoring

Political parties:

- To conduct the pre-election campaign on the basis of electoral platforms; to provide the public with as much information as possible about their platforms;
- To base their pre-election campaigns on a positive agenda and to put as much emphasis as possible on future plans;
- To pay as much attention as possible to informing ethnic minorities about their electoral platforms;
- To ensure that women are represented adequately in party lists and that representatives of ethnic minorities are included in these lists;
- To refrain from aggressive acts and provocations, as well as from involving party activists in such acts;
- To abandon the practice of discrediting opponents, including by means of disseminating information on private life or other similar information; to channel the relationship with opponents toward thematic discussions;
- To respect human rights and to recognize the significance of building a law-governed, secular and democratic state, as well as to abandon the instrumentalization of various discriminated groups and to condemn the manipulation with the human rights situation of vulnerable groups for political purposes;
- To abandon the use of hate speech, as well as the practice of making xenophobic and homophobic statements; to make efforts to properly inform ethnic and religious minorities and other discriminated groups and to enhance their political participation;
- To share responsibility for peaceful conduct of elections and bear in mind that undemocratic conduct of the elections is going to affect the further development of the State of Georgia and the future of its integration with the EU;
- To spend funds in good faith, transparently, and in compliance with the requirements of law in the run-up to the elections and to abandon the practice of vote buying.

Media organizations:

- To provide an impartial coverage of the pre-election campaign and the polling day;
- To provide voters with information regarding the platforms and pledges of political parties and candidates; for this purpose, media outlets should ensure the broadcasting of relevant discussion programs;
- To provide voters with impartial, fact based information about irregularities in the run-up to the elections;
- Not to discredit political parties intentionally and to act in the interests of the public;
- To ensure equal access to media for political parties during the election period.

Local monitoring organizations:

- To observe neutrality and impartiality when observing the electoral processes;
- To act professionally and not to be subjected to the influence of any political group.

Friendly countries and foreign monitoring missions:

- To send long-term monitoring missions to observe the elections.

Signatory CSOs

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Transparency International Georgia (TI Georgia) | 16. Civil Society and Democracy Development Center | 32. Racha-Lechkhumi and Lower Svaneti Municipality Resource Center (Ambrolauri) |
| 2. International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) | 17. International Society "Civitas Georgica" | 33. Anti-Violence Network of Georgia – Mtskheta-Mtianeti Regional Committee (Mtskheta) |
| 3. Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) | 18. Center for Development and Democracy | 34. Association "Dea" (Zugdidi) |
| 4. Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC) | 19. Public Movement "Multinational Georgia" | 35. Association "Imedi" – IDP Women's Movement for Peace (Zugdidi) |
| 5. Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center (EMC) | 20. Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters | 36. Georgian Democratic Development Union (Ozurgeti) |
| 6. Article 42 of the Constitution | 21. Public Advocacy | 37. Indigo (Rustavi) |
| 7. Open Society Georgia Foundation (OSGF) | 22. Civil Integration Foundation | 38. Development Fund for Tkibuli (Tkibuli) |
| 8. Civil Development Agency (CiDA) | 23. Green Caucasus | 39. Regional Development Center (Telavi) |
| 9. Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics | 24. Studio "Re" | 40. Step for Kharagauli (Kharagauli) |
| 10. Human Rights Center | 25. Management Systems Development Center | 41. Dusheti Development Fund (Dusheti) |
| 11. Media Development Foundation (MDF) | 26. Local Democracy Network Center | 42. Our Pshavi (Pshavi) |
| 12. Atlantic Council of Georgia | 27. We for Sensible Future (Tserovani) | |
| 13. Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) | 28. Atinati (Zugdidi) | |
| 14. International Center for Civic Culture | 29. Demosi (Rustavi) | |
| 15. Center for Training and Consultancy (CTC) | 30. Association "Toleranti" (Akhaltzikhe) | |
| | 31. Association for Civil Society Development "Spectri" (Sagarejo) | |



United National Movement accused of buying votes for Parliamentary Election

The country's leading non-governmental organisation Transparency International Georgia (TI Georgia) has accused oppositional party United National Movement (UNM) of attempting to buy votes for the upcoming Parliamentary Elections.

Today TI Georgia released a statement that called on the Central Election Commission (CEC) to investigate their allegations and react appropriately if UNM are found to have committed the illegality.

TI Georgia said UNM party member Levan Varshalomidze had approached people living in a slum-like settlement in Batumi, western Georgia, and convinced them to sign a contract. The contract allegedly stated UNM would build a large apartment block in Batumi and when complete, the apartments would be gifted to the settlement residents for free.

The paperwork stated UNM would fulfil this responsibility step-by-step in the four years after winning this year's elections.

"The contract doesn't say anything about what resources will be used to fund the construction," said TI Georgia in its statement.

The NGO said election participants must motivate citizens to vote for a party's policies and ambitions and not by material interests.

"This activity by the United National Movement party might be aimed to offering apartments to the settlement residents in return to receive their votes," said TI Georgia.

The NGO added this act appeared to be a clear signal of "vote-buying" and urged the CEC to take appropriate action.

In Georgia it is illegal for political parties to bribe, gift or buy votes for an election.

The Georgian Election Code states: "From the moment of publication of the relevant legal act announcing elections until the publication of the final results of the elections, the following shall be prohibited: Give funds, gifts and other material possessions (irrespective of their value) to the citizens of Georgia by the election subject, candidates and their representatives personally or through other persons, sell goods to them at a preferential price, distribute or disseminate any goods free of charge (except for the agitation material as prescribed by this Law), also motivate Georgian citizens by promising to give funds, securities and render other material possessions (regardless of their value)."

Georgia's Criminal Code also prohibited vote-buying.