



Centar za demokratsku tranziciju - CDT

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PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE CENTER FOR DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION FOR THE ELECTIONS ON 22 DECEMBER 2002

GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROCESS

The presidential elections held on 22 December in Montenegro were generally conducted in a democratic atmosphere. As far as the election procedure is concerned, we believe that the presidential elections were a step forward compared to previous elections held this year. The problems that CDT monitors noted at some of the polling stations could not jeopardize the regularity of the elections – although we are still examining some of the statements about new violations.

CAMPAIGN

As in the previous elections, CDT proposed an "Agreement for a Fair Campaign." We are pleased to announce that this time again the majority of the participants accepted our document. On the basis of the foreseen principles, CDT followed the pre-election campaign. The presidential candidates who signed this agreement were obliged:

- During public presentations, to avoid statements that can be interpreted as a threat to other candidates or their supporters and to citizens of different nationalities or confessions;
- Not to influence the electoral will of voters by offering them money or gifts;
- Not to prevent journalists from performing their duties in accordance with the rules of their profession and the election rules;
- To publicize their election campaign expenditures within 10 days of Election Day;
- To respect the will of citizens expressed in the election if there are no major violations of the election process.

Filip Vujanovic, Dragan Hajduković, Aleksandar Vasilijević, Milivoje Bakić, Ilija Darmanović, Milan Šparović and Djordjije Milic signed the agreement, and this document was offered to all the presidential candidates.

The campaign was conducted in a relatively peaceful atmosphere and was much less eventful than the parliamentary elections held in October 2002. In their reports regarding the campaigns of the presidential candidates, the Municipal and Regional Coordinators reported no major violations of the Agreement.



During the campaign, some of the parties accused the ruling coalition of pressuring citizens to vote through state institutions. CDT examined some of these accusations and concluded that, on the basis of the individual examples, no general conclusions could be made.

CDT will continue to analyze these statements and inform the public of more details in its final report.

ELECTION DAY

During the election day, CDT regularly informed the public about violations of the voting procedure. On the basis of our monitors' reports that covered more than 90% of the polling stations, we can conclude that all noted irregularities refer to a insignificant number of polling stations that could not influence the elections' outcome.

In a few cases, Article 71a of the Law on Election of Councilors and Representatives was wrongly interpreted – meaning that CDT monitors were not allowed to collect information about voter turnout. Also, there were some cases in which the Polling Boards did not respect the election procedure such that board members in charge of the voter identification were announced the voters' names out loud.

Details regarding election day violations can be found on our website: www.cdtmn.org.

CDT monitors noted an increased number of persons voting by mail at some of the polling stations. At this moment, we are gathering information from our monitors and, on the basis of a detailed analysis of that information, we will inform the public.

ELECTION LEGISLATION

We believe that the Law on Election of the President of the Republic needs to be improved, made more precise and adjusted to the other election laws. Amendments made to election laws since 1992 resulted in many defects and contradictions. We appeal to the legislative organs to as soon as possible harmonize all election laws in line with international standards.

Podgorica, 23 December 2002
