

DEFENDER'S ASSESSMENT ON YEREVAN MAYORAL ELECTIONS

The RA Human Rights Defender Institution's 116 Hot Line received only 19 alarm-calls on the May 5, 2013 Yerevan Mayoral Elections. For comparison we would like to note, that during the previous Parliamentary Elections only in Yerevan the Defender's Institution received 178 alarm-calls, and during the Presidential Elections 214 alarm-calls. Taking into consideration the low number of alarm-calls compared to the previous elections the Defender's Rapid Response Group went around the city on the Election Day and met with the citizens at the precinct centers trying to get additional information on possible election violations. As a result of the 66 visits carried out by own initiative 2 complaints were received.

During the whole process of these Elections the statistics of the complaints and alarm-calls addressed to the Defender is as follows: consultation on the inaccuracies in the voters list, voting with the identification card and entering the precinct centers after the voting ends (10 calls), gatherings at precinct centers (6 alarm-calls), on distribution of election bribes (2 alarm-calls), on violence against journalist (1 alarm-call), on threatening the observer and snatching the camera (1 complaint), and on improper behavior of the observer (1 alarm-call).

Based on own alarm-calls, as well as following the actual data of violation provided by media, local and international observer organizations, political powers, and state bodies, we can draw the following conclusion on Yerevan Mayoral Elections.

The Elections were competitive. All the competing powers had free conditions for campaigns, and in precinct centers had enough representation and real chance to monitor the election and voice calculation process. The journalists and non governmental organization observers followed the whole process of elections with unprecedented activity and informed the society almost on all, even on the minor violation. All the accurate and inaccurate announcements of the observer organizations and media on essential and not essential violations, including doubtful and suspicious ones, did not exceed 600. In comparison with the previous elections, the Police more operatively and fully responded to the alarms on election violations raised by the civil society and found out and separated only 143 valid alarm-calls. The number of at least prime facie grounded alarm-calls on stuffing, election bribes, double voting and other essential elections violations is almost five dozen, meanwhile the number between the competing powers is significantly higher than this amount of the suspicions published on the election violations.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned, it can be stated that Yerevan Mayoral Elections were free, and currently there are no legal grounds for considering them to be unjustice.

Negative impact on the overall positive picture of the Election Process left illegal activity of the local men executing suspicious activity in some districts, as a result of which there were unnecessary gatherings of the citizens, suspicions of voter guiding, hindering activities of several participants of the election process and psychological pressure. Almost a dozen alarm-calls on banning of making relevant records in registration books by some precinct center heads were also alarming.

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