

Preliminary Statement
On the results of the short-term observation of the elections to Jogorku Kenesh
October 10, 2010



Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society

The Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society (Coalition) is an independent, non-partisan and neutral organization working to strengthen democracy and build civil society in the Kyrgyz Republic.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society (Coalition) conducted an independent short-term observation of the parliamentary elections scheduled to October 10, 2010. The short-term observation effort involves Coalition's leadership, one lawyer, four analysts, 60 coordinators, 25 operators and 1000 short-term observers deployed to a random sample of 500 polling stations, representative of the territory of Republic of Kyrgyzstan. Coalition's methodology allows extrapolation of the data from the sample to the whole country. Coalition implemented the first-ever statistically based observation in the Kyrgyz Republic.

The following are the preliminary findings of the Coalition based on the results of the short-term observation conducted on Election Day, October 10, 2010:

- In general the elections to the Jogorku Kenesh (parliament) of October 10, 2010, were held in a free, transparent and peaceful atmosphere.
- These elections differed from others by an unprecedented number of political parties that took part in the elections.
- Coalition notes that there were many observers from the political parties at the polling stations, which contributed to transparent and open processes on voting day.
- The Government took essential measures to provide public security at all polling stations.
- Coalition emphasizes that these elections are a step forward to conducting fair and free elections in comparison with the practice of previous elections.
- Despite the positive aspects noted above, some violations and problems of the voting processes have been found.

The observation effort is supported by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the British Embassy, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union (EU), and the Embassy of Austria.

II. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The parliamentary elections were scheduled for October 10, 2010, by the presidential decree “On appointing election of deputies to Jogorku Kenesh (Parliament) of the Kyrgyz Republic” on August 9, 2010. Also, on August 9, 2010, the Interim Government adopted the Decree #94 “On recalling Decree of the Interim Government “On introduction of amendments and changes to the Election Code of the KR” of July 1, 2010”.

On August 9, 2010, the Interim Government adopted the Decree #117 “On canceling emergency situation in Osh, Jalal-Abad, Uzgen cities, Kara Suu, Aravan rayons of Osh oblast and in Suzak, Bazar Korgon rayons of Jalalabad oblast in the Kyrgyz Republic.”

Fifty-seven political parties expressed a desire to participate in the parliamentary elections. Twenty-nine political parties submitted their candidates’ list to the Central Election Commission (CEC). CEC has registered the candidates’ lists of 29 political parties. Thus, 29 parties appeared on the ballot.

At the end of July, a number of political parties initiated “The Forum of National Trust”, which resulted in the signing of the ethical code of conduct of 2010 parliamentary elections participants. A total of 26 political parties signed “The Code of Conduct of Political Parties” on August 11, which was developed by the OSCE, the International Republican Institute (IRI), NDI and USAID.

The electoral context is complicated by the recent tragic events in the south of the country, which resulted in several hundred deaths according to the official data. The tension remains in some regions of Osh and Jalal-Abad.

Methodology of election observation

The Coalition is a politically neutral non-governmental organization created to provide civic education for the purposes of increasing voters’ legal awareness and to organize monitoring of all stages of the electoral process and referenda, including monitoring of observance of the electoral legislation by all participants of the electoral process, and analysis of the current situation both in individual regions and in the country in general.

Coalition conducted an independent short-term observation of the parliamentary elections on October 10, 2010 to provide an objective assessment of the preparation and conduct of elections and its consistency with the legislation and international commitments of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The short-term observation effort involves Coalition’s leadership, one lawyer, four analysts, 60 coordinators, 25 operators and 1000 short-term observers deployed to a random sample of 500 polling stations, representative of the territory of Republic of Kyrgyzstan. Coalition’s methodology allows extrapolation of the data from the sample to the whole country.

This preliminary statement consists of six sections: executive summary, introduction and context, opening of polling stations, voting, closing and vote count, and conclusions and recommendations.

For their mission, observers adhered to the principle of impartiality and neutrality. STOs reported only what they witnessed first hand and could confirm. The observers could also report the information communicated to them by other citizens. All of the observers signed Code of Conduct based on international standards for domestic election observers.

III. PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF ELECTION DAY SHORT-TERM OBSERVATION ON OCTOBER 10, 2010

In general the elections to the Jogorku Kenesh, held on October 10, 2010, were conducted in a free, competitive and peaceful atmosphere.

However, it is worth noting that during the observation several violations were revealed: the quality of voter lists, voting without proper documents, violation of inking procedures, busing of voters, and bribery of voters. Violations identified by the Coalition were not systemic or widespread. Nationwide, these violations could not strongly affect the overall quality of the electoral process, but when considering the situation from the local level, these violations affected the electoral process in a given region. In particular, in 39% of polling stations in Jalal-Abad region and in 33% of the polling stations in Naryn oblast, the busing of voters took place. Most of the violations occurred in the afternoon.

The Coalition notes that voters expressed strong interest and activeness during these elections. Due to this, most voters, notwithstanding the absence of registration in their place of residence, attempted to participate in elections, in spite of the Election Code of KR requirement to vote by the place of registration.

The Coalition underlines that in comparison with elections of previous years, these elections are a step forward.

Observers of the Coalition assessed the Election Day as positive in 98% of polling stations.

The Coalition notes the large number of observers from political parties in polling stations, which contributed transparency and openness of the Election Day. Observers from political parties Ata-Jurt, Respublika, SDPK, Ar-Namys and Ata-Meken were deployed to more than 80% of polling stations.

Opening

Opening of the polling stations was held without serious violations.

According to the data of the Coalition observers, 99.5% of the polling stations were opened on time. Sealing of the ballot boxes was conducted in accordance with the Election Code of the Kyrgyz Republic at 99% of polling stations.

Drawing of lots was held in accordance with the Election Code at the 91% of the polling stations. At 3% of the polling stations, election commissions did not test inking in the presence of the

observers, and at less than 1% of the polling stations there was no inking equipment. The observers had an opportunity to observe all opening procedures at the 99% of the polling stations. The Coalition observers revealed minor violations of the procedural character that are not considered to be large scaled or systematic. The Coalition observers filed acts concerning all violations.

Voting

In general the voting process was conducted with minor violations.

Cases of voting without proper identification documents were observed during the voting process (from 1 to 10 people – 25% of polling stations, from 10 to 100 people – 3% of polling stations).

The voters could not find their names on voter lists (from 1 to 10 people – 41% of polling stations, from 10 to 100 people – 22% of polling stations, and more than 100 people – 7% of polling stations). These numbers show problems with the quality of voters lists.

Busing of voters was observed at 26% of polling stations. The highest percentage of incidences of busing of voters was recorded in Jalal-Abad oblast (39%) and Naryn oblast (33%).

Bribing of voters was found at 9% of the polling stations. The highest percentage of incidences was recorded in Osh oblast (18%) and Issyk-Kul oblast (14%).

Closing and Vote Count

Twenty-three percent of polling stations were closed before 20.00 pm, and in 19% of polling stations, voters in line before 20.00 pm, were not allowed to vote. By doing so, Precinct Election Commissions (PECs) violated the right of voters to vote.

Coalition observers did not observe any delays in the vote count.

Coalition notes that in 5% of PECs, protocols on voting results were not filled in with pen.

Coalition revealed isolated instances of failure to provide or certify copies of protocol on election results to the observers.

In 10 of PECs, pens were used during the sorting and counting of ballots, what represents a violation of the vote count procedures.

In 12% of PECs, unauthorized persons were present during the vote count.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON FINDINGS OF SHORT-TERM OBSERVATION

- There is a need to reform the voter registry.
- There is a need to dedicate sufficient time and resources for higher quality training of election commissions.

- Coalition calls for a thorough investigation of serious violations for which complaints were filed -- in particular instances of bussing and bribery of voters.
- Coalition recommends introducing visible ink in the next elections due to repeated problems with the use of invisible ink.

More comprehensive recommendations will be included to the final report of the Coalition, which will be released within one month.

Coalition will observe the post-election period and may release an additional statement following the announcement of the official results on voting by the CEC.