



NGOs Statement about Position of the Ruling Coalition on Reforming Election System

On June 5, 2015 the ruling coalition Georgian Dream introduced its decision to public and reported that forthcoming parliamentary elections in 2016 will be held under the applicable mixed proportional-majoritarian system with slight amendments. In particular, the Coalition plans to increase the minimum threshold of majoritarians to 50 percent and proposes to redraw the borders of majoritarian districts for observance of equality of votes as per Constitutional Court decision. As for further reform of the election system, they plan to annul majoritarian system for the 2020 Parliamentary elections and to conduct it under proportional system. Limited period was named as an argument for postponement of the amendment by the government.

We consider that proposed amendments respond to the problems of electoral system only partially and fail to ensure formation of competitive and equal election environment in Georgia. Firstly, it would be difficult to decrease disproportionality between majoritarian districts and many districts will to be united/split mechanically which may lead to additional problems in terms of equal territorial representation. Further, as the 2014 local self-government elections have illustrated, introduction of only 50% threshold is insufficient for improvement of electoral process and more complex resolution of the issue is required.

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Furthermore, we believe that government's argumentation that short time is remaining before forthcoming elections and a substantial reform of the electoral system is not desirable, is not convincing. The next parliamentary elections will be held in a year and half, accordingly conduct of the 2016 elections under proportional system and adoption of the constitutional amendments is possible even in the remaining period, if a political will exists.

We hope that for improvement of the electoral system and conduct of free and fair elections government should take into account common vision of leading NGOs and political specter about electoral system and conduct the 2016 Parliamentary elections under proportional system. In modern history of Georgia it was the first wide scale consensus between politicians and civil society and ignorance of the process from the government is impermissible.