



# The Resolution of the Central Election Commission Restricting Photo-video Recording needs to be Annulled

On September 24, 2012 the Central Election Commission adopted resolution determining the rule of photo-video recording at the polling stations on the election day. The resolution stipulates following restrictions on the polling station:

- If an individual authorized to be in the polling station is moving with a camera or leaves the building, he/she is deprived of the opportunity to re-enter the polling station and implement photo-video recording;
- Prior to opening the polling station, from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. and in the moment of calculation of votes, photo-video recording should be carried out from the special area allocated by the head of the commission;
- Recording should be carried out from three meters distance from any individual or object;
- Representative of press and other media outlet is entitled to carry out photo-video recording for no more than 10 minutes during the whole polling period. Those willing to carry out recording for a longer period should do it from the specially allocated area.

Since the resolution significantly restricts and hinders obtaining of information on the election process during Election Day, governmental organizations and media representatives have been asking for its annulment from the day of its adoption. Nevertheless, the CEC failed to make relevant decision so far. CEC reports that the

issue of introducing amendment to the resolution is being discussed.

On October 15, 2013 representatives of the Media Advocacy Coalition and the Coalition for Freedom of Choice met with CEC chairman and submitted alternative recommendations worked out by NGOs for regulation of photo-video recording at polling stations on the election day. Recommendations envisage changes of the resolution that will enable media representatives to carry out interesting events of the Election Day without restriction and to ensure uninterrupted conduct of the election process as well. While working on alternative recommendations, NGOs have considered all the obstacles faced by media representatives while airing last year parliamentary elections that need to be eliminated for comprehensive broadcasting of election process. In addition, the necessity of uninterrupted operation of election administration was also taken into account.

We once again call on the Central Election Commission to annul or amend the resolution according to our recommendations. Election Code envisages rights and obligations of individuals authorized to be in the polling station and by imposing additional restrictions media will be prevented from implementing its decisive function.