

**REPORT BY THE  
SOCIALIST PARTY OF  
ALBANIA**

**ON 28 JUNE 2009  
GENERAL ELECTIONS**

*Tirana, 20 July 2009*

## Table of Contents

<b>1. THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND SAFETY BEFORE POLLING DAY</b> .....	5
1.1. Conflicting political environment.....	5
1.2. Execution of Opposition MP Fatmir Xhindi.....	5
1.3. Execution of Christian Democratic Party Chairman in Shkodra .....	6
1.4. Violence against Opposition’s symbols and campaign offices.....	7
1.5. Making use of criminal and extremist elements by the Democratic Party. ...	8
<b>2. GOVERNMENTAL CONDUCT AND USE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION</b>	8
<b>3. ELECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE</b> .....	10
3.1. Serious shortcomings in providing citizens with identify cards and their selective distribution .....	10
3.2. Voter lists .....	11
3.3. Location of the CEAZ, VCCs and BCCs .....	12
<b>4. MEDIA</b> .....	13
<b>5. VOTING PROCESS</b> .....	14
5.1. Opening of the voting centres and management of the election process ...	14
5.2. Presence of the propaganda materials and engaging in propaganda on polling day.....	16
5.3. Voter list and showing up of voters in voting centres .....	16
5.4. Voting, ID cards and opportunity to cast the vote .....	17
5.5. Voter list, duplications in the lists and failure to clean them .....	18
5.6. Family voting	
5.7. Election commission members, Opposition observers and pressure against them prior to, during and after vote .....	20
5.8. Pressure on voters by representatives of Communes and Municipalities, running candidates and representatives of businesses .....	20
5.9. Voting in detention facilities and prisons.....	21
5.10. State Police during the elections.....	23
5.11. Immigrants and voting in their name.....	24
<b>6. VOTE COUNT</b> .....	25
6.1. Conditions and infrastructure of areas designated for counting votes.....	25
6.2. Selection of counting teams and their training .....	26
6.3. Problems surrounding vote count .....	26
6.4. Actions undertaken with with CEAZ by CEC representatives .....	27
<b>7. APPEALS AND THE CEC ROLE</b> .....	27
<b>8. ANNEXES</b> .....	29
8.1. ANNEXI I .....	29
8.2. ANNEX II .....	39

8.3.	ANNEX III.....	41
8.4.	ANNEX IV.....	45
8.5.	ANNEX V.....	47

## INTRODUCTION

The said Report sums up the monitoring exercise performed by the Socialist Party structures, as well as the domestic media and civil society actors and international organisations, which did observe the election process in Albania. The Report captures the phenomena observed prior and during the election process in Albania. Such phenomena broke the Albanian citizens' will, with the elections falling short of meeting international standards a NATO member country and a country aspiring to its membership of the European Union are required to comply with.

The Report contains several chapters, with each of them addressing the issues that arose prior to, during and after 28 June 2009. Chapter One is focused on the period running up to the Election Day, and the tensions surrounding the election campaign. Governmental conduct during the election campaign, misuse of administrative resources and pressure on public-sector workers get a mention in Chapter Two. Chapter Three looks at the pronounced lack of election infrastructure, which impacted directly on breaking the will of the people. Over 250 thousand voters, who were not able to receive their ID cards, were disenfranchised. Voter lists contained inaccuracies, and were displayed elsewhere, with numerous voters being prevented from casting their votes through failure to locate their names in the voter lists.

Media coverage of the election campaign cuts across Chapter Four. Chapter Five reveals a snapshot of the polling day. Chapters Six and Seven accommodate an analysis of the issues concerning vote count, appeals and the utterly political approach in favour of the DP adopted by the CEC.

The five Annexes attached to the Report deal in more details with the serious violations concerning: i. Use of prison inmates during the election campaign and on the polling day; ii. Presence of election propaganda materials in voting centres; iii. Pressure on public-sector workers during the election process; iv. Pressure on Socialist Party election commission members; v. Politically motivated dismissals after 28 June 2009 on grounds of involvement in the election process.

## **1. THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND SAFETY BEFORE POLLING DAY**

### **1.1. Conflicting political environment**

Through conflicting rhetoric and arbitrary conduct, the majority political leadership, and particularly, Prime Minister Berisha and Speaker of Parliament Topalli have constantly strained the Majority-Opposition ties, and contributed to a heightened political tension, with the latter reigning during the pre-election period and culminating on polling day. The harsh political language Prime Minister Berisha and Speaker of Parliament Topalli employed throughout the pre-election period contributed to the political life being in the grip of a series of crises.

In all the press conferences and political rallies, the Majority political leadership used to make heaps of accusations against the Opposition in general, and particularly, against the SP political leadership, making use of a hard language charged with culminating regarding their challengers' private life.

The least encouraging and strained political environment prevailing during the period running up to election campaign signalled the further exacerbation of the election process, and indeed, instances of violence, which were not a rare occurrence during the election campaign. The new electoral system, which helps avoid confrontations among the different electoral subjects and candidates, instances of violence targeted the SP campaign offices or campaign symbols in many areas across the country (see Chapter 1.4). As the media would also report, elements, which were on a regular basis inspired by Democratic Party structures, were largely to be blamed for such a situation.

### **1.2. Execution of Opposition MP Fatmir Xhindi**

Assassination of the Opposition MP from the Fier Region, Mr. Fatmir Xhindi, on 2 May 2009, critically affected the public's understanding of the level of peace and order in the country. International media extensively enough underscored the fact that the killing of Socialist Party MP Fatmir Xhindi, and failure to bring murders to justice would impair the credibility of Albania, which had newly joined the NATO, particularly under the conditions where the country was moving towards holding an election process.

For the purpose of contributing to a calm political situation in the country, the Socialist Party refrained from making any political accusations, as has frequently been the case in the past with Mr. Berisha. Instead, it requested the authorities to investigate the case at an accelerated pace and bring the perpetrators to justice. Even though more than two months have gone by since the execution of the Socialist Party MP Fatmir Xhindi, no one has yet been apprehended on charge for this serious crime. No piece of information, which would give the hint that the competent bodies are in some way solving the crime, has been disclosed yet.

The Socialist Party considers that, as already stated by family members of MP Fatmir Xhindi, there is an utterly political background to the said assassination, which was committed on account of the office the Opposition MP was holding.

The Socialist Party considers that this act indirectly served as direct pressure brought to bear upon the Opposition and the public overall, so as to intimidate them, and do so in the area of Fier, in particular. The other acts politically inspired by the DP, which were registered in the Fier area on the polling day, and specifically, after the polling day, raise more doubts that the said assassination was for political purpose made use so as to gain electoral advantages through intimidation of voters, and the Socialist Party supporters and the Opposition, in general.

### **1.3. Execution of Christian Democratic Party Chairman in Shkodra**

The terrorist act against the Christian Democratic Party official's life in Shkodra, on 18 June 2009, was the most serious criminal act with a direct electoral impact as to the way and timing of its execution. And not only because of the fact that the assassination attempt involved an explosive device operated by a remote controller, but also because the crime was only perpetrated two days following the accusations made by Speaker of Parliament Jozefina Topalli, precisely, against the Christian Democratic Party officials from the constituency where the execution was carried out, portraying them as mafia-type individuals.

The situation grew worse following the statement by the State Police spokesmen, which came at a lightning speed several hours following the assassination, that it was a criminally motivated murder, which was not related to Mrs. Topalli's

statements. The speed with which the State Police jumped to conclusions – only a few hours following the execution, with no investigation being yet initiated as provided for by the law – immediately led to understanding that the motives behind the assassination were strongly political. Additional argument to support this includes the fact that the victim not only had clear records, but he was also deeply engaged in the election campaign in favour of the Christian Democratic Party, which was working on winning the rightist electorate's votes in this constituency.

Accusations for having instigated crime were made against Mrs. Topalli by numerous political parties across the right spectre, which considered her political activity in that area as closely connected with criminal elements enjoying support by given government structures. Strange enough, no one has yet been apprehended or charged with this crime, even though the Police declared that it was familiar with the victim's criminal activities. As election outcomes in Shkodra signified, this event became the epitome of the destruction of each and every democratic election standard, and in many voting centres the Opposition has not got a single vote, with this proving the falseness of voting.

#### **1.4. Violence against Opposition's symbols and campaign offices**

In the course of the election campaign, the Socialist Party and the media would constantly excoriate the different cases involving damage of the campaign offices, violation of the Opposition representatives or/and damage of the election promotion materials. Numerous concrete cases were reported at Shijak (setting the SP campaign office on fire), Tirana (damaging the SP campaign offices and posters), Korça (wounding a SP activist who was putting up SP slogans, and damaging the campaign office in the village of Vashtmi for three successive times), Elbasan (damaging of the SP promotion materials), Rrëshen (DP activists attempting to jeopardise the SP rally), Gramsh (DP activists attempting to forcefully remove a poster of the SP leader), Lezha (burning the poster of the SP leader), and many others of a similar nature.

Whereas no case involving provocation by the SP activists against the DP electoral subjects or their political representatives have been reported by the media or to the observation missions.

## **1.5. Making use of criminal and extremist elements by the Democratic Party**

The Socialist Party considers, and this has been backed up in different reports by the media, that there has been a revival of the DP activists' groups, notorious for being extremist in nature, which have also been joined by individuals with criminal records, or worse still, by declared wanted individuals in the Tirana, Fier, Elbasan, and Korça Regions, who are made use of in order to heighten tension, and intimidate the Opposition representatives and voters in the days prior to and during polling day.

Throughout the election campaign, hundreds of cases involving use of cars with foreign plates or without plates, which were engaged in the Democratic Party's election campaign, demonstrating in the streets and squares of Albania a clear spirit of insecurity in front of the Police that had chosen the path of surrender, were identified.

The Socialist Party has succeeded in accessing data, which are included in this Report. These data highlight the fact that convicts sentenced on different criminal charges managed to obtain a temporary leave from prison, which is an apparently blunt contravention of law, so as to ensure contacts with criminal and aggressive elements from different areas across the country, and basically, from the region where the Minister of Justice and Minister of Transportation (former Minister of the Interior) were running.

## **2. GOVERNMENTAL CONDUCT AND USE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Legally speaking, the electoral campaign kicked off on 28 May 2009. Indeed, as far as the Government was concerned, the electoral campaign got going much earlier, while funds and public means were committed, and making the entire public administration available to it.

The campaign materialised in the television ads commissioned by the Government in different media, which started off as early as the autumn 2008, or the DP-led rally when Albania joined the NATO, might be considered as strong evidence. Building on direct data made public in the media with regard to the latter event, the entire public administration and the nine-year school students were forced to confirm their attendance by signing up. The one-year long Government-sponsored

television ads clearly point to the parties' inequality, and use of public funds for campaign purposes. The bill only footed by the Government for this advertisement of itself is estimated to amount to several million Euros. These phenomena have been constantly published and commented on by independent media, as well.

Children' and pupils' engagement in the pre-election and election campaign is known for a fact now. All the cities and towns across the country would feature similar. Children were a permanent presence in rallies to be addressed by Prime Minister Berisha and Speaker of Parliament Topalli. The shutdown of schools and other education institutions in cases, where students and public-sector workers were forced to attend Democratic Party high-ranking representatives' rallies, was an ever present phenomenon in the course of the entire election campaign.

On several occasions, the President of the Republic Bamir Topi, and other civil society actors called for avoiding such phenomenon. By way of a letter addressed to the Minister of Education Fatos Beja, Ombudsman Ermir Dobjani asked him to undertake preventive and punitive measures against use of children in the election campaign. However, the Minister of Education Beja replied that children's participation in the election campaign contributes to their mental health and background.

Unlike the parliamentary elections on 3 July 2005, where, in line with the commitments undertaken under the Code of Conduct proposed by the President of the Republic at that time, Mr. Alfred Moisiu, public assets were forbidden to be used in the election campaign, cases involving misuse of public assets, including vehicles, fuel, offices, telephone services, promotion materials, and airtime, were registered throughout this year's election period. The said misuse also affected segment of the public administration, or entities, such as the Albanian Power Corporation (KESH) or Electricity Distribution Company of Albania (OSSH), which are going through a transition period in the aftermath of the privatisation process.

Prime Minister Berisha intensified the use of public assets in the election campaign by enrolling the majority of the deputy ministers and directors of other public entities in the candidate list, and appointing new deputy ministers who are also enrolled in the candidate list for purposes of using public assets (the case of the Director General of KESH, appointing the two Deputy Ministers of Justice, and filing the candidacy of the Deputy Ministers of European Integration, Foreign Affairs, the Interior, Education, Economy, Transportation, Public Works, Finances, Environment, Labour and Social Affairs, Culture and Tourism).

A good number of the candidates running for the Democratic Party, who are in charge of local government units (Mayor of Klos, Mayor of Borough 10 in Tirana), refused to resign following their enrolment in the DP candidate list, thus falling afoul of the Electoral Code requirements. The same may also be said for the senior leadership of the public administration acting under the disguise of the Civil Service Legislation (cases involve Director for Foreign Aid and Coordination of Strategies in the Council of Ministers, Director General for the Macro Economic Policies in the Ministry of Finances, and Secretary General in the Ministry of Health). It is in the same spirit that, in the Central Election Commission, the DP chose to be represented by political representatives acting also under the disguise of Civil Service (the case of the Director for Anti-corruption in the Council of Ministers).

On the other hand, throughout the election campaign the evident pressure on the public administration targeted several aspects:

- gathering votes by getting all public-sector workers to declare their votes in advance;
- ensuring their obligatory participation in Democratic Party public events;
- issuing reprimands to dismissal, if they attend Opposition's political activities, or cast their ballots in favour of the Opposition, counting also on the phenomenon of photographing their ballot papers by a mobile.

Evidence surrounding the above-mentioned phenomena is already in place, with the OSBE/ODHIR Reports also highlighting them.

### **3. ELECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **3.1. Serious shortcomings in providing citizens with identity cards and their selective distribution**

Under the Electoral Code, the identity cards and passports to travel abroad are the two major and only identity documents available to voters in the election process.

In a repeated and concrete way, the Socialist Party has voiced its deep concern over the whole process, asking transparency from the relevant bodies, which has been inexistent, and in time, shouted a warning about its failure.

Over 250 thousand voters were left without a legal document required for them to exercise their constitutional voting right. This number of voters has a determining

role to play in the outcomes of the vote. In the view of the Socialist Party, failure to provide a number of nationals with an ID card is an insurmountable obstacle for the 28 June 2009 elections to be considered free and fair.

The Socialist Party considers that this situation was the outcome of the coexistence of the Government's incapacity to prepare, run and carry the process to provide citizens with identity cards, with its fancy to make of it a selective process, so as to make use of them as a vehicle to distort the election outcome. Overall, the process featured a pronounced lack of transparency. Only 1 week prior to the holding of elections, a comprehensive list of ID card applicants and the number of the ID cards produced were made available to the public at large, even though under the law such a thing should have been made possible months before that day.

### **3.2. Voter lists**

The Ministry of the Interior openly violated the legal deadline set forth in Article 54 of Law "For the preparation and publication of the final voter list." Lists were made public at least 5 days beyond the final legal deadline. Whereas the Opposition was provided with an electronic copy of the voter list only on 3 June 2009.

Preliminary review conducted by the Socialist Party revealed that:

1. At least 2,799 persons aged between 110 and 150 years appeared on the voter lists.
2. 515 nationals, who have given up Albanian nationality on the basis of a presidential decree, appeared on the voter lists.
3. Lists provided overlapping information for 5,186 nationals, who appeared in lists in more than one voting centre.
4. Personal data for 97 nationals were wrongly written.
5. In many cases, voters' names were moved from one voting centre to another, with the result being the voters' demotivation.
6. The issue surrounding voters carrying codes "999" and "888" remains unaddressed, and consequently, unresolved.

Until 8 June 2009, 101 out of the 383 local government units across the Republic of Albania had not yet posted the voter lists, as required by law. The media would constantly report different cases where nationals were prevented from accessing

these lists at the local government units under the Democratic Party representatives.

Likewise, verification of voter lists, and particularly, on polling day, revealed that many voters did not appear in the lists available to many voting centres, because their names appeared in lists available to other voting centres, often with the household members being split in different voting centres. This process brought about a great confusion on polling day, and many voters were not able to locate their names in their voting centres, and thus, were prevented from exercising their voting rights.

Additionally, numerous data show that, in a number of constituencies in the Shkodra Region and in the Tirana suburbs, in local government units under the DP, the published lists differed from the lists used in the voting centres, allowing other people, who are not voters in those constituencies, to cast their votes. This illegal methodology is thought to have been highly efficient for vote-rigging in these voting centres, with this being a matter that deserves to be looked into. Unfortunately, the only one way to learn the truth would entail opening of the ballot boxes carrying the electoral materials, and verification of the voter lists found inside them. Nevertheless, the CEC has never complied with the constant requests submitted by the SP to the effect of opening the ballot boxes from these problematic voting centres.

### **3.3. Location of the CEAZs, VCCs and BCCs**

In accordance with the Electoral Code requirements, the Socialist Party has constantly expressed its concern over the location of the VCCs (Voting Centre Commissions), BCCs (Ballot Counting Centres), which, in a number of cases, was established in breach of the law (Articles 93 and 94 of the Electoral Code). Their establishment in an arbitrary manner and in contravention with the law in private buildings, jeopardised seriously the election process.

The BCC in the Bushat Commune, the Shkodra constituency, for which the Electoral College handed down a decision, and the majority in the CEC fell short of observing that decision, while again re-establishing the BCC in a privately owned structure in violation of the law and the determining court order by the Electoral College, remains a flagrant case.

The most serious violation, which had an extraordinary impact throughout the polling day, was noticed prior to elections. It concerns precisely accommodation many voting centres in private structures owned by DP activists. This phenomenon culminated with the CEAZ no. 56, where over 10 per cent of the voting Centres were housed in private structures owned by DP activists in a traditionally problematic area election-wise, where the vote outcome has created a non-typical difference with regard to the trend of outcomes across the region, thus directly impacting the overall outcomes. These structures, which served as voting centres on polling day, were depicted by the local government under the DP, and were ratified by the CEC, irrespective of the constant protests and objections by the Opposition. Reporting from all sources reveal that voting in these voting centres was a farce, and the pressure put on voters drove many Opposition voters away from these voting centres, with them failing to participate in the elections. And this directly impacted the election outcome in the relevant constituencies.

#### **4. MEDIA**

Media coverage of the election campaign took place under unequal conditions, mostly dominated by the Government. Such a fact is also heightened by the ODIHR Reports, that “all the television channels under monitoring devoted to the DP a large part of the airtime allotted to the political subjects...,” and that “the Ministries and government entities were made use of to produce a number of informative television ads, “which were used for the election campaign in favour of the DP.

Use of public money to buy airtime and broadcast ads related to the election campaign many months prior to the start of the election campaign, was one of the serious violations, as well as a new practice for the Albanian fragile democracy. Irrespective of the numerous requests coming from many political or non-political factors to stop the campaign-related ads outside the election period, as sanctioned by law, the National Council of Radio and Television (the body that supervises the media, and is fully controlled by the DP) did not order their interruption, or review of the message they sent across. The total amount of money the Government spent on these ads has never been made public, but independent sources have estimated it to be to the tune of several million Euros, with all of them being public money.

## 5. VOTING PROCESS

### 5.1. Opening of the voting centres and management of the election process

Through lack of logistics, the polling booth in many voting centres was arranged in a way that it did not ensure secrecy of the vote. Indeed, in many voting centres control of votes was highlighted in a number of ways:

- a. Given that the ballot paper was very long, and there was a space in between two major political subjects (the DP and the SP) (respectively, entry 10 the DP and entry 33 the SP), the position of the voter's elbow in the polling booth could be easily identified and found out who they were voting for. If voter's elbow was inside the secret room, it was evident that the voter had voted for entry 10, i.e. for the DP. If the elbow poked out of the polling booth, it was obvious that they had voted for entry 33, i.e. for the SP. Numerous voters in the Kukës, Puka, Korça, Shkodra and Elbasan Regions were under pressure from this phenomenon, and their vote was read by the election commission members.
- b. Protruding of the ballot paper in the front part of the polling booth. In many voting centres in the Tirana and Durrës Regions, control of vote was achieved thanks to the setting up of the polling booth in such a way that, when they voted for the subject the SP, the ballot paper perked over the table in the polling booth. Whereas if they voted for the DP, the ballot paper stayed within the edges of the table.
- c. Disclosing the vote to the DP-affiliated election commission member, who stayed next to the polling booth.
- d. Many ballot papers carried voter's name or signature, thus rendering it invalid.
- e. Filling out the ballot paper prior to entering the polling booth, or its display following its filling out, and then, folding.
- f. A widespread phenomenon was the tactics employed by the election commission members to render ballot papers invalid, where voters were known to be sympathetic to the SP by resorting to the following ways: refraining from putting the stamp, throwing ink on the ballot paper, and use of

a pen to draw lines and signs, which rendered the ballot papers invalid. Similar phenomena are evidently present in the Berat and Gjirokastra Regions, and in many other constituencies. In the voting centre in Pacom, Përmet, the DP-affiliated election commission members made efforts to render ballot papers invalid, scrawling various signs on them. The Berat Region features the largest number of the invalid ballot papers (2,900).

The election process also revealed problems concerning the timely distribution of the material base. The election commissions in many voting centres in the Tirana, Berat, Vlora and Dibra Regions, did not receive the ink pads. Whereas there were no tables and chairs in many voting centres housed in kindergartens, crèches and medical centres. A number of voting centres in the Vlora Region reported problems surrounding stamps for the voting centres, given that the number of stamp did not match with that for the voting centre, prepared by the CEC.

On 27 June 2009, in the Shkodra Region, in the Voting Centre no. 0422 in the village of Vriza, Qerret Commune, Puka District, Democratic Party exponents set the ballot box and electoral materials on fire. The Socialist Party reported these illegal acts, which deny to the Albanian nations from this constituency their voting rights. This gruesome event decreased voters' confidence in the election process, thus creating the mindset among voters that the DP will be the winner at all costs.

Problems surrounded also the transfer of the voting centres slightly prior to the beginning of the voting process, which resulted in voters' confusion and refraining from participating in voting, or in the partial management of the electoral materials. For instance, in the Shkodra Region, in the Voting Centre no. 0182 in Vau i Dejës, the election process revealed evident shortcomings and confusion, because, two days prior to polling day, and the Democratic Party representative had moved the voting centre to another facility. In the Korça Region, the CEAZ no. 28, the Voting Centre no. 3653, the election commission chairperson, sponsored by the Democratic Party, in violation of the law, kept both stamps for the election commission all the night long prior to the beginning of the voting process: that carried by the head of the election commission and that carried by the secretary of the election commission, who was sponsored by the Socialist Party. In the Vlora Region, in the CEAZ no. 61, the VCC no. 4499 reported the stamp carried by the VCC secretary as lost.

In certain cases, composition of the election commission members fell afoul of the law. The most flagrant case was registered in the Berat Region, in the VCC no. 3486, Guri i Bardhë, Ura Vajgurore, where the secretary for the VCC, Mrs. Valbona

Rumniçi, representing the DP, is the spouse of the candidate running in the Berat Region, Thima Rumniçi.

## **5.2. Presence of the propaganda materials and engaging in propaganda on polling day**

Under Article 101, point b, in the Electoral Code, the VCC removes the propaganda materials in a range of 150 m. However, as was confirmed on polling day, this provision was seriously infringed in many voting centres. On polling day, propaganda materials were noticed in/and in the neighbourhood of voting centres, with this propaganda being intended to be carried out by way of different means, banners and Democratic Party tea-shirts in front of the voting centres. This was most evident in those voting centres, which were housed in private facilities, and owned by DP activists. Likewise, cars with foreign plates, playing DP election campaign song, started to move in the neighbourhood as of the moment when voting started, and this was the case throughout the voting process in many voting centres in Tirana, Elbasan, Durrës and Shkodra.

## **5.3. Voter list and showing up of voters in voting centres**

In certain cases, the list published in the CEC home page, and those placed in a voting centre were not the same thing. This phenomenon was more widespread in the Tirana Region (see explanations given in Section 3.2). In a number of communes, including the Durrës Region, the Thumana Commune, and Kruja, the voter lists carried inaccuracies, as no space to enter the number of passport or the number of the ID card was foreseen in them. These same lists, compiled by the leadership of the local government units under the Democratic Party, did not show an area for voter's signature, thus seriously infringing Article 105, point c, in the Electoral Code.

Throughout the polling day, the voting process was frozen in certain constituencies because the ballot boxes were damaged, the voter lists were not made available, or there was no electricity. Hence, in the village of Qinam, in the Voting Centre no. 4059, the ballot box was damaged. As a consequence, the election process was blocked. A damaged ballot box was also noticed in the town of Pogradec, in the Voting Centre no. 3888. In the Tirana Region, in the CEAZ no. 60, voter lists were not distributed to 13 voting centres. In the Moglica Commune

and in Kurvelesh, the election process was jeopardised through lack of electricity in the voting centres.

In the Voting Centres no. 0045, Niksh, and no. 0041, Shelca, Kelmend Commune, Malësia e Madhe, Commune chairperson representing the DP entered the names of around 70 persons into the voter lists in handwriting and out of the officially prescribed format, claiming that they were forgotten in the lists, but, in reality, they were Democratic Party activists. As well as being in contravention with the law, such act is legally punishable, and fraught with consequences for the voters' integrity.

#### **5.4. Voting, ID cards and opportunity to cast the vote**

Under Article 99 in the Electoral Code, the CEC provides the CEAZ with the required number of ballot papers. As was seen on polling day, this legal request was violated in many CEAZs. So, for instance, in the Voting Centre no. 4401, Mifol, Novosela Comuna, they reported 100 ballot papers less. In Postriba, in the Voting Centre no. 0079, Domen, instead of ballot papers they received blank sheets of paper.

One of the irregularities found during closing of voting included also the lack of match between voters' number, who had cast their ballot papers, and the ballot papers. In the Shkodra Region, in the Voting Centre no. 0342 (village of Juban, the Guri i Zi Commune), the ballot box carried 26 more ballot papers than the number of people who had voted.

Irrespective of the promises for ID cards to be provided, many individuals could not cast their votes through lack of an ID card. In Patos, the Fier Region, 150 voters showed up without ID cards, and they were not able to cast their ballot papers. In a number of communes in Dibra, many voters were not able to vote, because they had not received an ID card through financial reasons, or procrastination on the part of the local government personnel.

Use of ID cards gave rise to problems, too. There were voters without an ID card, or with a passport that had expired. There were other cases where people with an ID card were not able to cast their votes, because their ID cards carried orthographic mistakes. The most flagrante situation concerned those voters who were not able to vote, given that other persons had previously voted in their name. Hence, in Tirana, in the CEAZ no. 53, the Voting Centre no. 1966, located at the

*Sami Frashëri* School, voter Eriola Dervishi were denied her voting rights because somebody else, holder of an ID cards featuring all the data pertaining to Eriola Dervishi, including her personal number, except for the number of the electronic ID card, which was the only different element, had voted in her name.

In the CEAZ no. 51, the Voting Centre no. 1885/1, citizen Ramazan Meleq Zerdelia lodged a complaint that he had been denied his voting rights, given that another person had been allowed to vote in his name. The same applies also to the situation surrounding the Albanian immigrants, who have not been present in Albania on polling day. Hence, it turns out that Orjon Ndue Simoni, a young immigrant in Greece, did cast his vote even though he was not in Albania on polling day. When he voted, his father, Ndue Simoni, found out that a signature and the ID card number were entered against his son's name. Orjon has not yet applied for an electronic ID card.

The DP election commission members entered the names of different persons to vote in the name of others, numbers of passports or ID cards, which they had collected from their employees. This information was obtained on the insistence of the public administration employees, and particularly, on the basis of the data collected by the Ministry of the Interior.

Ill-use of ID cards on polling day so as to manipulate the election outcome was hinted by information provided by investigative media (*Vizion Plus*), with different persons succeeding in obtaining up to four ID cards in different areas across Albania. The Socialist Party has filed criminal charged not only against this case, but also against a local Democratic Party secretary , who, according to reporting in the media, promised to different nationals to provide them with ID cards free of charge, provided that they voted in favour of the Democratic Party.

## **5.5. Voter list, duplications in the lists and failure to clean them**

The Civil Status Register highlighted numerous problems, which arose on polling day. Orthographic mistakes in the Register led to mistakes in the ID cards; allowed transfer of names from one centre to the other; transfer of voters to different cities and towns, where they have not lived and where they had never registered with the Registrar's Office.

Final voter lists carried much duplication of names of people not only from different Regions, but also of people from within the same Region. In Puka, over 400 voters with their names appearing in more than one list, were identified; indeed, in 3-4 places. In more concrete terms: in the Blerim Commune 179 persons, in the Fierza Commune 70 persons, in Qafë Mali 31 persons, in the Fushë-Arrëza Municipality 7 persons, in Iballa 30 persons, and in Kukës there were 129 persons whose names appeared twice. Voter lists and voters' names were moved from one list to the other and from one centre to the other, with discrepancies revealing between the published lists and the lists made available to the VCC.

A most widespread phenomenon, particularly in the urban areas, concerned the splitting of family members into different voting centres within the same ZAZ or outside of it; indeed, in some ZAZ very far from the place of residence. Hence, splitting of family members in different voting centres was noted in the voting centres in the Kukës Municipality, but this was not a problem for the communes in Kukës. In the villages in Gjirokastra, names were transferred beyond measure. For instance, voters from the village of Bulo were transferred to the village of Nepravishta.

A disturbing issued included the wrong orientation of voters with regard to the voting centre. DP exponents gave the wrong orientation to senior voters, or voters whose names were not to be found with the voting centre where they had voted before, or, even though their names appeared on the lists there, they provided those voters with false information that, allegedly, their names were not on the lists. An issue of concern included the cases where female voters had married, and the documents reflected their maiden names. If recognised for their political beliefs in favour of the SP, they would not be allowed to vote.

Many leftist voters did not find their names on the lists, even though their names had appeared on the preliminary lists. So, in the Constituency no. 19, around 450-500 persons were not able to vote because their names were not to be found either in the voting centre where they had voted in previous elections, or in the other voting centres in that ZAZ. In many communes in Patos, large transfers from one village to the other were identified, and many people found it difficult to exercise their right to vote. As compared to entries in computer, around 500 voters had been removed from the list for a voting centre to another list for several voting centres in the Shkodra Region (nos. 243, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, and 257).

Through lack of verification of final voter list by the local government representatives, they agreed to the final lists provided by the Directorate General for Civil Status, the Ministry of the Interior, which differed from the previous lists. So, in the Poshnje Commune, Berat, many seniors were not able to vote given that their names did not appear on the final voter list, whereas they had already located and had their numbers from the previous lists.

## **5.6. Family voting**

As in the past, family voting continued to be a matter of concern in many rural areas. Irrespective of the intervention effectuated by the SP election commission members, this issue was not possible to be avoided, as it was the “man of the household” who decided for which to vote. In the voting centre in Berisha e Vogël, Iballa Commune, the counting teams found 4 ballots papers folded together, which shows that one person has voted for 4 of his family members.

Family voting was due both to voters’ choices, and to their decisions, pressures and the democratic election commission members’ decisions when they were in larger numbers. There were cases, as in the Shala Commune, in the Voting Centre no. 0116, where Democratic Party election commission members insisted on people voting in group, namely one person for the whole family. The same situation was reported also in Kukës, in the ZAZ no. 34, and in the village of Bele, in the Zapot Commune. In the ZAZ no. 31, Kolonja, the Korça Region, in the Voting Centre no. 4058 Qafzez, voting was frozen, because a number of voters put pressure on people to exercise family voting. Until noon of 28 June 2009, out of 40 voters 20 voted in the company of other people. The phenomenon of family voting was more widespread in the Durrës Region, the Thumana, Borizana, and Dukagjin Communes, and it was applied on a large scale in the Shkodra, Kukës and Dibra Regions.

## **5.7. Election commission members, Opposition observers and pressure against them prior to, during and after vote**

In a number of Regions, the Socialist Party election commission members were faced with different pressures coming from Democratic Party members and activists. There were cases where campaign office members were hit, pressures were placed by the running candidates on the election commission members, indeed, violence was also perpetrated against them (*Please see Annex 3*).

In the Voting Centre no. 0652, Kukës, there has been tension among the election commission members sponsored by different political forces. Following open conflict among election commission members, the CEAZ, with a majority of votes, took the decisions that the SP election commission members should be removed through use of police force. The police forcefully sent the chairman and the secretary, representing the SP, out of the voting centre. The whole staff of the DP and a large number of police force were present in this voting centre.

In Gjirokastra, in the Voting Centre no. 4358, Rexhin, the Kurvelesh Commune, the secretary of the VCC, representing the SP, was hit by a member of the VCC, representing the Republican Party. In the Voting Centre no. 2978, in Remas, a DP election commission member cast 4 ballot papers. This act led to a confrontation among the election commission members, and froze voting for several hours.

Even though, under law, the running candidates are not allowed to hang around in the voting centre, in the Voting Centre no. 3325, Velabisht, the candidate running for the DP Miranda Haxhia brought pressure to bear upon the election commission chairman representing the SP, which led to the interruption of the voting process for around one hour.

In the suburbs of cities and towns, and in the communes, the running candidates and public-sector workers attempted to “buy over” the election commission members representing the SP. So, in a number of voting centres, including those in Jorgucat, Dervican, Frashtan, Kakavia, Lunxheria, and Pogon, Mr. Spiro Ksera, Prefect and a running candidate, was joined by representatives of the DP in the Region, the Director for Tax Directorate, the KESH, and a part of the tax administration in an effort to intimidate the election commission members representing the SP.

### **5.8. Pressure on voters by representatives of Communes and Municipalities, running candidates and representatives of businesses**

In the Kukës, Shkodra and Korça Regions, tension loomed large in the air on polling day. In voting centres in communes, the leadership of local government units, and local education and medical institutions in Kukës put pressure on individuals receiving financial assistance, the municipal administration and the institutions subordinate to the Municipality, teachers and medical staff in the jurisdiction of the Municipality and in the Region, threatening them with dismissal

if the DP did not win in the Kukës Region. The most flagrant case was identified in the Topojan Commune, which distributed the financial assistance the previous Saturday, whereas in the Kalis Commune, they did not distribute the financial assistance, in a form of pressure, pending the DP victory.

In a number of voting centres in municipalities and communes: Elbasan, Vlora, Tirana and Korça, Democratic Party representatives visited in a demonstrative manner the voting centres, placed psychological pressure on the election commission members and voters, asking votes in favour of the Democratic Party. In the Tirana Region, Mr. Gent Strazimiri, Deputy Minister of the Interior, and Mr. Aldo Bumçi, DP Chairman in Tirana, made rounds of the voting centres, bringing pressure to bear upon the election commission members and voters. In the CEAZ no. 47, located at the *Hasan Prishtina* School, Tirana, which housed 10 voting centres, adviser to Prime Minister, Mrs. Suzana Guxholli, and Director of Polyclinic 3, were joined by a considerable number of people at the schoolyard and put pressure on voters, goading them to vote in favour of the Democratic Party.

Representatives of tax offices and traffic road police in the State Police put pressure on voters, particularly, in the voting centres in the communes, where control of vote was easier on account of the number of voters and their familiarity among themselves and with the election commission members. Pressures would be accompanied with dismissal prior to and after voting process, and the traffic road police would levy fines, seized driving licenses, with fines being imposed by the tax police, as well. Hence, in the Voting Centre no. 3052, Ruzhdie Commune, the DP Chairman exerted pressure on a counting team member representing the SP, Mr. Agim Shehu, engineer by profession by 30 June 2009, and reappointed as an ordinary worker on 1 July 2009. In the Ruzhdie, Siqoc and Strum Communes, the next day of the election process the traffic road police levied extreme fines ranging from 35,000 to 60,000 lekë on, and removed driving licenses from a number of the election commission members representing the SP.

Open pressure was put on the *ALB. SH* administration, Patos, so that they should vote for the DP, arguing that, if the DP did not come the winner in the communes where the employees voted, all the employees would lose their jobs. In the Dibra Region, the Democratic Party exerted great pressure, threatening with dismissal if they did not vote for the DP. In the meantime, in the Durrës Region, the phenomenon of vote buying among the Roma and Egyptian communities was identified in exchange for votes in favour of the DP (Voting Centre no. 1497). The above-mentioned phenomenon was also observed in Tirana, Elbasan and Shkodra.

## **5.9. Voting in detention facilities and prisons**

In the 28 June 2008 elections, misuse of leave for convicts provided for in Article 59 of Law no. 8328, dated 16 April 1998, as amended by Law no. 9888, dated 10 March 2008, "For the rights and treatment of convicts and pre-detainees," was identified. Rewarding leaves were granted to convicts, and even to those doing time in high security prisons, were granted in contravention with the criteria set forth in the law. Given that the Minister of Justice, Mr. Enkelejd Alibeaj, was running in Fier, many rewarding leaves were also granted to convicts from the prisons at Rrogozhina and Lushnja, located in this Region, who are residents in this Region, or whose family members are residents there.

The collected and verified data show that the Minister of Justice, and with his permission, the Director General of Prisons, Mr. Gazmend Dibra, and directors of other institutions seriously infringed the law, and abused their duty, so as to grant rewarding leaves to persons posing serious threat to society, and in contravention with the legal criteria.

The Socialist Party has filed a criminal charge with the public prosecutor's office, requiring that the persons charged for abuse of duty are prosecuted criminally, because, as of 12 June 2009, around 150 rewarding and special leaves were granted. Around 80 per cent of the convicts granted a leave have been sentenced for very serious criminal offence, including murder, serious wounding, trafficking in drugs and human beings, production and selling of narcotic substances, exploitation of prostitution, violent sexual intercourse, and theft through use of weapons and violence. Rewarding and special leaves were granted to convicts, even though they fell short of meeting the criteria of the time required so as to be entitled to take a rewarding leave, as defined by law, or to persons sentenced to 20-25 years in prison, which have not yet spent more than 4 years in confinement.

It has been confirmed that the persons who have been granted similar leaves, at this time, have arranged political and criminal activities to the benefit of the Democratic Party. In breach of the law, convict Sokol Grenica, who is doing time in prison at Rrogozhina, and has been sentenced for several counts of crimes to over 10 years in prison, has several times gone on leave, and has been involved in active election campaign, in Fier, at the campaign office of the candidate running for the Democratic Party, Sokol Olldashi.

Aside from the leaves and pressure brought to bear upon convicts to vote for the DP in exchange of favours, on polling day, in the prison at Shënkoll, Mr. Kastriot Piroli, deputy director of prison, while armed, exerted pressure on the election commission members in the village of Zhej, Mamurras, in the Voting Centres nos. 0917 and 0918.

Around 90 per cent of prison inmates in Kruja and Fushë Kruja voted for the DP, due to the pressure exerted and promises made beforehand for leaves to be granted and other facilities, including release on parole, and reduction in the sentence. The number of voters in these prisons was higher than the number of ballot papers, with the latter being all used and being insufficient.

#### **5.10. State Police during the elections**

State Police officers, who were guarding the voting centres and the ballot counting centres, allowed unauthorised persons, who were well-known in the constituency or were senior representatives of the public administration. In a number of cases, the State Police acted without a decision by the Voting Centre Commission. Hence, in the Tirana Region, in the Voting Centres nos. 1862 and 1862/1, Kombinat, the State Police, in contravention with the law, removed Socialist Party observers from two voting centres, exercising violence against them, thus committing a criminal offence. In the Vora Municipality, representatives of the State Police and municipal workers from Vora were identified in each and every voting centre, where the Democratic Party representatives put pressure on voters, as well.

#### **5.11. Immigrants and voting in their name**

A widespread phenomenon noticed on polling day was the attempt to vote in the name of the immigrants, who were not able to exercise their right to vote because they were found abroad. In the Gjirokastra Region, according to data around 3,700 immigrants have voted. No data are available whether all of them did exercise their rights to vote, or someone from them was not able to do so.

In the Bytyç Commune, Tropoja, irregularities were observed during voting, and other persons voted instead of the immigrants. So, other persons voted in the name of both sons of Demali Nezes, who are immigrants in the United Kingdom. In the Voting Centre no. 3052, Patos, the Fier Region, the election commission chairman and 3-4 other persons, representing the DP, voted several times for their family

members who were or were not in Albania. Lawful response to this led to pressure and use of violence against the SP election commission members.

## **6. VOTE COUNT**

### **6.1. Conditions and infrastructure of areas designated for counting votes**

Frequently, the designated areas adopted by the CEC upon the proposal of the Prefect of the Region were not at all suitable for a normal process of the vote count. Small rooms, rooms devoid of sufficient lighting, very large distance from the voting centres, their location in privately owned structures (the cases in Paskuqan, and Bushat), even though contested by the Opposition, were approved by the CEC in breach of Articles 93 and 94 of the Electoral Code, which specifies that they should be located in public buildings, with sufficient space and lighting being ensured.

The Prefects fell short of living up to their obligation provided for in the Electoral Code to provide the CEC with a full list of the facilities across the Region, out of which the CEC would depict accommodation for the BCC. It was the Prefects themselves who set aside the facilities intended to accommodate the BCCs and indicated them to the CEC, and the CEC was obliged to formally approve them. Such conduct adopted by the Prefects was subject to objection between us and the CEC, and quite often, the CEC members' votes on the decisions on many of the BCCs, which fell short of complying with the conditions outlined in an instruction forwarded by the CEC, would split 4 to 3, with the CEC DP-sponsored members' votes being in favour.

The most flagrant case concerning area designed for counting votes was registered in Bushat. Following its contestation by Opposition and its filing a complaint in the Electoral College, the latter took the decision that a different area was designated instead. Nonetheless, again, by violating the law and the court decision handed down by the Electoral College, the CEC decided on the same area designated for counting votes.

More often than not, the layout of the tables made available to the counting teams left much to be desired, with such tables being sometimes as far as 10 m away from the observers accredited to the counting teams. A number of these tables were so small that made it impossible for the ballot papers to be normally laid down on them, and they were instead laid down on top of chairs. Or, still worse, all the

ballot papers in favour of the small parties were piled together, thus creating premises for failure to properly count their votes.

## **6.2. Selection of counting teams and their training**

In their largest number, the DP counting teams were made up of activities who only executed the orders they received from their headquarters, and individuals who caused problems during the vote count. Public-sector workers, local government employees, and directors of important directorates swarmed around the counting teams, keeping advice and instructions for them off-hand. It was noted that, occasionally, information was leaked out of the ballot counting centres by DP representatives in the CEAZs on the number of votes in a ballot box, and the need this Party had for additional votes.

The largest majority of the counting team members had not training through the CEC's failure to run things properly. Several CEC-sponsored training sessions were run by individuals who were lacking in a legal background, who were teachers close to the CEC administration, or unemployed, selected for the purpose of allowing them to receive payment. Consequently, in many case those who had received training to act as counting team members, received conflicting and wrong information on the vote count.

## **6.3. Problems surrounding vote count**

The process of the vote count started off very late in nearly all the CEAZs, namely, in the small hours on 29 June 2009. In certain cases, it took them 9 hours to count votes in a ballot box, and they refrained from applying similar criteria in order to declare an invalid vote. Even though Article 117 in the Electoral Code of the Republic of Albania lays down the criteria for evaluating a vote, many votes for the SP were declared invalid votes only because of the fact that number 33 encircled, or a cross was placed against the line where the Socialist Party was written. Hence, voters' will was clear, and it was not considered.

Likewise, because of the political interventions, the counting process in Shkodra, Lezha, Kurbin and Fier was hampered. In the last two, the CEC took a decision to interrupt the counting process in the CEAZs, and sent the CEC representatives over in order to collect the electoral materials, and finish the process in the CEC. Proceeding from the political composition of the CEAZs, the CEC behaved differently in terms of a decision-making. In the case of Laç, the CEAZ no. 39, the

CEC conducted the vote count there and then, and closed the counting process, whereas in the case of Fier, the CEAZs nos. 18, 19, 20 and 22, with the DP-affiliated members being in the majority, the CEC representatives ordered closing of the outcomes table, which did not include all the voting centres. This was why the issue concerning the outcomes for Fier was resolved through an appeal. Nearly all the Regions reported problems surrounding the counting process, with the outcomes tables falling short of reflecting outcomes from the voting centres, which had been delivered in order. In their overall outcomes, all the Regions featured voting centres where votes had not been counted, and which are not reflected in the ultimate outcomes. Korça registers the biggest number of them – 6 voting centres. No complaint has been filed for them, and of course, this process still falls afoul of Articles 119 and 122 of the Electoral Code.

Contrary to Article 121 of the Electoral Code, which provides for the persons that are to be present in the vote counting process, the BCCs were overcrowded with individuals not authorised by the CEAZs to act as observers. Senior representatives of the public administration and the persons accompanying them exerted pressure, or swore after outcomes were made known. All these pressures created premises for a difficult, tiresome and, often, uncontrollable process.

#### **6.4. Actions undertaken with CEAZs by CEC representatives**

In the course of the election process, the Socialist Party did criticize the CEC for failing to play its role, rigorously defined by the Electoral Code. The CEC made an attempt at exchange its role set forth in the law as an arbiter for the elections for the role of a biased party to the process. Overall, it was noted that both the CEC and its representatives to the CEAZs fell short of discharging their duties properly, and indeed, they seriously violated the law and abused their duty. The CEC lawyer Lorenc Danaj, assigned with following up on the process in the area of Shushica, voted in each and every voting centre without producing an identity document, while refusing to follow the inking procedures claiming that he was a representative of the CEC.

### **7. APPEALS AND THE CEC ROLE**

It was at the moments, where it became clear that the counting process deteriorated irreversibly in a number of CEAZs, that the CEC was reminded to intervene in the process. Instead of contributing to putting an end to the said process, this intervention led it finally into an impasse. By way of its own

decisions, the CEC gave rise to irreversible problems. By way of its unclear decisions, frequently set against a political background, which were made in contravention with the law, the CEC ultimately denigrated the counting process.

So, for instance, the CEC ordered the CEAZ no. 39 to complete the outcomes table for the constituency the CEAZ no. 39 was in charge of pursuant to the law. Finding it impossible to continue with the vote count, the CEAZ shipped the electoral material to the CEC, thus interrupting the process. After counting the ballot papers found in the ballot boxes that had not been counted, the CEC approved the briefing table for the CEAZ (Decision no. 460, dated 1 July 2009, for the CEAZ no. 39 in the Lezha Region).

The Fier case is another highly denigrating and illegal case. The CEC ordered the respective CEAZs to complete the outcomes tables, and transport the electoral materials to the CEC. Even though it was fully aware that the vote count was not over yet, instead of ordering the CEAZs to finish the vote count, and subsequently, complete the briefing table, by taking a decision that was absurd and in contravention with the Electoral Code (Articles 122 and 123) the CEC ordered the CEAZ to leave the vote count half-way, and produce the outcomes that did not accommodate the voting centre data on the uncounted votes.

The CEC had to order the CEAZs to finish the vote count. Otherwise, the ballot boxes carrying the uncounted ballot papers along with the other electoral material had to be taken to the CEC so that the CEC, in its capacity as a superior body, should take on the CEAZ powers, and take the vote count through to the end and approve the briefing table for each and every CEAZ.

Further to these approaches, through its spokesman the CEC hastened to announce a preliminary outcome for the Fier Region. Before the process was over, the CEC divided the mandates in this Region, and came up with an outcome for the whole country, thus openly violating the law. Such actions undertaken by the CEC are evidence of its full political dependency, its lack of professionalism, and its conduct in violation of the Electoral Code provisions.

Building on the provisions in Article 138/3, two CEC members placed a request for a vote recount and re-evaluation in the Berat and Shkodra Regions, and in a number of CEAZs in Tirana. Even though the Electoral Code stipulates explicitly that, in the event that a request for a vote recount and/or re-evaluation is supported by two members of the CEC, the latter is bound by law to conduct a recount and/or re-evaluation of the vote as required, the CEC failed to comply with

this legal obligation to re-order a vote recount and re-evaluation. This fully arbitrary decision was taken under pressure by the DP, which was adamantly against the opening of the ballot boxes. Indeed, the DP representative in the CEC openly threatened the CEC members sponsored by the Opposition that they would ask for their removal if they filed such a request. The irony was that this same majority resorted to this legal instrument in its favour with regard to vote recount in the Fier Region, thus applying two standards.

All the procedural actions and the subsequent decisions taken by the CEC, ranging from its failure to order a vote recount and re-evaluation following a request submitted by two of the CEC members (Article 138 of the Electoral Code) to shutting down the administrative inquiry, and to its dismissal of the request for appeal, exceed the legal powers exercised by the CEC and in open contravention with the mandatory procedure of the law.

Lack of the rules of procedure for the CEC has resulted in the bad organisation and bad running of the CEC meetings, which are left to the CEC Chairman's arbitrariness. The agenda and the meeting materials were deliberately distributed prior to the beginning of the sessions only, and not 24 hours in advance, as required under law. Decision-making by the four DP-sponsored members of the CEC was openly delineated by political intention fully in favour of the DP. Indeed, more often than not, this decision-making fell afoul of the Electoral Code.

## **8. ANNEXES**

### **8.1. ANNEX I**

#### **USE OF PRISON INMATES, POSING SERIOUS THREAT TO SOCIETY, FOR PURPOSES OF ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND PRESSURE ON VOTERS**

A highly dangerous phenomenon surrounding the election period running up to the 28 June 2009 elections, featured the use by government institutions of persons sentenced to imprisonment for purposes of fighting an electoral battle.

According to confidential information available to us (for the dates of June 12, 15, 16 and 17, only), the number of leaves were granted to convicts during the election period, many of them in contravention with the law and the respective subordinate

laws, increased substantially. We received feedback from people on the ground, indicating that a good part of these convicts were used with a view to getting them to engage in campaigning in favour of the Government among their households, or restore their criminal ties in support of the pro-Government campaign.

### **I. Rewarding leaves**

Article 5 (paragraph 4, letters b and c) in Law no. 8328, dated 16 April 1998, as amended by Law no. 9888, dated 10 March 2008, "For the rights and treatment of convicts and pre-detainees," explicitly sanctions that:

"The director of an institution may grant a rewarding leave to convicts who shall observe the internal regulations of the institution, display good conduct, and are not a threat to society, during which time they shall pursue their emotional, personal, economic and cultural interests. Such leave may not be more than a total of 20 days on a yearly basis.

"A rewarding leave is granted to:

- a) Convicts sentenced up to 3 years in prison, after having served not less than one fourth of their sentence;
- b) Convicts sentenced to 3-10 years in prison, after having served not less than half of their sentence;
- c) Convicts sentenced to over 10 years in prison, after having served not less than two thirds of their sentence.

"A rewarding leave [to convicts] in prisons or high security detention facilities shall be granted upon the instruction from the Minister of Justice, or as duly permitted by him, by the Director General of Prisons."

In contravention with the criteria set forth in this Law, rewarding leaves were granted to convicts, and indeed, even to those doing time in high security prisons. The following examples would illustrate this negative phenomenon most typically.

The following persons are actually doing time, are sentenced to many years in prison on a charge of having committed criminal offences, with them posing serious threat to society, and consequently, falling short of meeting conditions for being entitled to go on leave, as provided for in the afore-mentioned law.

And specifically:

### **Rewarding leaves were granted by the prison at Lezha**

- **Isa Doçi** is sentenced to 6 years and 8 months in prison on a charge of having committed the criminal offence of trafficking in arms and ammunition, defined in Article 278/a/1 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania.

On 19 June 2009, the said convict was granted a five-day leave, with this action being in breach of Law no. 8328 of 16 April 1998, as amended by Law no. 9888 of 10 March 2008, "For the prison inmates' rights and treatment," given that individuals sentenced to 3-10 years in prison become entitled to go on leave, primarily, provided that they have served not less than half of the sentence. The said individual has been sentenced to 6 years and 8 months in prison. Until the day when a leave was granted to him, it turns out that he had only spent 3 months and 8 days in confinement.

- **Marjan Lukaj** is sentenced to 13 years in prison on a charge of having committed the criminal offence of murder.

On 19 June 2009, the said convict was granted a five-day leave, with this action being in breach of the law, given that individuals sentenced to over 10 years in prison become entitled to go on leave, primarily, provided that they have served not less than two thirds of the sentence. The said convict has been sentenced to 13 years in prison. Until the day when a leave was granted to him, it turns out that he had only spent 6 years and 3 months and 22 days in confinement, with this period falling short of the period of 8 years and 8 months in prison required for him to be entitled to take a leave.

- **Shpëtim Beqiri** is sentenced to 13 years in prison on a charge of having committed the criminal offence of murder.

On 19 June 2009, the said convict was granted a five-day leave, with this action being in breach of the law, given that individuals sentenced to over 10 years in prison become entitled to go on leave, primarily, provided that they have served not less than two thirds of the sentence. The said convict has been sentenced to 13 years in prison. Until the day when a leave was granted to him, it turns out that he had only spent 6 years and 3 months and 22 days in confinement, with this period falling short of the period of 8 years and 8 months in prison required for him to be entitled to take a leave.

### **Prison at Peqin**

- **Emiljano Domi** is sentenced to 15 years in prison on a charge of having committed the criminal offence of murder.

On 19 June 2009, the said convict was granted a four-day leave, with this action being in breach of the law, given that individuals sentenced to over 10 years in prison become entitled to go on leave, primarily, provided that they have served not less than two thirds of the sentence. The said convict has been sentenced to 15 years in prison. Until the day when a leave was granted to him, it turns out that he had only spent 4 years and 1 month in confinement, with this period falling short of the period of 10 years in prison required for him to be entitled to take a leave.

#### **Prison at Lushnja**

- **Artan Goxhaj** is sentenced to 25 years in prison on a charge of having committed the criminal offence of murder.

On 19 June 2009, the said convict was granted a four-day leave, with this action being in breach of the law, given that individuals sentenced to over 10 years in prison become entitled to go on leave, primarily, provided that they have served not less than two thirds of the sentence. Until the day when a leave was granted to him, it turns out that the said convict had only spent 14 years and 4 months and 12 days in confinement, with this period falling short of the period of 16 years and 8 months in prison required for him to be entitled to take a leave.

#### **Prison at Tepelena**

- **Arjan Sina** is sentenced to 18 years in prison on a charge of having committed the criminal offence of murder.

On 19 June 2009, the said convict was granted a three-day leave, with this action being in breach of the law, given that individuals sentenced to over 10 years in prison become entitled to go on leave, primarily, provided that they have served not less than two thirds of the sentence. Until the day when a leave was granted to him, it turns out that the said convict had only spent 9 years and 28 days in confinement, with this period falling short of the period of 12 years in prison required for him to be entitled to take a leave.

#### **Prison at Rrogozhina**

- **Bujar Sinjari** is sentenced to 17 years in prison on a charge of exploitation of prostitution. He had only served 6 years and 10 months, with 10 years and 2 months and 16 days yet to go. For him to be entitled to take a rewarding leave, he should have served two thirds of the sentence, i.e. 11 years and 4 months !!.

- **Altin Patoku** is sentenced to 8 years in prison on a charge of production and selling narcotic substances. He had only served 3 years and 1 month, with 4 years and 11 months yet to go. For him to be entitled to take a rewarding leave, he should have served half of the sentence, i.e. at least 4 years.

- **Spartak Kazazi** is sentenced to 20 years in prison on a charge of intentional murder. He had only served 3 years and 11 months, with 16 years and 1 month yet to go. For him to be entitled to take a rewarding leave, he should have served two thirds of the sentence, i.e. not less than 13 years !!!.

- **Skënder Kulla** is sentenced to 12 years in prison on a charge of attempted premeditated murder and illegal carrying of weapons. He had only served 7 years and 1 month, with 4 years and 11 months yet to go. Actually, he should have served two thirds of the sentence, i.e. 8 years, in which case he could have become entitled to take a rewarding leave !!.

- **Ilir Tosku** is sentenced to 5 years in prison on a charge of attempted murder. He had only served 1 year and 2 months, with 3 years and 10 months yet to go. For him to be entitled to take a rewarding leave, he should have served half of the sentence, i.e. not less than 2 years and 6 months.

- **Sokol Genica** is sentenced to 10 years in prison on a charge of traffic in narcotic substances world-wide. He started off doing time on 14 April 2009. The said convict is notorious for his negative precedents in dealing with the Opposition in previous election campaigns, and is quite influential among criminal elements in the Fier District. Two months ago, this person was transferred to the prison at Rogozhina, and over this period he was granted a rewarding leave on three occasions (!!!) (7 days, 5 days and 14 days of leave, respectively). Specifically, on 1 June 2009, with the leave over, he went back to prison. On 4 June 2009, he was again released on a 14-day leave, and his services were employed in the pro-Government election campaign in the Fier area, where Minister Oldashi (former Minister of the Interior, at present Minister of Transportation) and Alibeaj (Minister of Justice) appeared on the candidate list.

## **II. Special leaves**

Article no. 60 (first paragraph) in Law no. 8328, dated 16 April 1998, as amended by Law no. 9888, dated 10 March 2008, "For the rights and treatment of convicts and pre-detainees," expressly sanctions that:

*"Director of an institution may grant convicts a special leave in cases involving serious diseases putting the other household members' lives at risk, with this being supported by medical evidence, or important family events, including death, birth, or wedding. This period shall be included into the sentence to be served."*

Hence, the law specifies that a special leave may be granted to persons doing time in prison for very specific reasons only, including death, wedding, or serious diseases putting their household members' lives at risk.

In granting a special leave to convicted persons, the latter's threat to society, their conduct, and of course, the reasons for this leave to be issued by the respective institution, are taken into account.

According to the information available to us (attached is a photocopy of the official document), on 12 June 2009, 15 June 2009, 16 June 2009, and 17 June 2009, the institutions for enforcing judicial decisions in criminal matters (IEVP), under the Directorate General of Prisons, granted many such leaves in contravention with the afore-mentioned law, given that persons convicted for crimes posing serious threat to society (murder, serious wounding, production of narcotic substances, trafficking in weapons and human beings, exploitation of prostitution, violent sexual relationships, and armed robbery), account for 80 per cent of the total number of convicts granted a special leave by the heads of these institutions on these dates.

The following examples are evidence of the fact that these persons were granted a special leave under qualifications beyond the boundaries of the law, for reasons that do not fall under the definition in the above-mentioned law.

**Lezha IEVP granted the following special leaves:**

- Petrit Gjoka is sentenced to 12 years and 7 months in prison on a charge of murder, with 9 years and 8 months and 10 days yet to go. He was granted a special leave so that he could visit with his sick mother !!.

- Antonin Keçi is sentenced to 14 years in prison on a charge of murder, with 9 years and 8 months and 10 days yet to go. He was granted a special leave so that he could visit with his sick father !!.

- Sokol Mujo is sentenced to 14 years in prison on a charge of trafficking in weapons, with 7 years yet to go.

- Fatjon Sterkaj is sentenced to 7 years in prison on a charge of armed robbery, with 5 years and 11 months and 8 days yet to go.

- Alfred Peposhi is sentenced to 10 years in prison on a charge of murder, with 5 years and 3 months and 15 days yet to go.

- Halil Dauti is sentenced to 12 years in prison on a charge of armed robbery, with 8 years and 9 months and 3 days yet to go.

#### **Peqin IEVP:**

- Festim Koçi is sentenced to 6 years in prison on a charge of attempted armed robbery.

- Florian Pisha is sentenced to 8 years and 6 months in prison on a charge of production and selling of narcotic substances.

- Drutan Zhuka is sentenced to 8 years in prison on a charge of exploitation of prostitution with aggravating circumstances.

- Besnik Subashi is sentenced to 16 years in prison on a charge of murder, with 5 years and 5 months yet to go.

- Besnik Deda is sentenced to 16 years in prison on a charge of intentional murder and illegal carrying of weapons, with 6 years and 3 months and 3 days yet to go.

#### **Rrogozhina IEVP:**

- Ferdinand Lamaj is sentenced to 9 years in prison on a charge of exploitation of prostitution, with 8 years and 1 months and 13 days yet to go.
- Gentjan Balla is sentenced to 20 years in prison on a charge of pre-meditated murder, with 10 years and 2 months yet to go.
- Ivan Kondi is sentenced to 15 years in prison on a charge of production and selling of narcotic substances, with 2 years and 1 month and 21 days yet to go.
- Naim Avdija is sentenced to 10 years in prison on a charge of murder, with 4 years and 7 months yet to go.
- Ervin Gërbi is sentenced to 8 years in prison on a charge of production and selling of narcotic substances, with 2 years and 2 months and 23 days yet to go.
- Sokol Uxhi is sentenced to 7 years and 4 months in prison on a charge of production of military weapons, with 2 years and 11 months and 27 days yet to go.
- Hajri Hiraj is sentenced to 10 years in prison on a charge of trafficking in human beings.
- Ervis Curri is sentenced to 8 years in prison on a charge of intentional murder. He was granted a special leave so that he could visit with his sick grandmother !!!
- Jasim Sula is sentenced to 9 years and 4 months in prison on a charge of trafficking in weapons and ammunition, with 4 years and 11 months and 13 days yet to go.
- Luan Isufaj was granted a special leave so that he could visit with his sick mother. He is sentenced to 25 years in prison on a charge of intentional murder, with 15 years and 6 months and 12 days yet to go.
- Lush Kolndreu is sentenced to 17 years in prison on a charge of murder, with 8 years and 9 months and 10 days yet to go. He was granted a special leave so that he could visit with his sick grandmother !!!
- Sulo Celaj is sentenced to 10 years in prison on a charge of female trafficking for purposes of prostitution, with 2 years and 7 months and 28 days yet to go.

- Bardhi Nanollari is sentenced to 12 years in prison on a charge of trafficking in narcotic substances, with 8 years and 9 months and 8 days. He was granted a special leave so that he could visit with his sick grandmother !!!
- Elvis Pasholli is sentenced to 9 years and 8 months in prison on a charge of production and selling of narcotic substances.
- Bujar Ago is sentenced to 11 years in prison on a charge of production and narcotic substances, with 5 years and 4 months and 8 days yet to go.
- Lutfi Memolla is sentenced to 14 years in prison on a charge of murder, with 2 years and 8 months and 6 days yet to go.
- Luan Llulla is sentenced to 19 years in prison on a charge of murder, with 13 years and 5 months yet to go.
- Ertjon Cala is sentenced to 10 years in prison on a charge of murder, with 5 years and 6 months and 21 days yet to go.
- Skënder Driza is sentenced to 8 years in prison on a charge of selling of narcotic substances, with 5 years and 3 months and 26 days yet to go.
- Gentjan Hasani is sentenced to 17 years in prison on a charge of murder, with 12 years and 1 months and 16 days yet to go.
- Gjergji Saliu is sentenced to 17 years in prison on a charge of trafficking in narcotic substances, with 15 years and 3 months and 11 days yet to go. He was granted a special leave so that he could attend the anniversary of his father's death.

**Note:**

For further information on this topic, please find herein attached the following documents:

1. Communication (2) of 12 June 2009, "On a number of problems surrounding the pre-election period running up to 28 June 2009" (point 1.3), addressed to the International Election Observation Mission of ODIHR and the OSCE Presence in Tirana, which, *inter alia*, touches upon this negative phenomenon identified during the election period.

2. Letter of 26 June 2009 addressed to the Minister of Justice, Mr. Enkeljed Alibeaj, and to the attention of the International Election Observation Mission of ODIHR and the OSCE Presence in Tirana;
3. Charges pressed on 26 June 2009 with the Tirana District Public Prosecutor's Office;
4. Objection no. 8, dated 27 June 2009, addressed to the Central Election Commission, and to the attention of the International Election Observation Mission of ODIHR and the OSCE Presence in Tirana;
5. Request of 27 June 2009, "Concerning pre-detainees' and prison inmates' lists," addressed to the Directorate General of Prisons, and to the attention of International Election Observation Mission of ODIHR and OSCE Presence in Tirana;

## 8.2. ANNEX II

### PRESENCE OF ELECTION PROPAGANDA MATERIALS AND CONDUCT OF PROPAGANDA ON POLLING DAY

- 1 In the Tirana Region, in the area close to the CEAZ no. 48, the *Bajram Curri* School, which housed 4 voting centres, and at the CEAZ no. 51, located at the *Naim Frashëri* School, in Borough 3, cars with foreign plates waving Democratic Party banners and singing this Party's election campaign song started to move in the neighbourhood as of the moment when voting started and even later on.
- 2 In Borough 51, in the Tirana Region, unidentified individuals turned up at the voting centres located at the *Naim Frashëri* School, and introduced themselves as representatives of the CEC. These individuals brought pressure to bear upon the SP election commission members, threatening them that they were going to teach the former a lesson after polling day.
- 3 In the Durrës Region, in the CEAZ no. 8, in the Voting Centres nos. 1428, 1428/1, 1429 and 1430/1 in Spitalla, Durrës, Democratic Party activists rallied around voting centres carrying Democratic Party banners and tea-shirts.
- 4 In the voting centre situated at the village of Pajova, Peqin, the Commune Chairperson (DP) put a lot of heat on voters, and brought along with him into the voting centre DP election propaganda materials and handouts, which called on voters to cast their votes for the Democratic Party and no. 10.
- 5 In the Voting Centre no. 2372, Elbasan Municipality, which was located in the *Bardhyl Popa* Kindergarten, a highly tense situation was predominant, given that activists of the electoral subject DP forced their way into the voting centre, and jeopardised the election process.
- 6 In the Voting Centre no. 2366 located at the *A. Krasniqi* School, Elbasan, numerous DP activists led by running candidate Mr. Aurel Bylykbashi got together, and brought pressure to bear upon voters.
- 7 In the Voting Centre no. 2447 in the Papër Commune, Elbasan District, DP activists congregated in front of the voting centre, exerting pressure and

causing provocations with a view to spoiling the normality of the election process in this voting centre.

- 8 In Tirana, in the ZAZ no. 57, Voting Centre no. 2037, individuals sympathetic to the DP had gathered in front of this voting centre, cheering and placing pressure on voters.
- 9 In the VC no. 4724 located at the village of Markat, Konispol Municipality, Vlova Region, Commune Chairperson, Mr. Ismail Murtaj, and DP activists put pressure on the voting centre.
- 10 The situation grew also tense in the VC no. 4512, Oriku, where crowds of people and pressure exerted by representatives of the DP were registered.
- 11 In the Voting Centres nos. 31 88 and nos. 31 89 in the village of Ndërmenas, Libofsha, Chairperson of the Regional Council, Mr. Luan Muca, and a group of people drove to the voting centre and committed blackmail against voters.

### 8.3. ANNEX III

#### PRESSURE PUT ON VOTERS BY LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT WORKERS

- 1 Director of the Regional Education Directorate, and at the same time, the DP Chairman for Kukës, the Mayor of Kukës, Director of DRSKSH, Director of the Regional Hospital in Kukës, and Director of Social Insurance have exerted pressure in the voting centres in the Zapod and Shishtavec Communes.
- 2 In the Kukës Municipality, the Mayor has brought pressure to bear upon all those receiving financial assistance, the Municipality administration and the subordinate institutions.
- 3 The DP Chairman, and at the same time, Director of the Regional Education Directorate, Kukës, have placed pressure on all voting centres in the Kukës Municipality, and the teachers across the District, threatening them with dismissal if the DP did not come out winner in Kukës.
- 4 Director of the Hospital in Kukës issued an order for the administration employees to gather, forcing them to attend the DP electoral rallies, with the hospital being deprived of its medical staff. At the same time, they were found under pressure that, should they fail to cast their votes for the DP, the succeeding Monday they would be fired.
- 5 Representatives of the DP, The Commune Chairmen have exerted pressure through the financial assistance. The Topojan Commune proved to be most outrageous by far, making sure that people received financial assistance on the preceding Saturday. Resorting to some form of pressure, pending election outcomes, the Kalis Commune did not provide financial assistance.
- 6 In the city of Elbasan, the Pajova Commune, the Commune Chairperson and, at the same time, representative of the Democratic Party, Mr. Albert Kreci, visited the voting centres demonstratively carrying a gun around.
- 7 In the city of Vlora, Gur i Zi Commune, Kuç, Democratic Party fuelled tension in the voting centre.

- 8 In the Tirana Region, in the Voting Centres nos. 579 and 579/1, Mayor of Kamza and, at the same time, representative of the Democratic Party visited a number of voting centres, putting pressure on and threatening election commission members.
- 9 In the Korça Region, the Chairperson of the Mollaj Commune imposed himself on voters to cast their votes for the Democratic Party.
- 10 In the Vora Municipality and the Bërxull Commune, Tirana Region, individuals appointed to public functions by the Democratic Party brought pressure to bear upon voters to cast their ballots in favour of the Democratic Party.
- 11 In the Tirana Region, Mr. Gent Strazimiri, Deputy Minister of the Interior, and Mr. Aldo Bumçi, made rounds of the voting centres, placing pressure on election commission members and voters.
- 12 In the CEAZ no. 47, located at the *Hasan Prishtina* School, which housed 10 voting centres, Prime Minister's adviser Mrs. Suzana Guxholli and Director of Polyclinic 3 mixed with a considerable number of people that had gathered at the schoolyard, and put pressure on voters so that they should cast their votes for the Democratic Party.
- 13 In the Tirana Region, in the CEAZ no. 56, in the Voting Centre no. 1720, groups of Democratic Party activists and the Borough Mayor exerted pressure on the election commission members and voters.
- 14 In the Berat Region, in the town of Çorrovoda, at the entrance to the voting centres Movement for Socialist Integration (LSI) activists engaged in propaganda so that people could vote for the LSI.
- 15 In Tirana, in Borough 4, in the Voting Centre no. 1791, Mr. Agim Berisha, who is a Democratic Party activist, placed ongoing pressure on voters to cast their ballots in favour of the Democratic Party.
- 16 In the Fier Region, the Chairperson of the Dushk Commune sent the SP observers away, whereas he stayed in the voting centre.
- 17 The Voting Centre no. 2814 in the Dushk Commune, Fier Region, reported use of vouchers, instead of ID cards or passports, in voting.

- 18 In the Këmishtaj Commune, Mr. Gazmend Arapi and Mr. Kujtim Meçaj, as well as Chairman of the DP branch, Florian Qorri, brought pressure to bear on Socialist voters, and called on voters to cast their votes for the DP.
- 19 In the village of Derviçan, Gjirokastra, Mr. Spiro Ksera and his family members put pressure on voters.
- 20 In Puka, as well as in Dibra and Kukës, pressure kept building up. The DP-affiliated Commune chairpersons threatened people with dismissal, requesting voters to cast their ballots in the presence of the DP-affiliated persons, while threatening to deprive them of financial assistance. In the Blerim Commune, the person in charge of financial assistance drove to all the SP running candidate's rallies, where he jotted down the participants' names. He did not refrain from calling them as the rallies were under way, threatening them that he was going to deprive them of financial assistance. In the village of Flet, Puka, the prospective participants in the rally hid away and showed up only after this public-sector worker left; then, they attended the rally and told people about the threats they had received.
- 21 In the Qerret Commune, Puka, one day prior to polling day the DP voters received 5,000 lekë each, styling that money as energy subsidies.
- 22 Education employees in Puka, who have been assigned provisional contracts, received a note informing them they had been assigned provisional contracts, and could be dismissed the upcoming September, if the Democratic Party did not come out winner and they fail to work for that.
- 23 The nurses across all the Communes and the hospital in Puka received order to attend a rally with Jozefina Topalli taking place in Shkodra; to this effect, their transportation was organised in three buses, and they were threatened with dismissal if they did not show up for the event.
- 24 The employees of the Forest Enterprise in Puka, and other enterprises were prevented from attending the Socialist running candidate's rallies, and were threatened with dismissal, and after elections, 4-5 persons were dismissed.
- 25 In nearly all the villages in the Devoll District, Korça Region, public-sector workers put pressure on voters from households in need, and for whose votes 1,000 or 2,000 new lekë per vote were paid. Levying of fines for having cut

firewood without permission was a new route devised to keep the same category of households under pressure, and the director of the Forest Enterprise promised them that their fine would be removed if the person's household cast their votes in favour of the DP. This case is a fact registered in the Voting Centre no. 3987.

- 26 In the Korça Region, occasional threats with dismissal, with the employees and their families being compelled to cast their votes in favour of the DP, were identified region-wise. The DP had made sure to appoint their ardent activists, who were managers of the principal undertakings: electrical company, water utility, hospital, and road enterprise, to the voting centre commissions and the counting teams. In turn, these activists were also surveyed by devoted activists in their capacity of observers, both in the voting centre and the counting team.

#### 8.4. ANNEX IV

##### **OPPOSITION ELECTION COMMISSION MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS, AND THE PRESSURE PUT ON THEM PRIOR TO, DURING AND AFTER POLLING DAY**

- 1 In the Fier Region, in the Voting Centre no. 3052, the head of the voting centre commission and representative of the Democratic Party, Mr. Pëllumb Myrto, buoyed by a group of armed individuals swinging their weapons openly, threatened the Opposition members in this commission with life. They asked these members to leave the election process, and under the threat of weapons, filled the ballot boxes with votes going in favour of the Democratic Party.
- 2 In the Korça Region, the CEAZ no. 33, Devoll, in the Voting Centre no. 4001 in the Miras Commune, an inhabitant, who was a member of the SP electoral headquarters, got hit by a car with a foreign plate.
- 3 In the Elbasan Region, in the city of Elbasan Mr. Aurel Bylykbashi and Mr. Luçiano Boçi, candidates running for the Democratic Party, entered voting centres engaging in debate and conflict with the Socialist Party election commission members and observers, and later on, with candidates running for the Socialist Party.
- 4 In the Lezha Region, in the Voting Centre no. 0778, the village of Xhuxh i Fanit, Socialist Party election commission members suffered physical violence, with this leading to the temporary interruption of the voting process.
- 5 In the CEAZ no. 47, in the Voting Centre no. 1761, a number of DP activists embarked on an attempt to enter the voting centre by exerting pressure on population to cast their ballots in favour of the DP; a CEAZ member, representing the SP, intervened to stop them from entering the voting centre. In the meantime, violence was perpetrated against the election commission member: she was dragged out, and physical violence was perpetrated against her.
- 6 In the Tirana Region, in the Bërzhita Commune, the Socialist Party election commission member received ongoing threats. And specifically, during a

telephone call, a person threatened him with physical elimination. The telephone number of the person involved in threatening is already available to us. This act entails a criminal offence prescribed by the Criminal Code of Albania, and on these grounds, criminal charges have been filed against this person.

- 7 In the Tirana Region, in the Dajt Commune, in the Tufina neighbourhood, on the evening of 26 June 2009 the inhabitants and voters from this constituency were found under constant pressure of weapons and calls for the physical elimination of those who would not be voting for the Democratic Party. These threats came from two off-road vehicles. The State Police did not take any measures so as to ensure identification of the perpetrators of this act, and their apprehension, even though this act took place publicly.

## 8.5. ANNEX V

### PUBLIC SECTOR OFFICIALS LAID-OFF ON POLITICAL GROUNDS

#### Gjirokastra Region

1. Pranvera Lapaj – Përmet Municipality, laid-off (Motive: photo of her daughters' profile in the Facebook appears under Logo *VOTO PS 33* (VOTE FOR SP 33)).
2. Katina Pujo – Përmet Municipality, moved to another job (formerly a kindergarten teacher, she is appointed to the wastewater enterprise).
3. Mihase Ceka - worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
4. Vito Demiri - worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
5. Evgjëni Gjoni - worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
6. Gjërëqina Lopa - worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
7. Sirma Abazi - worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
8. Hëna Tota – worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
9. Sumbulla Shehu – worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
10. Naime Meçe – worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
11. Pëllumbesha Spahaj - worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.

12. Elidon Gërbi – worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
13. Aleksandër Bilbili - worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
14. Robert Mamaj – sector supervisor, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
15. Namik Muçobega - worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
16. Engjellush Runa - worker, Rural Road Directorate in Tepelena, laid-off.
17. Halim Xhafaj - plumber, Water Utility Sh.A., Tepelena, laid-off.
18. Denis Lamka - plumber, Water Utility Sh.A., Tepelena, laid-off.
19. Adriatik Rrapaj - plumber, Water Utility Sh.A., Tepelena, laid-off.
20. Petrit Brahimi - electrician, OSSH, Tepelena Branch, reappointed to Konispol.
21. Altin Zhupa – electrician, OSSH, Tepelena Branch, was moved to Konispol.
22. Ize Shehu – warehouse-keeper, OSSH, Tepelena Branch, reappointed to Çarshova.
23. Myzafer Liçi – sector supervisor, the Fshat Memaliaj Commune, laid-off.
24. Astrit Rama – official, Bënça prison police, reappointed to Peqin.
25. Ajet Hita - official, Bënça prison police, reappointed to Peqin.
26. Safet Majko - official, Bënça prison police, reappointed to Peqin.
27. Arben Sina - official, Bënça prison police, reappointed to Peqin.
28. Arben Elezi - official, Bënça prison police, reappointed to Peqin.

29. Muhamet Sinani - official, Bënça prison police, reappointed to Peqin.
30. Tefik Deda - official, Bënça prison police, reappointed to Peqin.
31. Shamet Lagji - inspector, Directorate for Agriculture in Gjirokastra, laid-off.
32. Llukan Llogo - inspector, Directorate for Agriculture in Gjirokastra, laid-off.
33. Vladimir Stroka - inspector, Directorate for Agriculture in Gjirokastra, laid-off.
34. Afuz Shkreli - inspector, Directorate for Agriculture in Gjirokastra, laid-off.
35. Ilir Bime – fire fighter in Gjirokastra, laid-off.
36. Mane Bizhga – accountant, Social Insurance in Gjirokastra, laid-off.
37. Mimoza Meta – accountant, Social Insurance in Gjirokastra, laid-off.
38. Vjollca Proko – cooker, Student Treatment Directorate in Gjirokastra, laid-off.
39. Pirro Naçe - journalist, Albanian Radio and Television for Gjirokastra, laid-off.

### **Fier Region**

1. Robert Shehu - engineer, *Albpetrol* Company, laid-off.
2. Guri Nuhaj – official, Ballsh Municipality, laid-off.
3. Enver Abedinaj (Invalid) – guard, Water Utility in Ballsh, laid-off.
4. Zamir Lenja - architect, Agency for Legalisation, Urbanisation and Integration of Informal Areas/Constructions (ALUIZNI) in Fier, laid-off.
5. Portokalle Baho - accountant, Vehicle for Use Enterprise, laid-off.
6. Fuat Rama - accountant, Cakran Commune, laid-off.
7. Vera Kokoneci – accountant, Vehicle for Use Directorate in Fier, laid-off.

8. Donika Yzeiri - teacher, Fier, laid-off.
9. Arben Maci – oil engineer, *Albpetrol* Company in Fier, laid-off.

### **Kukës Region**

1. Nasuf Zelfia – service worker, Kukës Municipality, laid-off.
2. Floresha Ademi – cleaner, Kukës Municipality, laid-off.
3. Vladimir Spahiu – engineer, Kukës Municipality, reappointed to a lower rank.
4. Shpresa Remallari – librarian, Kukës Municipality, laid-off.
5. Azem Elezi - teacher, Regional Education Directorate in Kukës, received a reprimand to dismissal.
6. Lirika Çengu – teacher, Kindergarten 5, Kukës, laid-off.
7. Miradije Basha – specialist, Economic Assistance Office, laid-off.
8. Shkurte Haxhiu – cleaner, Service Directorate, laid-off.

### **Dibra Region**

1. Luiza Tola – specialist, Social Insurance Directorate in Bulqiza, laid-off.
2. Fahri Manja (brother of SP candidate Ulsi Manja) – electrician, OSSH, laid-off.

### **Korça Region**

1. Gëzime Oralliu – specialist, Telekom Korça, laid-off.
2. Haxhi Lanka – specialist, Telekom Korça, laid-off.
3. Përparim Çaçi – specialist, Telekom Korça, laid-off.

4. Merushe Gjonaj – nurse, Regional Hospital in Korça, laid-off.

### **Elbasan Region**

1. Nikolla Kavaja– inspector, Employment Office in Elbasan, laid-off.
2. Ramadan Alla –official, Peqin prison police, laid-off.
3. Feruze Sela – official, Peqin prison, reappointed to Tepelena.
4. Fatos Malkja – official, Peqin prison, reappointed to Tepelena.
5. Lumi Koseni – employee, Peqin Municipality, laid-off.
6. Kujtim Gurra –worker, Rural Road Directorate in Labinot Mal, laid-off.
7. Nazmi Gurra – worker, Rural Road Directorate in Labinot Mal, laid-off.
8. Tajar Bici - employee, Gramsh Municipality, laid-off.