

# REPORT No.2 Monitoring New Local Elections of 19 May 2013



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### 1. SYNOPSIS

The present report covers the period between 1 and 17 May 2013. It reflects the electoral context and major developments in the electoral campaign and describes the performance of electoral contestants, including with regard to campaign financing. The report also focuses on the performance of the local public authorities and electoral bodies in terms of respecting the regulatory framework and the established mechanisms.

The monitoring effort found that local public authorities had largely followed the electoral legislation, providing sites for posting electoral advertisement materials, as well as public premises/spaces for organizing campaign rallies. Local authorities adopted a balanced approach and failed to create equal conditions for all the contestants. However, the monitoring effort registered cases in which local administrations provided spaces for election rallies without opening proper contracts with the contestants.

Observers noted the scarcity of members of electoral administration who performed their functions with integrity. After receiving training in courses organized by the higher level electoral bodies, election administration officials applied the present provisions of the election law in a largely consistent manner. However, there have been reports of inconsistent interpretations and superficial understanding of the legal rules related to penalties for cases of alleged misuse of public resources, use of unmarked campaigning materials and their posting in unpermitted places, as well as the contestants' failure to present proper financial reports.

The Promo-LEX monitoring team found that, in the reported period, the campaign was particularly dynamic and diverse. In all the towns, electoral contestants distributed leaflets, posted electoral ads and held campaign rallies. Some candidates organized major events in their towns, such as electoral concerts, many of them featuring district level and national leaders of their respective political parties. Contestants organized voter education activities, helped equip voters' social and cultural sites, and offered voters' electoral gifts. Promo-LEX remains particularly concerned with the candidates' failure to fully disclose funds used in the campaign, the use of administrative resources, the use of unmarked election posters and posting electoral ads in unpermitted places.

In this respect, Promo-LEX calls all electoral contestants to reflect in their financial reports all costs incurred for organizing electoral concerts, social and voter education activities, cover of transport and publishing campaign materials, etc. At the same time, Promo-LEX calls electoral administration bodies to pay particular attention in checking the contestants' financial reports and see that spending ceilings for each locality are respected.

Moreover, observers welcome some candidates' attempts to challenge the undue actions of other contestants, including their demand that the latter be excluded from the race for using administrative resources, inadequate financial reporting, improper use of election posters, etc.

The Promo-LEX monitoring effort notes the need for a continuous and more active involvement of the local and regional media in covering the electoral campaign. The role of the media refers in particular