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Results of the GYLA`s Observation Mission of the Polling Day of Batumi Sakrebulo by-elections 2022 as of 12:00 PM

Georgian Young Lawyers Association within the framework of the Short-term Observation Mission provides the public with information on the observation results of the Batumi Sakrebulo by-elections as of 12 PM. The information provided by GYLA observers mainly concerns issues related to the arrangement and opening of the polling stations, the beginning and development of the voting procedure within the polling stations and on the outer perimeter.

Most of the polling procedures at almost all precincts started on time. An exception was Batumi #23 and #76 precincts, where verification machines had some technical problems. However, they were soon resolved and from 08:16, voters were able to cast their votes at both of the polling stations. At some precincts, regulations for establishing polling stations were violated, as the total number of registered voters exceeded 1500.

Some of the precincts were overcrowded both inside and outside of the polling stations, which was mainly caused by the lack of space and a large number of commission members and observers (e.g., #58, #78, #100, #104). These conditions hindered a proper observation process.

There were long queues at the entrances to some polling stations. GYLA observers also noticed minibuses near #100 and #76 precincts, which were used to transport voters to the stations.

Two attempts of agitation occurred in the adjacent areas of the polling stations:

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- At the #100 polling station, an unknown person appealed to the citizen to vote for 41. Following a remark by the GYLA observer, this person left the territory of the station.
- At #104 precinct, a voter carried a specially printed agitation material, on which was written “War Party” next to the serial number of the UNM. In addition, a box with instructions called for “coloring” a circle next to Ramaz Jindzharadze, the candidate of the Georgian Dream. Presumably, this agitational material was distributed at the outer perimeter of the polling station. After the appropriate reaction of the chairman of the commission, the violation was removed.

In order to respond to the irregularities on the perimeter, GYLA □□ observers called law enforcement two times.

- At #77 precinct, crowds gathered within 10 meters of the polling station. The police arrived on time; however, they did not file administrative offense protocol. The reason given for this decision was that the people present were all authorized to attend the voting processes at the polling station. The rules on the control of voters' will should apply to all citizens, including the authorized ones, if they gather, obstruct the free movement of voters, or/and record their data.
- The crowd was also mobilized at the #100 precinct. GYLA's observer informed a policeman standing nearby about it. The crowd dispersed after the policeman's remarks.

For now, GYLA submitted 2 remarks:

- At the #100 precinct, commission members left the polling station;
- At #90 precinct, a commission member who was regulating the flow of voters allowed a voter to enter who had already cast his ballot and had been inked accordingly. This violation was resolved after the chair of the commission intervened.

Several deficiencies were identified in relation to the proper functioning of electronic voting technologies. In particular, after colorizing a checkbox on the ballot paper, color stains were leaked on the back of the sheet. Since the bulletin is not always fully inserted in the envelope and some parts stay visible, it is possible to identify which candidate was elected based on the location of the stain, which is even easier when

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there are two candidates in total. GYLA ☐☐ observers at precincts #77, #78, #100, and #104 advised commission members to instruct voters to properly place the ballot in the envelope before casting the vote.

GYLA`s election observation mission on the voting day

The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) on April 2, 2022, will fully observe the by-elections in the 79.04 majoritarian districts of Batumi Sakrebulo.

On Election Day GYLA operates a hotline number for the citizens which enables them to receive legal consultations as well as any information regarding electoral procedures, violations on the polling day, and the ways of responding to them.

The hotline number is: **577 07 05 67**

The hotline number for Tbilisi is: **577 07 05 26**

GYLA will provide updates to the public on the observation results throughout the polling day.