



10 CANDIDATES REGISTERED TO CONTINUE ELECTORAL RACE

Central Electoral Commission on November 18 has registered ten candidates for the upcoming elections of the President of the Republic of Belarus (the list of the registered candidates is located on the last page of this Update).

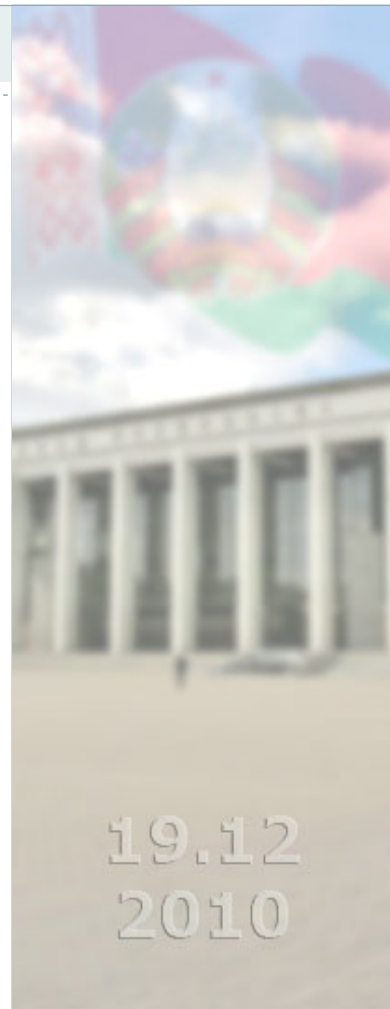
One candidate was refused registration due to the insufficient number of signatures collected in his support.

Prior to the registration the Central Electoral Commission together with territorial commissions has verified the authenticity of presented signatures. The Chair of the Commission stressed that all uncertain situations during the process of verifications were resolved for the benefit of the candidates.

The Commission was also rather loyal during verification of the income and property statements of the candidates, allowing for minor errors and omissions.

The Chair of the Commission has stated that it will continue to apply policy of loyalty and compromises during the electoral campaign. According to the Belarusian legislation the registration of a candidate may be recalled if there are violations of the existing electoral law and procedures. However, the Central Electoral Commission “will endeavor to not to get to such point”.

After the registration the candidates may begin public campaigning, appoint their non-voting members to the Central Electoral Commission, create personal electoral funds and receive funding from the budget of the State.



ELECTION HIGHLIGHTS

- Election day—19.12.2010
- 17 initiative groups registered
- 11 persons collected over 100 000 signatures
- 10 candidates registered
- 159 international observers registered so far

2010 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD WITH THE UPDATED ELECTORAL LEGISLATION

The relevant law on amendments to the Electoral Code was signed into force by the President of Belarus already on January 4, 2010.

The amendments incorporated, inter alia, the OSCE/ODIHR recommendations on the following important issues:

- ensuring the inclusion of representatives of political parties and non-governmental organizations in electoral commissions;
- simplification of the nomination of presidential candidates;
- openness of the process of electoral commissions' set-up and introducing the institute of non-voting CEC members;
- simplification of requirements for holding pre-election meetings with voters, including mass gatherings and pickets;
- holding of debates;
- use by the candidates of their individual electoral funds in addition to the campaign financing provided by the state ;
- additional protection and security of ballot-boxes;
- ensuring safety of the early voting procedures and greater transparency for the vote count process;
- additional guarantees to contest the results of the elections by expanding the time limits for lodging complaints;
- effective legal protection of voters' rights.

FORMATION OF PRECINCT COMMISSIONS

The formation of precinct electoral commissions (PECs) has been completed by the official deadline of November 3. More than 70,000 persons (out of some 84,000 nominees) have become members of 6,346 PECs. Representatives of public associations (NGOs) and political parties have acquired 41.8 per cent of seats (27,851 and 1,769 members, respectively). The opposition political parties nominated 1,073 of their representatives, of which 183 ones have been included in PECs.

Responding to a proposal to give political parties a priority while set-

ting up election commissions the CEC Secretary, Mr. N.Lozerovik underlined that the number of party members on election commissions has significantly increased in the ongoing presidential election campaign compared to the 2006 elections. Back then, there were only 122 party members, while in 2010 their number has surged 14.5 times to reach 1,769 people. There were almost no representatives of opposition parties among members of precinct election commissions at the last presidential elections, now there are 183 of them.

INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

The long-term observers from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have arrived in Belarus . They started their monitoring mission on November 19.

The long-term ODIHR mission consists of 40 persons who represent 18 countries (Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA).

The long-term observers will monitor the process of campaigning by the candidates, examine electoral legislation and its application, the work of the electoral commissions and authorities, the process of resolution of disputes.

The final goal of the OSCE observers is to determine to what extent the organization of electoral process corresponds to the principles of the OSCE, international standards and Belarusian legislation.

According to the Belarusian laws and

regulations the international observers have the right to be present during the meetings of the electoral commissions of all levels, freely meet with the candidates and their proxies, representatives of parties and NGOs.

A special clarifying decision of the Central Electoral Commission underlines that “during the vote count the observers should be provided with a real possibility to observe the ballots counting procedure in the conditions allowing its visibility”.

Several days before the elections date another 400 OSCE ODIHR observers will arrive to Belarus. Their mission will be to monitor the voting process, counting of the votes and computing the results of the vote on the country level.

The Chair of the Central Electoral Commission underlined that it is ready to closely cooperate with the OSCE mission and to provide complete information on its requests.

PUBLIC CAMPAIGNING

After their registration the candidates may start public campaigning, *i.e.* meeting the voters, distributing fliers and information materials, using the mass-media, advertising on billboards, etc.

Every local authority in Belarus has issued a list of premises and public places where candidates may organize meetings with the voters. The list includes conference halls at educational and cultural institutions, libraries, as well as open spaces in proximity to commercial centers, stores, markets and cinemas. For example, each district of the city of Minsk has 10-30 open spaces and

up to 56 conference halls available for such meetings.

The local executive committees will also set-up multiple information booths to post the materials of the candidates. The information stands located in front of the houses, housing organizations, hostels and medical institutions may be used to post campaigning materials.

The state provides funding for every candidate for printing billboards, flyers, leaflets and other materials. The use of additional financing from personal electoral funds is also permitted.

For the first time in the history of the Republic of Belarus 10 candidates participate in the presidential elections campaign

ACCESS OF THE CANDIDATES TO MASS-MEDIA

The Central Electoral Commission informed that the candidates for the election of the President of the Republic of Belarus will be provided with the state-sponsored time on the national TV and radio channels in the period from November 22 to December 2.

The recorded statements of the candidates will be broadcast on TV in the prime-time, *i.e.* from 19.00 to 20.00 during week-days. Radio transmissions will be organized from 6.00 to 7.10 am.

The order of appearance of the candidates on TV and radio channels is determined by drawing lots.

Following the consistent requests of some candidates the Central Electoral Commission has recommended to the Belarusian National TV and Radio Company to organize live debates of the candidates (previously a pre-recorded debate was offered). The details and participants of the debates should be made known by the TV company not later than November 26.

Every candidate will be provided with the possibility to publish his electoral program or other materials in state-owned newspapers. The use of additional financing from personal electoral funds is permitted to publish additional materials in newspapers and magazines.

BELARUSIAN MILITIA WILL NOT YIELD TO PROVOCATIONS DURING ELECTIONS

Belarusian militia (law enforcement service) will use persuasion and warnings to prevent people from disturbing the public order. "If a person understands us, we will not detain him or her" - underlined the Deputy Minister of Interior Eugeny Poluden.

The militia officers will not yield to eventual provocations of some persons during the presidential campaign.

CALENDAR FOR THE ELECTIONS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

	September	October	November	December	Jan.
Registration of initiative groups	29				
Collection of signatures	30	29			
Submission of documents		30	13		
Registration of candidates			14 – 23	18	
Public campaigning				14 – 18	
Early voting				19	
Election day					
2 nd tour (if needed)					2

CANDIDATES REGISTERED FOR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2010

Name	Party	Employment	No. of collected signatures	No. of verified signatures
Kostusev, Grigoriy	Belarusian National Front	Deputy Director of a construction company	107 083	100 870
Lukashenko, Alexander	-	Incumbent President of the Republic of Belarus	1 113 014	1 110 149
Mikhalevich, Aleksei	-	Lawyer at translations and law firm	120 531	111 399
Neklyayev, Vladimir	-	Director of research and education institution	193 829	180 073
Romanchuk, Yaroslav	United Civil Party	Executive director of a think-tank	128 699	123 206
Rymashevskiy, Vitaliy	-	NGO "Christian Business Initiative"	105 318	102 817
Sannikov, Andrei	-	Political observer at newspaper	150 168	142 023
Statkevich, Nikolai	Social-Democratic Party	Retired	117 989	111 159
Tereshchenko, Viktor	-	Chairman of a SME association	122 520	109 012
Uss, Dmitriy	-	Director of a company	110 753	104 102



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