

HDIM.NGO/0022/16/EN
19 September 2016

Warszawa, 19th September 2016

Situation with democratic institutions and free elections in Nagorno-Karabakh

Under democracy we understand, in the first place, the principle of establishing state authorities, wherein the crucial role remains with the choice of the people. The people itself forms authorities through elections. This is the first step towards realization of sovereignty, where the sovereign itself is the state-forming nation. This principle is generally enshrined in the basic law of each country.

Only after the establishment of state authorities through democratic processes, there is an opportunity for further development of democratic institutions within a given society, the main goal of which is essentially to systematically ensure political and economic development.

It is easy to establish and develop democratic institutions in a society, which is recognized by the international community as an independent subject of international law, and it is very challenging to develop democratic institutions for a society living on unrecognized territory. And if such a society is still trying, with all its strength, to create state power through elections, i.e. in a democratic way, then it requires greater attention and even support of the international community.

I am talking about Nagorno-Karabakh now, where since 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the society has been implementing the functions of the sovereign, establishing through direct and equal elections a legitimate state power.

Over the past 25 years since independence, five presidential, six parliamentary and dozens of municipal elections were held in Nagorno-Karabakh. The last parliamentary election was held on 3 May 2015. In order to improve elections, the legislative framework has been systematically developing. On the basis of the current Constitution of 2006, new laws are passed and existing legislation is periodically improved.

In conclusion, I would like to recommend ODIHR:

- to co-operate with unrecognized governments throughout the OSCE region, regardless of the status of the country, and engage in exchange of best practice on elections and election monitoring,
- and that leading non-governmental organizations are able to observe democratic processes in unrecognized territories in the OSCE area.

Thank you very much for your attention!