Press Release:

**What should be done before calling for (Belgrade) elections?**

On the occasion of possible calling for Belgrade Assembly elections and increasing announcements for parliamentary and other elections, Transparency – Serbia (accredited chapter of Transparency International) indicates that **changes of the law and other measures are necessary for avoiding of campaign becoming battlefield for corruption and public resources’ abuses**, as it was so far. Priorities are following:

1. Anticorruption Agency should **finalize election campaign 2012 financial reports’ control, initiate procedures in all cases of law violation** and publish those data. Publishing of these data will have, according to estimation of TS, preventive effect against rules’ violation in new election campaign but would also provide voters with important information on previous complying with anticorruption regulations.
2. Police and public prosecution, before calling for elections, should inform on the progress **in investigating of all criminal acts** for which political competitors accused each other of during 2012 elections, especially related to **irregularities in votes’ counting, votes’ buying and abuse of public resources**.
3. To regulate more precisely **party leaders’ and candidates’ promotion that are at the same time public officials during election campaign**. Monitoring of Transparency – Serbia in 2012 determined increase of “regular” activities of existing officials up to amazing2 to 17 times compared to non-election period. Extraordinary local elections organized in the past year show continuation of this practice. It especially refers to signing of agreements with investors, opening of public objects, visits to construction sites, disburse of social aid and other events. If such promotions are necessary during the election campaign, **presence of politicians is certainly unnecessary** – it could be done by civil servants who do not participate in the election campaign.
4. To **change media regulations** as soon as possible, to ensure, unlike now, transparency of media ownership, regulated financing of media and transparency of data on significant media financers. Republic Broadcasting Agency should timely react to all cases of program or financial favoring that are contrary to the law and RBA’s mandatory Guidelines.
5. To **precise norms of Law on Financing of Political Activities**, especially for controversial areas from previous elections – paying of expenses after the election campaign, bank loans, humanitarian activities of political parties and legally vague status of civil groups.
6. To **publish,** within 48 hour deadline, **data on spending of budget assets, taking over of financial commitments and new employments in** state and local administration, public services and enterprises that occurred during election period. To **subject these processes to special control**, since so far, they frequently served for political promotion and buying of voters’ support.
7. **Participants’ election programs should be published at the beginning of the campaign**, which would provide enough time for experts to provide comments, but also for the parties to provide **reasonable explanation on method of accomplishing election promises and financing of announced activities**.

Transparency – Serbia

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