



IRI Preliminary Statement of the 2024 Georgia Parliamentary Elections

October 27, 2024

I. Mission Overview

This preliminary statement is offered by the international election observation mission of the International Republican Institute (IRI) to Georgia's October 26, 2024, parliamentary election. At the invitation of Georgia's Central Election Commission (CEC), IRI deployed a 48-person international delegation from twenty countries to observe the electoral process. The mission was co-led by Mr. John Shimkus, former United States Congressman, Ms. Margareta Cederfelt, Member of Parliament of Sweden, and Dr. Daniel Twining, IRI President.

Through this mission, IRI: echoes the international community's interest in, and enthusiasm for, inclusive and transparent elections in Georgia; offers an impartial and objective assessment of the electoral process; provides actionable recommendations to enhance the administrative, legal and regulatory environments; and documents the activities of malign entities who may seek to interfere in or discredit the election process or credible civil society organizations providing essential oversight of those processes. Importantly, the mission recognizes that the 2024 elections are critical for the democratic future of Georgia and the democratic aspirations of its citizens.

Methodology

The delegation to Georgia's 2024 parliamentary elections mark IRI's 250th international election observation mission since 1984. Since then, IRI has offered countless reform recommendations for the benefit of host countries, including recommendations for Georgia and other countries that seek to improve the quality and conduct of their elections. This preliminary statement summarizes the findings and recommendations of 48 election observers who focused on national and community-level electoral preparations in the lead up to the October 26 elections.

The analysis of the pre-election environment began in early June with the deployment of IRI mission director, Sean Dunne and was augmented by the arrival of 20 international Long-term Observers (LTOs) and 28 Short-term Observers (STOs) on July 18th and October 22 respectively. Long-term observers deployed to ten regions throughout Georgia: Imereti, Kakheti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Shida Kartli, Kvemo Kartli, Ajara and Tbilisi. For approximately 100 days ahead of the polls, the mission observed all 73 election districts throughout the country and met with political parties, media representatives, election officials, the judiciary, government and security officials, civil society organizations, and community and religious leaders.

The mission conducted its activities in accordance with the laws of Georgia and the [*Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation*](#), adhered to principles of non-interference, and coordinated closely with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and other regional observer missions that endorse the Declaration. As the nation awaits the announcement of the



official results, IRI will continue to observe the electoral process, including the adjudication of disputes. At the conclusion of the process, IRI will issue a comprehensive final report.

II. Executive Summary

On October 26th, Georgia held its 11th national election since its independence to select members of its next parliament amid three major challenges: movement toward Europe, a dynamic constellation of established and emerging political unions, and significant regional instability.

Since its independence, Georgia has overcome economic hardships, war, political violence and significant regional instability. In recent years Georgia has sought closer ties with Western institutions and deepened its relationship with the European Union (EU), including accession to the EU within its constitution and subsequently receiving candidacy status in 2023. Today, however, that path remains uncertain.

The 2024 election cycle landscape was dominated by two major political factions and many smaller opposition unions: the ruling Georgian Dream party (GD), who has held a parliamentary majority since 2012; the United National Movement (UNM); Lelo; Akhali; and Gakharia's For Georgia parties.

During the 2024 electoral period, the government undertook unprecedented political, legal and legal changes that constrained political competition. This manipulation created an uneven electoral playing field far ahead of the polls.

First and foremost, the government's resurrection and enactment of the Foreign Agent Law undermined freedoms of association and expression. Civil society organizations faced continual harassment and intimidation by government authorities and aligned groups. The result is a deep disconnect between the established political elite and majority public opinion was evident and led to significant widespread protests across the country.

Throughout the pre-election period and intensifying closer to election day, GD utilized state resources to boost its campaign and suppress voter turnout including using local government officials to do their political bidding. Pervasive intimidation and pressure on these public sector employees were evident. Moreover, since GD controlled many local governments, these fear tactics resonated, leading many citizens to believe they would lose their social benefits if they voted against the governing party. Interlocutors described this as a systematic attempt, not only to influence voters to support the ruling party, but also to deter and intimidate voters from supporting opposing parties.

Other forms of lawfare included altering the composition of the Central Election Commission (CEC), including the abolishment of the opposition-nominated deputy chairperson and a lower threshold for consensus-based decision-making across all commissions. These changes



reinforced concerns of political bias and imbalance within election commissions. For these reasons and more, trust in the independence and impartiality of the CEC is abysmally low.

The government transferred the regulation of political party donations and campaign financing from the State Audit Office (SAO) to the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), whose head was appointed by the Prime Minister. This move raised serious concerns over its political independence and impartiality, raising fears that it could be weaponized for political gain.

Amendments to the Law on Political Union of Citizens (LPU) did not allow parties to receive donations from legal entities or to form pre-election blocs, forcing candidates to abandon their own party to join a unified list. Given Georgia's fragmented opposition landscape and a threshold of one percent of votes to obtain public political party financing, these changes created a disincentive for smaller parties to unite and to compete to win seats.

The government also altered broadcast media regulations prohibiting media outlets from providing free airtime for political advertisements to all parties. This limited the ability of opposition political parties to engage with and reach voters. The formula for the distribution of free airtime was also changed resulting in further reductions of airtime for coalitions that had reorganized themselves after the 2020 elections.

The current legal and regulatory landscape created an uneven electoral playing field that favored the ruling party and poses a significant structural barrier to genuinely competitive elections.

In the pre-election period, GD spread false narratives that it would use polling technology to track how individual voters voted. This systematic voter intimidation campaign was targeted at rural areas, minority communities, and elderly voters to influence how they would vote. In the final weeks before election day, observers also received extensive and credible reports that voter ID cards were collected by GD activists, ostensibly to apply psychological pressure for political advantage and enforce vote buying schemes. These pernicious tactics contributed to a climate of fear, intimidation, and psychological pressure and were echoed by credible civil society reports in the lead up to election day. It is against this backdrop that the 2024 parliamentary elections took place.

On election day, over two million Georgians turned out to vote—nearly three percent higher than in 2020.

IRI observers were present in 260 polling stations in 42 districts across ten regions. Overall, polling stations were well-administered, and the implementation of new polling technology performed as intended, although some minor problems were observed with the ballot scanning. Over the course of voting, concerns were raised about the secrecy of the vote. **Intimidation and harassment of voters was systematic both inside and outside polling stations, creating an atmosphere of fear.** Several serious isolated incidents of vote buying, attempts at multiple voting, violence and failure to check for ink were observed too. Closing and counting was calm and orderly. Tabulation machines and the transmission of preliminary results functioned



effectively. Electoral complaints were submitted to the precinct commissions in accordance with the procedures.

The mission stresses that the critical processes of results tallying remain underway; neither provisional nor official results have been announced, and the 337 complaints filed to date with district election commissions have yet to be resolved. In the immediate period following election day, IRI urges the CEC to conduct a fair, transparent, accurate and timely count of the results to ensure that Georgian voters' democratic desires are respected. IRI continues to monitor the electoral process including the announcement of provisional and official results and the adjudication of disputes. At the conclusion of the process, IRI will issue a comprehensive final report.

III. Key Recommendations

In the spirit of international cooperation, the mission offers the following nine key recommendations that can be implemented to enhance transparent, credible, and inclusive electoral processes in Georgia:

1. **The Georgian Parliament should repeal The Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence.** Enactment of the 'Foreign Agents Law' is a threat to fundamental freedoms, reducing the space for civil society and independent media, fostering an environment of fear and limiting free speech.
2. **The CEC should implement reforms to balance the political composition of the commission at all levels.** Changes in the appointment of Central Election Commission members, the abolishment of an opposition-appointed Deputy Chair, and reducing the threshold for decision-making to only require a simple majority, mean that citizen stakeholders do not trust the impartiality of electoral administration.
3. **The CEC should remove arbitrary residency criteria to afford voters the opportunity to choose where they vote.**
4. **The CEC should use a uniform ballot and procedures to assess validity of the vote in any single election to ensure equity and simplify voter education.**
5. **Temporary Precinct Election Commissioners should be subject to vetting to ensure they have not been the recipient of short-term contracts within six months of an election.** Widespread allegations of partisanship have led to reduced public trust in the selection and composition of electoral management bodies.
6. **Parliament should reform the Law on Political Union of Citizens to allow pre-election coalitions.** The abolishment of electoral blocks undermined political party identities, limited media access and obstructed campaigning, thereby creating an uneven electoral playing field.



7. **The CEC should ban the use of video recording devices inside polling stations to avoid exacerbating an environment of fear and intimidation.**
8. **The Courts and investigative entities should revise the process of investigation and adjudication of election-related complaints.** While opposition parties and citizen observers have referred criminal and electoral complaints to the relevant authorities, they have neither been investigated nor remedied in a timely manner.
9. **The CEC should take immediate steps to ensure a calm, orderly and secure voting process at polling stations.** Excessive presence of persons within and around polling stations remains a serious concern, as it creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation and has the potential to compromise the voter secrecy.

IV. Political Context

Since its independence in 1991, Georgia has made significant strides to liberalize and enact reforms including, *inter alia*, adoption of a multiparty system, privatization of state-owned enterprises, and strengthening laws to prevent corruption. Still, Georgia struggles with issues such as unemployment, inflation, and a political environment that is divisive and complex. Georgia's political landscape is primarily dominated by two major factions: the ruling Georgian Dream party (GD), who has held a parliamentary majority since 2012, and the largest opposition party, the United National Movement (UNM).

The relationship between opposing factions is highly charged with GD portraying itself as a bulwark against a return to what it describes as the repressive era of the UNM; while UNM accuses GD of targeted political repression, and electoral manipulation. The polarized environment of the two major factions has had an historically outsized effect on smaller parties who struggle to gain traction among voters. Georgia's striking degree of identity politics, fragmented opposition and political polarization impacts the country's overall stability and democratic development.

In recent years Georgia has sought closer ties with Western institutions and deepened its relationship with the European Union. However, Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine added another dimension to the existing political tensions. GD took a cautious approach, avoiding anti-Russian stances while UNM heightened rhetoric that GD had further aligned itself with Russia. Nevertheless, Georgia received EU candidacy status in December 2023.

While GD publicly claimed it supported closer ties to the West, in practice, it took several steps to consolidate power including resurrecting the repressive *Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence* also known as the "Foreign Agent Law". Aimed at regulating activities of civil society and independent media, it was strongly criticized by international and domestic human rights organizations and opposition parties, triggering large scale public protests. The Foreign Agent



Law subsequently had a dramatic effect on freedom of association and expression and led to the suspension of Georgia's EU candidacy status.

Against this backdrop, GD sought to position itself as the sole guarantor of peace and stability. Conversely, the primary opposition parties have focused on the election as a choice between integration with the European Union or a pivot back into Russia's influence. Several substantial coalitions have emerged amid these dynamics and gravitated around parties including Lelo, Akhali and Gakharia's For Georgia, which offer voters a range of choices in the 2024 election cycle.

GD has publicly stated that it planned to dissolve opposition parties and establish a one-party state. This rhetoric led to a hyper charged election period. While UNM was the primary target, GD's campaign sought to conflate all opposition parties and potential sources of criticism as extensions of UNM; stigmatizing non-political actors including the President, civil society organizations, and independent media as part of a broader opposition front.

The 2024 elections have significant implications for Georgia's geopolitical, economic, and democratic trajectory, with the possibility of aligning its policies with citizens' ambitions for a European future.

V. Pre-election Period

Legal Framework

The multitude of legal amendments reshaped the rules of political competition in favor of the ruling party. Elections in Georgia are regulated by the Constitution, the 2011 Election Code and related CEC regulations, the Law on the Political Unions of Citizens (LPU), Anti-Corruption Bureau Regulations (ACB), the Criminal Code and the Administrative Offenses Code and other laws such as the Law on Broadcasting.

Legal amendments since 2022 introduced many changes to Georgia's legal framework, including: phasing out of the mixed electoral system to elect 150 members of parliament to a fully closed list national proportional representation system with a five percent threshold; changes to the appointment and decision-making procedures of the election commissions; the adoption of three new polling technology including voter identification units, optical ballot scanning and data transmission tablets for almost 90 percent of registered voters in the country; and the abolishment of the gender quota.

The adoption of the new electoral system and polling technology garnered broad support, although interlocutors expressed concerns over the lack of political consensus and public consultation in amendments made in 2024. Numerous, albeit less consequential legal amendments have affected the electoral competition, including banning legal entities from donating to political parties; disallowing subnational media outlets from providing free airtime for political advertisements; and changing the minimum number of candidates that are required to submit a list from 60 to 30.



The framework, as it currently exists, poses a significant structural barrier to genuinely competitive elections. For example, amendments to the LPU do not allow parties to form pre-election blocs or to combine their financial resources (as they are legal entities) leading to informal coalitions where candidates must abandon their own party to join a unified list. When placed into the context of Georgia’s fragmented opposition landscape and the lower threshold of one percent of votes to obtain state allocated party financing, the changes create a disincentive for smaller parties to unite or to compete to win seats. Of the 40 political party applications submitted to the CEC 18 parties were registered on the ballot.

Lastly, the regulation of political party donations and campaign financing was transferred from the State Audit Office (SA) to the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), whose head is appointed by the Prime Minister, raising concerns over its impartiality. This concern escalated when the ACB declared several CSOs as having “declared electoral goals”, although these actions were revoked following an announcement by the Prime Minister. Importantly, a concerning aspect of the Election Code allows the ACB to recommend that election commissions apply to the courts to have votes removed from parties in the case of “essential nature” violations.¹ This represents a severe vulnerability for the fundamental rights of voters and abuse of the election system.

Judicial oversight was perceived as weak, with limited remedies for electoral violations. As in previous elections, complaints of voter suppression, harassment, and intimidation were not sufficiently investigated. Although large-scale violence was reported, intimidation against opposition supporters, particularly in regions like Tkibuli, Zugdidi, and Sagarejo, created an environment of fear. Untimely or nonexistent police response to security threats meant that perpetrators could act with impunity.

Election Administration

The Central Election Commission of Georgia (CEC), is responsible for supervising and administering national elections and is composed of both non-partisan and party-nominated members. The impartiality and balance of political representation within the CEC was brought back into question by 2024 amendments that changed the process of nomination and appointment; abolished the opposition deputy chairperson position; and, changed voting procedures to a simple majority if unable to reach two-thirds consensus.

In the pre-election period, the CEC conducted extensive voter education campaigns and mock elections to demonstrate the new technology, regularly issued statements to announce progress and introduced additional measures for transparency, as well as training and certification processes for election staff. Nevertheless, interlocutors to the Mission highlighted

¹ See, Election Code Article 57(5).



their concern that these changes would create a cascade of political control into the 73 District Election Commission (DECs) and 3,044 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs).²

Across all provinces, PEC and DEC staff appointments were not conducted in a transparent manner. Opposition-aligned parties faced obstacles in PEC recruitment, with reports of biased appointments favoring GD. PEC appointments remained obscure, with some DECs limiting observers' access to materials and insufficient transparency regarding the allocation of mobile ballot boxes further casting doubts about the neutrality of subnational election commissions.

In 2020 IRI highlighted the lack of competition in selection of the temporary positions given the number of qualified individuals. Once again, interlocutors expressed serious concerns over the nomination and appointment of the temporary staff of the election commissions. Statistically, in 52 percent of cases the number of applicants equaled the number of vacancies for the three professional vacancies within the DECs.

Adoption of New Polling Technologies

In an effort to modernize voting processes, improve accuracy, accountability and the speed at which preliminary results could be tallied, the CEC introduced technology which was broadly welcomed by all stakeholders. A principal reform of the 2024 parliamentary election was the adoption of new technologies at almost 74.3 percent (2,263) of polling stations, accounting for 89 percent of registered voters in the country. Mock balloting and several pilots of the system were tested by the CEC in the lead up to the election. The technologies include a voter verification unit, optical ballot scanning units as well as a tablet to directly convey preliminary electronic and manual results from the PEC to the CEC's national tabulation center.³ Tablets were also deployed to manual polling stations.

The potential accelerated tabulation of preliminary results and subsequent publication online was viewed by most interlocutors as a positive step toward greater accountability and transparency. However, several interlocutors noted potential continued vulnerabilities for coordinated manipulation of the results tabulation process. Noting that the new technology does not prevent manipulation since, by law, the manual count supersedes the electronic count on election day. Specifically, interlocutors were concerned that the partisan nature of PEC staff appointments increased susceptibility to manipulate the manual count. In addition, CEC did not conduct sufficient voter education following the adoption of new technologies which led to concerns that the new scanner system may allow the government to monitor votes. Thus, rollout of electronic voting systems aimed at improving transparency was met with skepticism, especially in Georgia's rural and minority regions.

² DEC's are permanent Commissions comprised of five professional members that may expand to up to seventeen members during elections including an additional three professional members and up to nine party-nominated members. This composition is then replicated at the PEC level as a temporary Commission.

³ The technology is a tailored solution supplied through Smartmatic, who has used the same equipment in numerous countries.



Voters' List

Georgia's Unified Voters' List (UVL) is a passive registration system that relies on the extraction of records from the national identity system. This system offers *prima facie* evidence of an individual's identity with a secure identity card credential, although some legacy laminate cards remain in distribution. Among the Diaspora, eligible voters are recorded on the Consular Register maintained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In-country voters are assigned to polling stations based on their residency in the identity system. However, the transition to a single nationwide district for elections removes any requirement that a voters' entitlement to vote be linked to their place of residence. Georgia's Constitution and laws explicitly prohibit discrimination based on the place of residence.⁴ In effect, the CEC and parliament have maintained a residency requirement that is an unnecessary and arbitrary criterion for parliamentary elections.

The present arrangement raises concerns that the system is vulnerable to potential technical manipulation. Moreover, interlocutors to the Mission highlighted that many young voters studying or temporarily working in urban areas do not update their residency. As a result, these voters face disproportionately high costs and efforts to participate in the elections. To ensure equitable treatment voters should accordingly be able to nominate their place of polling based on convenience.

Campaign Environment

Of the 18 contestants registered for the elections, visible campaigning was dominated by GD, UNM, Lelo, Akhali and Gakharia. The overall campaign environment was low intensity, beginning with campaign activities in rural regions and, in the last week, eventually saturating urban centers with large rallies. The ruling party's domination of campaign activity such as rallies, events and distribution of campaign materials was largely due to a largess of political donations in 2023 and 2024. Opposition parties hampered by financial constraints opted for low visibility, door-to-door campaigning, small gatherings and social media. Opposition interlocutors often reported difficulties in securing campaign facilities and expressed concerns over their security and that of their supporters.

Critical Incidents

In the pre-election period, no major incidents of political violence were reported, but small localized incidents arose. Several incidents of ruling party and opposition parties damaging, destroying or removing each other's campaign materials were reported. However, the mission received consistent reports from opposition parties and other stakeholders that electoral complaints were not investigated.

Independent media and NGOs, already under pressure due to enactment of the Foreign Agents Law, reported increased harassment and restricted access to campaign materials and events. The

⁴ See Article 14 of the Constitution as well as the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination.



Georgian Orthodox Church's alignment with GD also stymied opposition outreach in some areas such as Kakheti.

Campaign Media

State-controlled media outlets were heavily biased toward GD, dominated the airtime and often framed a 2024 opposition victory as a threat to national stability while independent outlets faced pressure and harassment. Opposition parties struggled to gain equal media access, and disinformation around ballot secrecy was prevalent, especially in rural areas and GD strongholds.

Controversy also arose over inflammatory print advertisements and the distribution and use of free airtime to parties. Particularly, decisions made by the broadcast regulator, the Georgia National Communications Commission (GNCC), that were perceived as favoring the ruling party. Actions by the Anti-corruption Bureau (ACB) were equally contentious. At one point the ACB sought to subject CSO organizations and leaders to state campaign finance reporting requirements, though they were later revoked at the behest of the Prime Minister.

Misuse of State Resources

Throughout the campaign period and intensifying closer to election day, GD utilized state resources to boost its campaign visibility and suppress voter turnout including using civil service and social assistance beneficiaries as an avenue by which to influence people to support the ruling party and/or stigmatize support for other parties. Observers also confirmed instances where voter ID cards were collected by GD activists, ostensibly to apply psychological pressure for political advantage and/or enforce vote buying schemes which contributed to a climate of fear.

The use of short-term employment contracts, intimidation and pressure on public sector employees and the recipients of social assistance.... The launch of new State-funded projects shortly before the ban on such activities 60 days prior to the election were also highlighted. Interlocutors credited these issues as part of a systematic attempt to not only influence voters to support the ruling party but to also deter and intimidate voters from supporting opposing parties.

Overall, the campaign period was calm, with few irregularities of major significance. However, across the provinces, the competitive landscape was imbalanced due to a variety of irregularities pressuring public servants, voter intimidation in Samegrelo, and coercion of state employees. In Ozurgeti and Telavi, interlocutors reported instances of GD using public funds for campaign activities.

The prevalence of these irregularities became more salient closer to election day and increased public skepticism that the October polls would not be fair. Throughout October, voter intimidation that targeted opposition supporters, public sector employees, and vulnerable groups was widespread. Interlocutors alleged that GD threatened to terminate or cut benefits of public sector employees for attending opposition rallies. Rural areas and regions with a large public sector workforce, like Samegrelo, Adjara, and Kvemo Kartli, appeared most impacted.



Inclusion and Participation

Minority groups and rural voters faced significant barriers. Ethnic minorities such as Azerbaijani communities in Kvemo Kartli and Imereti lacked adequate voter education and feared political repercussions for engaging with opposition groups. PECs' efforts to educate persons with disabilities on voting procedures and accessible locations were largely insufficient, leaving questions as to whether persons with disabilities could fully participate on election day. Younger, urban voters generally showed support for pro-Western opposition parties, whereas in rural areas GD's influence remained stronger due to economic dependencies and homogenous political views.

VI. Election Day

As reported by the CEC, a total of 3,111 polling stations were opened across 3,044 sites in Georgia and 67 were set up in 53 cities across 42 countries. Of these polling stations 2,263 utilized electronic technologies representing 3,113,747 (89 percent) of the total 3,508,294 registered voters, while 64,238 voters are registered.

Opening

The mission noted that 62 percent of the 21 polling stations visited were open to voters by eight o'clock, observing that those that were delayed were all technology based and opened shortly later. All precincts had sufficient staff to open and were well laid out, but many experienced a degree of crowding due to limited space. The precincts visited were well-prepared with the necessary voting materials, and ballot boxes were sealed and visible. While accessibility for people with disabilities varied, the CEC had made prior arrangements to allow these voters to nominate their polling place for ease of access.

Voting

The 24 observation teams observed 216 polling stations across the country in 60 percent (42 of 73) districts across ten out of Georgia's 11 regions. Citizen observers were present in 95 percent of polling stations, 25 percent had other international observers, and accredited media were in 21 percent of locations. Essential voting materials were available at all polling stations throughout the voting period, while technology systems were noted to be operable with only a few experiencing temporary disruptions.

Party representatives from major political unions, including Georgian Dream, Coalition for Change, Unity-National Movement, Strong Georgia, and Gakharia for Georgia were widely present at nearly all polling stations. Voting proceeded smoothly, although crowding was problematic in some locations. In general, PEC members were professional and followed procedures, although there were a few instances of voters not being checked for ink and attempts at multiple voting. Secrecy of the vote was a concern due to the prevalence of Georgian Dream video cameras within polling stations reinforcing concerns raised by citizens regarding intimidation inside and around polling stations.



Closing and Counting

Mission observers were present at 23 polling stations for the counting and closing process. The performance of vote counting machines functioned well, with preliminary counts transmitted via tablet. No significant irregularities were noted during the counting processes, which were conducted at all polling stations. The electronic preliminary results were published on the CEC website.

Critical Violations

Twenty-two critical incidents were reported primarily in Samegrelo and Zemo-Svaneti, Kakheti, Imereti and Mtshketa-Mtianeti as well as Tbilisi and Kvemo Kartli. The most common and prevalent violations entailed pressure, intimidation and harassment of voters. These violations occurred both inside and outside polling stations. Instances of vote buying, ballot stuffing, and attempts at multiple voting were observed in isolated instances. Credible domestic observer groups reported that their observers encountered intimidation and interference in the course of their work, in some cases being ejected from polling stations. Media coverage of the election showed several instances of violence between ruling party and opposition representatives outside polling stations and brazen attempts at ballot stuffing.

VII. Acknowledgements

IRI actively worked in Georgia for more than 20 years, helping to strengthen democratic institutions and civil society. The mission is grateful for Mr. John Shimkus, Ms. Margareta Cederfelt, and Dr. Daniel Twining for leading the 48-person delegation. IRI expresses special thanks to Mr. Sean Dunne for his leadership of the mission and his adherence to the highest standards of electoral observation. Lastly, IRI is thankful for the cooperation it received from Georgian citizens, government officials, candidates, party members, representatives from civil society and the journalists with whom it interacted.

IRI closely coordinated with the National Democratic Institute (NDI)'s international election observation mission, ensuring extensive, nation-wide coverage and a holistic account of the elections by the respective missions. This mission is made possible with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS).