



4 February 2009

DECLARATION

REGARDING THE INACTION OF POLICE FORCES WHEN CIVIL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES ARE ATTACKED WHILE PEACEFULLY PROTESTING IN FRONT OF THE GENERAL PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

Monitoring the parliamentary elections 2009, the Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections - „Coalition 2009” notes that on 3rd of February 2009 several NGOs organized an action of protest aiming to defend the democracy and observance of political rights in the Republic of Moldova. While peacefully protesting, the participants were attacked with tear gas by a group of masked individuals, who triggered a fight resulting in injury of some protesters.

Wrangles that could degenerate into violence with unpredictable consequences took place under the eyes of the prosecutors from the General Prosecutor's Office, who refused to intervene in order to end violence and restore public order. Many insistent calls were addressed by protesters to the police forces asking to intervene and restore public order, but those were ignored by the latter. Comparing this situation to what happened on 29th of January, when Anatol Mătășaru was arrested, the Coalition concludes with indignation that police intervenes to limit freedom of expression and assembly, but ignores the legal requirement to ensure public safety and security of individual citizens, who were exercising peacefully on 3rd of February their rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

Coalition qualifies the inaction of police and prosecutors as an act that seriously undermines the freedom of expression and assembly, blots out the civic and political activism of Moldovan citizens and implicitly the democracy, as well as free and fair elections in Moldova.

Taking into consideration the previous statement regarding the insurance of political rights of citizens, the Coalition 2009 notes, with great concern, that this case had a direct impact on political rights and freedoms, which, although guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, are not ensured and guaranteed by the state. The lack of appropriate actions from the police and prosecutors' side impacts the civic and political activism of Moldovan citizens, transforming citizens from active agents in the processes of governance in passive and misinformed recipients, subjected to a police regime, which displays more frequently during the elections. Along these lines, the Coalition 2009 urges the Ombudsman institution to take action for defense of human rights, and the Parliament, Government and the President of Moldova to ensure unconditional respect for human rights and political freedoms of citizens – essential precondition for free and fair elections.

Coalition 2009 is a voluntary union of non-governmental organizations, aiming at contributing to the development of free, fair, transparent and democratic elections of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova. Coalition 2009 continues the efforts of civil society to contribute to the conduct of free and fair elections started by Coalition 2005 and Coalition 2007. Currently the Coalition consists of 45 NGOs.