

## STATEMENT\*

### The Standard of Partial Elections for the Mayor of Himara, important indicator for the Integrity of the upcoming 2025 Parliamentary Elections

Tomorrow, August 4, 2024, will be held the Partial Elections for the Mayor of Himara, as decreed by the President of the Republic on July 5, 2024.

The holding of these elections came after the Central Election Commission (CEC) decided, on July 5, 2024, to invalidate the mandate of the Mayor of Himara, Mr. Dhionisios (Alfred) Beleri, after the latter was found guilty by the Court of Appeal for Corruption and Organized Crime for the charge of active corruption in elections.

Tomorrow's election process will be administered at the second level by 1 Zonal Electoral Administration Commission (KZAZ), as well as 36 Voting Center Commissions (VCC). 23,074 voters registered in the voter lists as residents of this municipality have the right to vote in these elections.

The Coalition for Reforms, Integration and Consolidated Institutions (KRIIK) following **his continuous commitment to strengthening and ensuring the integrity of elections, law enforcement and free and uninfluenced voting**, in cooperation with local partner organizations<sup>1</sup>, has already started monitoring the preparations for this partial election process and will continue to follow it in all its phases, voluntarily engaging 10 observers with experience in monitoring the work of the Electoral Administration Area Commission, the voting process, as well as the counting.

Regarding the findings so far and those of the election day, KRIIK will issue on Monday a preliminary statement on the progress of this process. In the meantime, it should be noted that KRIIK has already filed two complaints with the CEC regarding the misuse of state resources and breaking of the election silence.

Also, **KRIIK has urged the CEC**, specifically the State Commissioner of Elections, and **through this Declaration reiterates the appeal to continue following the established positive practice** of the 2023 Local Elections and the partial ones for the Mayor of Kukes, to **approve as soon as possible a special order for the establishment of certain rules for the persons present in the territory of the venues where the polling stations are located<sup>2</sup>**.

This act, not only **is in compliance with the Electoral Code (articles 109, 110) and OSCE/ODIHR Recommendations**, but it **makes possible the engagement and participation of citizens in the good progress of the electoral process**. Any citizen, whether a voter, commissioner, observer or journalist, in case they notice unauthorized persons or gatherings outside the polling stations, in the courtyards of the buildings, at the entrance, in the internal corridors of the building where polling stations are located or around them at a distance of less than 150 m, can notify the Polling Station Commission, CEAZ, or even the CEC institution directly.

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<sup>1</sup> For these elections, Vloera Youth Center and Power of Hope, Trust and Change – Gjirokaštër.

<sup>2</sup> [Order no. 106, dated 22.9.2023](#) "On the implementation of some rules for the persons present in the territory of the electoral facilities where the voting centers are located, for the partial elections for the Mayor of Kukes on September 24, 2023".

The Central Election Commission, in continuation of the administration of the entire pre-election process, **should be maximally committed to have the entire process under control, promoting full law enforcement and providing maximum transparency**, guarantee all the necessary infrastructure and logistics, the smooth running of the voting and counting process, as well as ensure the follow-up and efficient addressing of any violation observed, evidence received, denunciation made or non-fulfillment of duties by the electoral administration .

**KRIIK appeals to the Leaders of Political Parties, at the central and local level**, to exercise their authority to keep their members and supporters under control by avoiding any form of gathering outside the premises of the polling stations, as well as gatherings of any kind until the end of the whole process.

Also, **they must avoid any influence on the election commissioners**, proposed by them, as well as to encourage them to perform their duty correctly, calmly and in full implementation of the letter and spirit of the law.

Political parties must fully respect the electoral silence, today and tomorrow until the polls close, especially in **stopping their electoral activity of contacts or door-to-door meetings with voters in the field** (*Article 77 of the Electoral Code*), in local media and especially in internet portals and social media platforms.

This behavior is emphasized as being quite important for political parties, their functionaries, supporters and militants, since, apart from being an application of the law, it is primarily an **indicator of respect for the voting citizen as sovereign**, that they are presumed to represent, giving each voter **the opportunity to reflect and vote freely and uninfluenced**.

The State Police must be committed to the maximum and in a professional manner guarantee maximum order and tranquility for citizens and voters during the voting day. Specifically, the State Police, in accordance with the Electoral Code (articles 109, 110), should take into consideration the prevention and distribution of any gathering of people in the areas around the polling stations, in the premises outside the polling station, in the courtyards of the buildings, at the entrances and in the internal corridors. In these venues should only be present voters waiting to vote, observers and representatives of the authorized media.

Also, **KRIIK appeals and brings to the attention of the General Prosecutor's Office and SPAK (Special Anti-Corruption and Organized Crime Structure)**, that it is quite necessary for the peace and safety of the citizens that these institutions show that they will be present and ready, as well as that they will follow with priority any denunciation or indication that can be observed regarding possible election crimes.

To conclude, **KRIIK calls on and urges all voters, residents of the Himara Municipality, to go to the polls en masse to exercise the basic right to vote**, for the election of the first Citizen of their Municipality.

Mass participation of citizens in voting **expressing their will completely free and intact, is a great moment of exercise of sovereignty and a great lesson in democracy for the political class**, in relation to today's political context, the future of democracy in the country and the projection of politics on the local government.

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**Tirana, on August 3, 2024!**

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**\*This Document is published in Albanian and in English.  
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