

## President's Call for New Elections

18 Nov. 2024



We heard one summary protocol of the election results [from the CEC], and now, as the President elected by the people and the only remaining independent institution, I must present my own summary of these elections - something the CEC likely cannot dispute.

My assessment of the election results is as follows: First and foremost, all principles and standards of Georgia's Constitution and international law, as enshrined and guaranteed in numerous conventions, were violated. Chief among these were the secrecy of voting and the universality of the vote, as the voting rights of emigrants were disregarded. Moreover, widespread and systematic fraud schemes were evident, encompassing both the pre-election period and Election Day. Crucially, a fundamental right related to elections was also violated - the right to have election complaints reviewed fairly and by an independent judiciary.

Furthermore, the elections are not recognized by the President, any opposition political parties, or a large segment of society, who continue their rightful protests and defiance. Consequently, the legitimacy of the elected Parliament is not acknowledged by anyone. Non-governmental and monitoring organizations, both domestically and internationally, also refrain from declaring these elections as free and fair. Even more significant is the fact that, three weeks later, none of our key democratic partners have recognized the elections. Instead, they emphasize the violations and are considering various measures of pressure.

Thus, the verdict is clear: these elections did not take place.

Given this situation, the country finds itself in a very serious state, facing grave threats. One such threat is destabilization, which could result from dual power structures and deepening polarization - a process fueled daily by the organized and aggressive propaganda of the ruling government and its supporters. Political instability could also lead to external destabilization caused by foreign factors. The risk of such destabilization grows when the country, instead of fostering close ties with partners, chooses isolation, as the current government does. Simultaneously, by every measure, an economic and financial crisis is looming.

As the President of this country, I have neither the right nor the intention to allow this to happen.

Therefore, we must collectively find a path out of this seemingly inevitable, deep, and dangerous crisis. I must offer a solution to society, political forces, and our partners. Even the current government should recognize this as the only stable and peaceful way out of the present situation.

### The Plan

What is the plan, and what do I propose? First and foremost, new elections. When elections have not taken place, they must be repeated as soon as possible. However, the timeline for new elections depends on addressing certain issues that must be resolved to ensure that the process is meaningful. These include an international investigation -not to confirm what we already know, that the elections were rigged - but to identify and prove the systemic flaws that need to be corrected for new, fair, free, and unmanipulated elections.

With international support, we must form a new electoral administration, amend the electoral code in line with the recommendations and requirements previously outlined by OSCE/ODIHR, and, for instance, establish proper procedures for opening polling stations abroad. A special court for election disputes should also be created. In all these new institutions, it would be both desirable and possible for our foreign partners to play a direct role.

Once the new electoral administration and procedures are adequately prepared, the second step is to revert to the pre-October 26 political status quo. Since the elections did not take place, no new developments can occur - no new Parliament, no new government, and no presidential elections. We will continue with the existing Parliament, government, and President to ensure maximum stability during the transitional period leading to new elections. Thus, we are not dismissing or prosecuting anyone; the goal is simply to reach new elections, as no stable country can exist without reflecting its people's will in elections and the political system that follows.

This plan requires the support of international partners, and I am already working on securing their backing. I am confident they will find this the most viable solution, as it is the only stable and peaceful path to navigate the crisis without unnecessary turmoil.

Who plays what role in this scenario?

First, society must continue its defiance and protest. I commend those who are out on the streets today and likely tonight as well. I particularly salute the students, who are the driving force of progress in any country and lead it toward its future. Your protest is vital because my efforts alone will not suffice without it. Peaceful and politically mature protest is a critical component of this plan.

As for political parties, I have met with them and will continue consultations to ensure they understand the necessity of their participation in this plan. I believe they recognize this well. There are no other alternatives; we must unite or at least align closely to achieve this goal.

As I mentioned, I am engaged in near-daily discussions with various leaders on these issues because their expectations are extremely high. It is not enough to merely state that the elections were rigged (a fact they already understand well); when elections are falsified, the international community consistently demands a clear path forward - a solution to the crisis. No one wants to see the emergence of a new crisis. Based on my initial conversations, I believe this plan is acceptable to them, as it offers a stable and constructive way forward.

To "Georgian Dream" - I urge them to reflect carefully. The idea of forming a new Parliament, appointing a government, and proceeding as if nothing happened is entirely unserious when neither your own country nor your key international partners support you - unless your intention is to take the nation in a completely different direction. Stability, crisis resolution, and the continuation of the outgoing Parliament - the Parliament of 2020 - and the government, whether led by Mr. Kobakhidze or someone else, to guide the country peacefully to new elections, are the logical steps forward. I leave this for their consideration.

Lastly, I want to inform you that tomorrow morning I will file a lawsuit with the Constitutional Court, addressing the violation of two fundamental constitutional principles: secrecy and universality. This action is not driven by faith in the Constitutional Court - we all know that no institution in this country remains truly independent, as we have seen repeatedly. However, this step is essential to signal that no legal dispute should go unchallenged, that every possible avenue must be pursued to its fullest extent.

The aim of this lawsuit is precisely this: to test the conscience of the judges who will face this decision. They must consider the kind of country they envision, the direction they want it to take, and with whom they see its future. Their response will hold immense significance. And I wish - them and ourselves - that there will be at least a few judges in the Constitutional Court who, as one judge has already demonstrated, can show us that we still have honorable judges in this country.

Thank you very much!

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