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**Electoral Conference on  
“Domestic observation of ballot counting. The current legal framework and best practices for  
its implementation”**

**Dear Mr. Ambassador Borchard,**

**Distinguished participants,**

I take this opportunity to thank the OSCE Presence, one of the main partners of the Central Election Commission, which also with the organization of this Conference, attests the engagement and continuous contribution to the increase of electoral process standard in Albania!

The Central Election Commission, the responsible institution for organizing and administering the elections, does not only look at the performance of the body and the election administration at all levels, but also the role of all actors in the process: voters, political parties, media and obviously to civil society, whose synergies enhance the process standards, by serving to strengthen democracy and integration processes of the country.

Parliamentary elections of June 25, 2017, as well as the pre-election processes, will be monitored by a large number of local observers whose engagement is a clear indicator of civic awareness rising.

The Election Observer Mission is a valuable civic service for Albanian democracy and society, which all actors are obliged to guarantee a smooth, regular process, **where the voter and free, secret and direct vote, are more important than the results of political parties!**

A ballot counting is one of the key moments of an election process. The politicization of technical aspects during the ballot counting process and the adoption of scoreboards, are the main factors that delay the issuance of results.

The correct reading and full transparency of any vote voiced, the issuance of election results by the CEAZ no later than 22.00 o'clock of the next day of voting, **is the responsibility of second level counters and commissioners, as well as the political parties and their observers, who should show prudence and not to abuse with their legal rights.**

In assessing the important role of observers for the transparency of the results, ODHIR in the 2013 and 2015 observation reports, has recommended that all accredited observers should have equal access to copies of VC scoreboards, and EAZ as well.

These recommendations are not yet reflected in the Electoral Code, which recognizes only the observers of the electoral subjects the right to contest or obtain copies of the results tables.

Due to the many years of experience in the CEC, I, personally judge that the reports and findings of local observers of civil society, with fair, impartial and professional judgment, are the "diagnostics" of the problems of the electoral process.

In two weeks, Albanians will go to ballot boxes!

I appeal to all actors and factors who have a role in administration of the electoral process, especially in ballot counting, to show maximum responsibility to guarantee the integrity of this process and its completion within legal deadline!

**Voters show responsiveness by taking part in the polls! We owe them, to read their will rightly and timely!**

Thank you!