



COMMITTEE OF VOTERS OF UKRAINE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LEADING CANDIDATES EACH RECEIVE 39.6% SUPPORT, ACCORDING TO NON-PARTISAN 'QUICK COUNT'

MOST SERIOUS ELECTION DAY PROBLEMS CENTER ON VOTER REGISTRIES

Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych and opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko have both received 39.6% of the vote in yesterday's first round of Ukraine's presidential election, according to a "quick count" conducted by the Committee of Voters of Ukraine (CVU), a non-partisan election monitoring organization. "Clearly, there will now be a second round of voting", says Ihor Popov, the CVU chairman. Oleksandar Moroz, the Socialist Party leader, finished third, with 5.6%, while the Communist Party's candidate, Petro Symonenko, was fourth, at 5.0%. Voter turnout was 74.5%. CVU based its findings on a parallel tabulation of the officially posted results in 1,424 randomly-selected precincts across the country. The "quick count" figures are accurate to within 1.8%, 19 times out of 20.

Election day saw numerous serious irregularities involving voter registries. "According to our estimates," says Popov, "up to 10% of citizens who tried to cast ballots were unable to do so because their names had been left off the registries." This represents close to 3 million people. The poor state of the voter registries was indicative of a general lack of facilities and preparation in the election administration. Despite these problems, election day was generally orderly, with high voter turnout.

CVU noted some instances where some election commissioners and poll-watchers were inexplicably removed just before election day. In other cases, particularly in Sumy and Kirovohrad, election commissions have refused officially to certify the voting results and to transmit them to the Central Election Commission. Our monitors also witnessed a few busloads of people being organized to cast multiple absentee ballots in different parts of the country.

CVU calls upon election commissions, voters and the courts to exert the maximum effort in the next three weeks to ensure that every citizen who wants to vote in the second round on November 21st is able to do so.

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