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NDI POLL: GEORGIANS SAY ELECTIONS WERE WELL RUN AND COUNTRY HEADED IN RIGHT DIRECTION

TBILISI – A survey of public opinion in Georgia, released today by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), shows that 79 percent of Georgians think the Oct. 1 parliamentary elections were run well compared to 12 percent who thought there was some level of falsification.

Fifty-eight percent of respondents view Georgia as headed in the right direction, while 11 percent said the country is going in the wrong direction. Jobs (mentioned by 56 percent) and affordable health care (mentioned by 35 percent) remain the top two most important issues.

Attitudes toward democracy have remained statistically the same since NDI's August poll. Asked whether Georgia is a democracy now, 41 percent of respondents said yes, compared to 40 percent who said no.

Expectations for majoritarian members of parliament (MPs) have changed dramatically from previous polling. For the first time, a majority of citizens now believe that majoritarian members will be active and represent the interests of citizens. In August, a majority expected their majoritarian MP will "do what the party tells him/her to do" and less than 40 percent expected that he/she would be active and represent constituents' interests.

"Since our last poll in August, Georgians made history by achieving their first democratic electoral transfer of power. A majority of Georgians assess the elections as well run and their country as headed in the right direction," said Luis Navarro, NDI's country director in Georgia. "While their priority issues and views of democracy have largely remained the same, their views on how majoritarian members will represent them in parliament have reversed and reflect their positive expectations."

The results reflect data collected from Nov. 14-25 in face-to-face interviews with a nationwide representative sample of Georgians that included 1,947 completed interviews. The survey looks at issues of public importance, perceptions of democracy and attitudes toward reforms, as well as various domestic and foreign policy issues. The survey has an average margin of error of +/-3%.

NDI's survey work is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and carried out by the Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC).

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NDI is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. More information is available at www.ndi.org.