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Contact: Teona Kupunia, Tbilisi
+995577 719134, teona@ndi.ge;
Kathy Gest, Washington,
+202-966-5215, kgest@ndi.org

IVANISHVILI, USUPASHVILI AND GEORGIAN DREAM COALITION RECEIVE THEIR HIGHEST EVER APPROVAL RATINGS IN NDI POLLS

TBILISI – Following Georgia’s first democratic transfer of power, a landmark event in the nation’s history, Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili received an 80 percent favorable rating and Speaker of Parliament Davit Usupashvili received a 63 percent favorable rating, according to the findings of a public opinion survey released here today by the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

Sixty-three percent of respondents identified the Georgian Dream coalition as the party closest to them. President Mikheil Saakashvili received a favorable rating of 29 percent, and the United National Movement was identified by 10 percent of those surveyed as the party closest to them.

The NDI survey was designed to measure Georgian voters’ attitudes toward the Oct. 1 parliamentary elections and the performance of politicians and political parties.

These findings were part of a broader survey that found that voters care most about jobs and affordable healthcare.

Luis Navarro, NDI’s country director in Georgia, said, “The Georgian Dream Coalition and Prime Minister Ivanishvili have received their highest ever approval ratings in NDI polls from Georgians following the October parliamentary elections. In addition, a majority of both Georgian Dream and UNM supporters see the country as going in the right direction.”

In an effort to better understand the priorities and perspectives of respondents who answered “don't know,” “refuse to answer” or “no party” to the question of which party is closest to you, NDI is releasing party crosstab information about Georgian respondent groups. A crosstab shows the relationship between two questions, such as “in which direction Georgia is going” compared with ““which party is closest to you.””

In the past, NDI has shared findings on parties’ and politicians’ ratings privately with political parties. It is releasing these results publicly today to avoid their misinterpretation through the leaking of partial findings

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.