

**We present to you the interview of the Central Electoral Commission Srбуhi Arzumanyan to aparaj.am. As a state and a quite experienced figure, but at the same time a young cadre what changes and innovations can you include in the electoral system?**

For changes and innovations, of course, bases are needed, and such are usually created after each national election. If we take into account the traditional character of the electoral system and the frequency of elections in Artsakh, then, perhaps, there is no need to expect globally great changes and innovations.

Nevertheless, we have some news. Today the National Assembly has accepted our proposal concerning the adoption of a new electoral code, which has become a subject of active discussions since the phase of the draft which had been launched in February of the current year. Even an opinion was announced that the amendments are of a technical nature. I do not share this opinion, because the main and key theses of the electoral process have already been fixed in the Constitution, the main law of our country. The Electoral Code deriving from the Constitution has been aimed to implement mainly the issues of the technical provision.

Although the Electoral Code generally corresponded to the international standards and gave solutions to almost all necessary questions for the organization of different elections, yet, it was not free from shortcomings. But the new Electoral Code, I am sure, will provide more improved legislative field for the implementation of full electoral right for about 100 000 voters, at the same time this will provide a clear and accessible employment for more than 2,500 electoral commission.

Taking advantage of the opportunity I express my satisfaction and gratitude to all the interested people, political powers for the active initiatives and cooperation. From January 1, 2015 the new Electoral Code will already be in action which will serve as a legal basis for the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

For a better outcome of the elections the electoral commissions have a lot to do. Of course, the provision of a right moral atmosphere has a great role for the population, so for it the electoral mechanisms are to be continually improved, and the fixation of the clear legislative bases is necessity for those who organize the elections. For that a thesis has been provided in the Electoral Code, thus, after the elections CEC analyze what has happened during the elections, if there is any shortcoming, the legislative issues which cause the reason of shortcomings, and come up with a proposal to make amendments in the law.

After having been elected a Chairperson of CEC I announce that we should take the example the best electoral experience of the world.

I remained true to my promise, and accordingly together with our colleagues we have fixed corresponding theses in the new Electoral Code.

**The electoral system in each country reflects the level of democracy: How would you rate the electoral system of the NKR?**

If we try to comment on the structure of the electoral system, then it will turn out that I answer to your question. Today our three-tier electoral system has a political involvement, that is, in all three levels the representatives of groups and fractions submitted in NA are presented in the committees, therefore, the entire electoral system, with its political tendencies serves to democracy.

Of course, in the issue of being democratic, first a great role has just our nation expressing themselves also through the electoral system, and in this regard, let me say that it does not fail.

This is neither a praise nor an exaggeration. but a reality, which also stated the international observers who arrived in Artsakh and participated in the elections of our republic. Their opinions give me bases to say that it is possible to hold democratic elections in our country and they are held. Finally, if 60-70 % of the voters participate in the elections, and that is a rather significant indicator for a developing country, therefore, we can surely state on the democracy established in Artsakh.

**In your opinion, what is the participation of people in making decisions in the state system and in the system of state control ?**

I think that so far as they are active. Our society is directly involved in the management of state structures starting with the fact that people choose the head of the supreme body of the country, President, the legislature and the representatives of local government bodies. We, the people of Karabakh are fond of power and statehood, therefore we can not be free from the process of nation-building. It is another question that there can be some difficulties and complaints. I consider it objective: It is typical to the post-war period. War is accompanied by human and cadre losses, which may affect to the quality of the governance. Although some passiveness, nevertheless, the participation of our population in making decisions in state and control system an undeniable reality. Only it would be desirable the initiative be activated.

**Due to the fact that Artsakh is small, after the elections especially in small communities very often there come out some unrests and complaints. In this direction, what do you think, what should be done?**

I think that such situations can appear not only due to the elections. The feature of a small area and the national thinking that you have mentioned I suppose an active participation in any process. Simply, the election is such a period that it leads those relations to flare-ups. The activeness in the electoral process should be welcomed, as the reverse picture of it, the indifference, is unacceptable. I am sure, that each one who is anxious about the future of our country is strongly against to unrests, but not to disagreements. Here all of us have doings. It also depends on the members of the commissions, that in case of any outcome of the elections, which situation can appear. Of course, those who are interested in the elections, the candidates, their proxies are not free from them.

We, as electoral commissioners, set ourselves two main conditions in future. First, we suggested an amendment in the new Electoral Code :to shorten the initial term of announcing the elections nearly for one month: and that is not a little time to ease the moral tension of the situation. The other one is regularly raise the level of professionalism of the electoral

commission for which in all the regions of the republic professional trainings are organized to add the system young and intelligent citizens. If the member of the commission has a best command of his main functional duties and has positive, moral qualities, then the issue of this sphere will be solved. Everything that depends on the electoral commissions is provided at present, and it will be provided also in future. I have a conviction, that we all and each of us separately are responsible for general moral positive atmosphere of our republic.

### **What is the reason for the small number of women in senior government positions.?**

I do not so share your opinion. The role of the women has objectively and clearly increased after war, which is noticeable from the level of their involvement in the government system . Perhaps there are few women in senior government positions, but if we have female figures who are ready to assume the responsibility of the government of this or other sphere, therefore, I think, it should be welcomed. For example, the half of the members of the electoral commissions are women.

A corresponding change has been fixed in the recently adopted Electoral Code expecting to see more women in the parliament. At least each fifth person in the list submitted by the parties participating in the elections under proportional system one shall be a female instead of one female of ten persons which used to be.

In the end, I would like you not to forget that the society will be successful only if there are no doubts about the fairness of the processes occurring around it. Belief in own country, people and the authorities in relation to the implementation of any measures, including the election is the only guarantee of a success. With all this consciousness , assuming moral responsibility to those who gave us victory and who are protecting the peace of our country we can only, as they say, keep the Country.