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PRESS RELEASE

Ferizaj municipal authorities violate the principles of transparency

The last meeting of the Committee for Policy and Finance as well as the session of the Municipal Assembly during this week was organized in contradiction with the legal provisions, which oblige municipal authorities to be more transparent with the public.

Chairman of the Assembly of Ferizaj, on the basis of legal authorizations organized the VIII meeting of the Committee for Politics and Finances, on 26 September 2015, while the VIII meeting of the Municipal Assembly was scheduled on 29 September 2015, whereas the notice for the meeting of these two decision-making authorities has not been posted on the website of the Municipality of Ferizaj, notice board or through the media.

Likewise, the chairman of the MA did not comply with the provisions of the Law on Local Self-Government, Administrative Instruction of MLGA for Transparency on Municipality (AI 05/2013) as well as the Regulation on Transparency of MA Ferizaj, which are binding for municipal authorities to publish the notice of the meeting of MA at least 7 days before the scheduled date for holding the session, through the official website, media and public announcements in the most frequented places. This is not the first time that citizens and civil society organizations in Ferizaj are not notified with the agenda and schedule for meetings of Committees or Parliament.

Moreover, it should be underlined that the review of strategic documents and of public interest were proposed on the meeting agendas, such as the draft decision for adoption of the budget for 2016, draft decision for approval of the regulation for tax on immovable property as well as draft decision on the revision of the regulatory plan of municipality zones I and VIII.

In this regard, the regulation on immovable property taxation was not subject to public hearing, while the revision of the regulatory plan of the I-st and VIII zones after being returned from the joint committee of MESP and MLGA was followed by new violations, which necessitates more transparent decision-making in the public interest. The budget proposal and the regulation for tax on property, as well as the revision of the draft decision to the regulatory plan of municipality zones I-st and VIII are important public policies, affecting the interests of citizens and further affect their living environment, therefore full transparency of decision-making authorities is essential.

Therefore, EC Ma Ndryshe and INPO consider that the Ferizaj municipal authorities should waive from practices that restricts the right of the public and civil society to be informed about the work, activities and decisions of local authorities, otherwise the principles of transparency, good and inclusive governance are seriously violated.

EC Ma Ndryshe and INPO recommended the municipality of Ferizaj to undertake immediate action that will ensure the functioning of the transparency mechanism, dissemination of information on important matters of public interest and the appropriate environment for strengthening the participation of citizens in decision-making.

EC Ma Ndryshe and INPO call on the Mayor and the Assembly Chairperson to seriously engage in the implementation of legal obligations to ensure transparency and public participation in the activities of municipal authorities since they gained the power through citizens and hence should cooperate with them.

Ec Ma Ndryshe started implementing the project "Municipal Transparency Index Reform" since May 2015, thanks to the support of the UK Embassy in Pristina, which covers the largest municipalities of Kosovo, Prishtina, Prizren, Peja, Mitrovica, Gjilan, Ferizaj and Gjakova, as well as in Suharekë, Rahovec, Malisheva, Dragash, Mamusha and Shterpce. The concerned project is aimed at assisting the municipalities in identifying major gaps in terms of transparency as well as providing guidelines for addressing and overcoming them. Transparency Index presents a structured effort to support Kosovo municipalities in meeting the standards of good governance, defined with the reform of local government and Kosovo's European agenda.

Respectfully,

Albulena Nrecaj/ Index Monitoring for the Municipality of Ferizaj and Gjilan



British Embassy
Pristina

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