



WHAT GOOD CAN WOMEN DO IN POLITICS?

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“Politics without Women - Unacceptable for Democracy”

“Solid ground is being laid for a woman to become the chairperson of the Tbilisi City Sakrebulo (City Council)”, - said Giorgi Targamadze, leader of Christian-Democrats Movement when Sozar Subari removed his name from the list of candidates for this position. Whether Inga Grigolia, candidate from Christian –Democrats will become the chairperson of Sakrebulo or not will depend on voters’ choice. In general, foreign experts give a high evaluation to work of women on high political positions.

In the opinion of Drude Dahlerup, Professor of political sciences of the Stockholm University, situation will radically change in the country if many women come to the Parliament and the Government of Georgia. Georgia needs women’s balanced policy greatly today which will quickly relieve the tension created by male politicians as the latter are easily coming to blows. As Drude Dahlerup has said, a politician woman cannot change anything if gender balance is not achieved in her environment. Without gender balance a woman politician will serve as a promotion face for her team and she will have to carry through the interests which men members of the party consider right and just.

Tina Khidasheli, is a woman at the head of the election list of 64 persons of the “Alliance for Georgia” but it does not change much, says the foreign expert as there is no gender balance observed in any of the parties today.

Drude Dahlerup: - I am from the country where 47% of the Parliament members are women while the same index is just 20% in Europe including Georgia. It’s a pity that Georgia is considerably behind by the quota of politician women. Georgia is on the last position among the post-soviet countries and even African countries are well ahead Georgia. It is surprising that in the country which had a woman king at its head already in XII century and which gave the right of vote to women in 1918, one of the first in the world, gender balance is not observed in politics?!

-What do you consider the reason of gender misbalance in Georgian politics?

- When making up the lists male leaders of the political parties make choice in favor of their sex, which is called “old guys” network all-over the world. Fifty countries have managed to neutralize this network and women number in parliaments has considerably increased.

Georgian democracy has deep roots and you cannot build future not making use of this. Politicians should remember history well to make fewer mistakes. Georgian male politicians should not forget the role women played in history of Georgia.

-How we can break through the “old guys” network in Georgia?

-You'll get nothing just waiting. You have to look back at the countries which have obtained quotas and increased women representation. This should be the task of the political parties.

I was surprised when I learnt that you have constitutional committee in which there is not even one woman. It is absolutely an undemocratic approach. Nobody hence will believe that someone in Georgia is going to take care of women quota increase in politics.

One of the most powerful parties in Sweden, Social –Democrats made a zebra list: a woman, a man, and so forth. Lefts and “Greens” have increased their lists with women as well, and the political situation changed radically in Sweden. It was very difficult to achieve. What women have to do in politics, Swede men used to ask; but, the practice proved just the contrary.

-In particular?

- It has changed content and form of debates, processes became more working, serious topics are not any more discussed in saunas and restaurant at late hours to the accompaniment of entertainment. For example in Finland, the first manager of the TV studio informed the authorities in sauna that she wanted to speak to them at round table about very important issues otherwise she would come to them to the sauna. The men having good time in the sauna enjoying beer and chatting, they thought it was a joke. But they were wrong. The director with a towel around her came to the sauna where all men were naked. So she made them to sit down around a negotiation table and start talking to a woman on very serious issues.

For men political activity is something like playing football while women require changes and actually to make politics different from entertainment or fun.

-Do activities of Georgian men politicians look like fun?

- Georgia is a wonderful country where I hope quality of democracy will grow. They say we had a war and therefore we have a crisis and women have to wait. It is not time for them yet. It is not a correct opinion. On the contrary, women have to change the current heavy situation and the country will move forward. Argentina and Ruanda are good example where after political changes and a civil war women undertook the task of building a democratic society. Women representing all the public sections came to politics young and aged and they already have results.

Women representatives of NGOs consider that women who are in politics today are not full political subjects. Men are just making use of their faces and names to make their party successful. This problem is arising in the parties where the number of women is under the critical line. Women should come to politics in greater number so as to make others understand they are a power worth of consideration. If their number is above the critical line, they will be able to change a lot.

I have got two interesting pictures which show clearly what democracy actually is. On one of the photos Margret Thatcher is surrounded by a hundred men, on the other – the first woman Prime-Minister of Norway who demanded on 50/50 correlation of men and women in the government. Politics without women is unacceptable for democracy but it is even more unacceptable when a woman does not support a woman. Once, Madeline Albright, to draw attention of these women, said that there is one place in the hell reserved for the women who do not support women.

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