



## **Statement by President Sergei Bagapsh on his Re-election as President of the Republic of Abkhazia**

“It is an honor to have been re-elected as President of the Republic of Abkhazia, and I thank the people of this country for their confidence.

This election is truly historic. It is the first Abkhazia has had since its recognition as an independent country, solidifying our sovereignty. Five candidates competed, making the election debate vigorous and providing the voters with broad choices. Most importantly, the people of Abkhazia were active—100,740 or 73 percent of those eligible cast their ballots at polling places around the country.

The election was transparent, fair, and orderly with 82 observers from 21 countries and several local NGOs monitoring the voting. News media outlets from around the world covered our election with free access to all candidates and the people of Abkhazia.

In essence, these elections have firmly established Abkhazia as a democratic, rule-of-law state where citizens can peacefully elect their leaders and help decide their own futures. I’m extremely proud to have served as their President for the past five years and look forward to the progress we will make together in the next five years, bringing Abkhazia to its rightful place in the international community and building a quality of life in this country that will assure our independence, our success, and our prosperity for generations to come.”

13 December 2009