

Chronology of 2008 Presidential Elections in Armenia

06.12.2007

Nine candidates were registered to run for the top post in the country. They were: Arthur Baghdasaryan, (former Speaker of Parliament and leader of the “Orinats Yerkir [*Rule of Law*] Party”); Artashes Geghamyan (leader of the “National Unity Party”); Tigran Karapetyan (leader of the “People’s Party”); Aram Harutiunyan (leader of the “National Accord Party”); Vahan Hovhannisyan (Vice-speaker of Parliament and candidate of “Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaktsutiun”); Vazgen Manukyan (former Prime Minister and leader of the “National Democratic Union”); Arman Melikyan (self-nominated candidate); Serzh Sargsyan (incumbent Prime Minister and candidate of the ruling “Republican Party”); and Levon Ter-Petrossian (former President, and self-nominated candidate).

19.02.2008

Election Day. The Central Election Commission announced a voter turnout of about 69 per cent.

20.02.2008

The Central Election Commission (CEC) announced preliminary results which indicated that Mr. Sargsyan had secured 52.86 per cent of the vote, Mr. Ter-Petrossian gained 21.50 per cent and Arthur Baghdasaryan 16.67 per cent. The second placed candidate, Levon Ter-Petrossian, claimed widespread election falsification and that he had won the election.

20.02. 2008

The International Election Observation Mission assessed in a public statement that “the presidential election in Armenia was conducted mostly in line with the country's international commitments, although further improvements are necessary to address remaining challenges.” The observers found that “the Armenian authorities made genuine efforts to address shortcomings noted in previous elections. But there is a need for further improvements and political will to tackle concerns such as the lack of public confidence in the electoral process and the absence of a clear separation between State and party functions.”

20.02.-29 02. 2008

Already prior to the election day Mr. Ter-Petrosian had called upon supporters to gather in Yerevan on 20 February for a “victory” or a “protest” rally. From 21 February to early morning on 1 March, protesters maintained unauthorized demonstrations and rallies in the Oper Square.

24.02.2008

The Central Electoral Commission announced final election results:

Candidates by alphabetical order	Votes	%
Artur Baghdasarian	272,427	17.7%
Artashes Geghamian	7,524	0.46%
Tigran Karapetian	9,792	0.6%
Aram Harutiunian	2,892	0.17%
Vahan Hovhannisian	100,966	6.2%
Vazgen Manukian	21,075	1.3%
Arman Melikian	4,399	0.27%
Serzh Sar gsy an	862,369	CEC: 52.8%
Levon Ter-Petrosian	351,222	21.5%

26.02.2008

Presiden-elect Serzh Sargsyan offered collaboration to the other former candidates, declaring that he is ready to form a coalition government, involving people from a wide political spectre.

29.02.2008

Arthur Baghdasaryan, the leader of the Orinats Yerkir party signed a political co-operation agreement with the President-elect, wherby he will assume the post of the Secretary of the National Security Council in the future administration.

01.03. 2008

Tipped that there were weapons and explosives in the possession of some of the protestors, early in the morning of 1 March the police attempted to carry out an inspection in the Opera

Square but met with resistance. Police were obliged to disperse the 9-day long demonstration in Opera Square and retrieved many items of guns, grenades and other objects intended to serve as weapons. When the demonstrators were expelled from the Square, they gathered in other locations of the city and soon turned into an aggressive and violent crowd, attacking private and public property, burning and overturning cars. Later in the day, protesters re-gathered and disturbances took place outside the French Embassy and Yerevan City Hall. In the early evening, serious unrest occurred that led to further to violence, looting and vandalism. When order was restored by special riot police forces, the city was left with 8 fatalities (7 protestors and 1 police officer) and more than 130 wounded persons, of which a considerable portion were law enforcement personnel..

01.03. 2008

To prevent further violence, President Robert Kocharyan declared a State of Emergency for 20 days.

08.03.2008

The Constitutional Court upheld the decision of the CEC, whereby Serzh Sargsyan was declared as a winning candidate. The Court also confirmed there were violations during the vote and asked prosecutors to investigate. The Court said in a statement the violations did not provide enough evidence to question the election result.

21.03.2008

The State of Emergency was lifted.

On 9 April 2008 the Inauguration ceremony of the President-elect Serzh Sargsyan will be held during the Special Session of the National Assembly at the Opera House.