



Global Network For Right And Development

الشبكة الدولية للحقوق والتنمية

Global Network for Rights and Development Jordanian parliamentary elections (23 January 2013) Observer Mission Report



Jordanian parliamentary elections Electoral Campaign. Jordan, 23rd January 2013

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About our mission

In response to the invitation from Jordan's Independent Election Commission (IEC), GNRD deployed an Election Observer Mission to observe and assess the Jordanian parliamentary election to be held on 23rd January 2013.

We express our appreciation to the IEC for inviting GNRD to observe the elections and for facilitating the accreditation of observers as well as making itself available to respond to the queries from the mission.

We are grateful to the candidates, their representatives, the media, academia and people living in Jordan for their willingness to brief the mission and to meet with the mission members in the various areas.

The GNRD mission was led by Dr. Loai Deeb, GNRD President. Dr. Nidal Salim, GNRD Vice-President, was the deputy mission leader. The mission comprised 14 members, including 7 international representatives from Switzerland, Russia, Norway, France and 7 national representatives.

GNRD Election Observer Mission was on the field from 14th to 25th January 2013. During this period, the team consulted with electoral stakeholders such as candidates, IEC and voters. The mission members also attended a briefing for international observers organized by the IEC on 18th January 2013. On Election Day, the mission members observed the opening, voting, closing and counting processes. The team visited a total of 44 polling centers in Amman, Zarqa and Jarash.



GNRD mission members, Amman Jordan, 23 January, 2013



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Background information on Jordan

Political and constitutional matters

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a constitutional monarchy and the present monarch is King Abdullah II. He took over power from his father King Hussein in 1999. Jordan's constitution as of 1952 provides for a monarchy with a parliamentary form of government.

In practice, the monarch is chief executive and head of state. He is commander-in-chief of the armed forces and is vested with the power to declare war, conclude peace and sign treaties. He appoints a prime minister who forms the cabinet. The prime minister and members of the cabinet are responsible to the National Assembly but serve at the King's discretion. The National Assembly consists of the Senate, whose 75 members are appointed by the King and the Chamber of Deputies, whose 150 members are elected by the people. Members of both chambers serve for four years and may be reelected. The King may extend the service period. Senator nominees must have reached the age of forty and must have held a senior position in the government or within the military forces. A nominee for the Chamber of Deputies must be above thirty-five years. He or she must not be related to the King by blood and must not be financially involved in contracts with the government.

By reforms passed in 1989, political parties and opposition movements have again been legalized. As a consequence, there are now around thirty political parties in Jordan, the Islamic Action Front being the overall leading party among the opposition.

The previous electoral law dates back to 1993 and was based on the principle of "one person, one vote". This has led to continuous critics from the opposition since it favors tribal Jordanians in rural areas, to the detriment of more urban population areas where Palestinians and Islamists reside. These circumstances caused the Islamic Action Front's boycott of the election in 1997. This party did participate in the election in 2003 but has later abstained from further participation, including this year's election. In an effort to accommodate the critics from the opposition, the 1993 law was replaced by a new electoral law adopted in June 2012. This implies that the voter will now cast two votes, one for a single candidate and one for a list of candidates competing on a proportionate basis at a national level. This did, however, not stop the critics from the opposition, again with the Islamic Action Front in the lead. The main complaint was that only 12 per cent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies were allocated for candidates competing on a proportionate basis. Hence, tribal candidates would still be strongly favored. Following an extraordinary parliamentary session in July 2012, the percentage of seats allocated to candidates to be elected on a proportionate basis was raised to 19 per cent. This has still not been enough to content the

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Islamic Action Front and other opposition parties. In addition, such parties disagree to the King's right to appoint the government and the senators and to dissolve the parliament.

As a new element under the 2012 law, the members of the security forces have now been granted the opportunity to vote. This has again triggered reactions from the opposition, the reason being that this rather important group of the electorate is assumed to vote in favor of the regime. Reference in this respect is being made to their interdependence of the regime, to their tribal background and to the fact that Jordanians of Palestinian origin have limited access to army positions. Finally, the allocation of three more seats to women from Bedouin districts, under the 2012 law, is being seen to further tip the balance in favor of the rural areas.

Economy

In August 2004 Jordan completed a 15-years IMF program of economic reforms. The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Middle East and Central Asia advisor stated that the economy had "achieved maturity and strength" and that investments in education and IT literacy were taking effect. Jordan has formal trade agreements with both the US and the EU and the country is targeting investments into three key industries, namely IT, pharmaceuticals and tourism.

The loss of oil from Saddam Hussein's Iraq, at very favorable prices, has called for adjustments in the Jordanian economy. Like Turkey, Syria and Kuwait, Jordan supplies electricity to Iraq in order to supplement its power generation.

Jordan was affected by the wave of protests that became known as the Arab Spring during 2011. There were a number of well managed protests in Amman, including both pro and contra government groups. The major complaints were related to food prices and unemployment, with calls for greater government accountability and new economic policies.

International relations

Jordan continues to be surrounded by conflicts, with Syria to the north, Iraq to the East and Israel and the West Bank to the west. Egypt and Lebanon not far to the southwest and northwest respectively had their own tensions during 2011. The monarchy encourages strong western agendas, and seeks to be a beacon of stability amidst the conflicts around it.

Due to the insecurity in Bagdad, Jordan also continues to be the base for much relief work in Iraq, including UN operations.

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The Pre-election Phase

Candidates registrations

According to the IEC web-site, there are two procedures for registration one for candidates on a local level and one for lists on a national level.

Registration as an independent candidate can be done either in a district election committee or IEC and is free of charge.

A list can be registered only at IEC for a fee of 700 Jordanian dinars. It has to contain at least 9 and not more than 27 candidates.

Any person wishing to run general election must:

- have been a Jordanian national for at least ten years.
- not hold the nationality of another country.
- have completed thirty calendar years of age on the Election Day.
- not be convicted of bankruptcy.
- not be under guardianship.
- not be sentenced to a prison term exceeding one year for a non-political offense and not been pardoned.
- not be insane or demented.
- not be a relative of the King of a degree of Kinship, as further stipulated in the law.
- not have a direct or indirect contract with the government, the public official institutions or companies owned or controlled by the government or any public official institution, other than land and property lease contracts and shareholdings in companies with more than 10 employees.

Any minister wishing to run for the parliamentary elections shall resign from his post at least 61 days prior to the Election Day.

None of the persons listed below shall have the right to run for the parliamentary elections unless they resign from their posts at least 61 days prior to the date specified for submission of the registration:

- Employees of ministries, government departments as well as official and public institutions and entities.
- Employees of Arab, regional and international commissions and the like.
- The mayor of Amman, members of Amman municipality Board, and the municipality's employees.



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Heads and members of municipal Boards, and municipal employees.

Voters Registration

According to the information on the IEC web-site, each voter can visit any of the registration centers and receive an electoral card. The registration center officers will:

- match the personal ID card (CSPD national ID) with the applicant;
- match the information on the ID card with the database;
- inquire on voters preferences as regards of polling station. Some of these stations are made specifically available for handicapped people;
- give the applicants electoral cards for themselves and for the direct family members.

The requirement to be a voter is:

- to hold Jordanian nationality;
- to have reached the age of 18 years within 1st December 2012;
- to hold an identity card with a national number, even if it has passed its validity date;
- to hold an election card;

to be registered in the final voter's lists.

Technical procedure

As regards the detailed technical procedure for the election, the GNRD mission has enclosed to this report the authorized translation of the instructions from Arabic into English as it has been presented by IEC on its website, in Appendix 3.

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Day of the Election

The GNRD mission members split into three observer teams each including national and international members and at least one lawyer.

All together three teams observed 44 polling stations in the Amman area, in the Zarqa region and in the Jarash region. Each team filled in a check-list covering all aspects of the election process. A sample of the check-list is presented in Appendix 1.

From the computed results, presented in Appendix 2 and partly in table 1, the GNRD team noticed a good security around polling stations, well-organized voting process including queue management, the respect of voting procedure for disabled persons, a friendly atmosphere in the centers and voters that appeared to be content.

Apart from this general positive picture our teams have also noticed some active lobbying around polling stations, indications of bribery attempts, improper staff training, and poor polling management cooperation.



Lobbying around a polling station, Amman, Jordan, 23January, 2013



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As an illustration of our work we include the observation made in the Zarqa area, the summarized results for each team is presented in Appendix 2, lists 2,3,4.

1. Polling Station and immediate surrounding

1.1. Security forces attitude.

Security forces were very present, even within the premises, but never in the polling rooms.

1.2. Polling Boards and lobbying around the premises.

In rare cases we observed non-authorized propaganda material within the premises, and asked the polling station chief to have it removed.

1.3. Organization and attitude of the queue, if any.

In the polling stations, queues, if any, were reasonably well organized.

1.4. General atmosphere.

The atmosphere was quite good even during the last hour when a big crowd came at the last minute.

2. Inside the Polling Station

2.1. Minutes of the polling station

Except in one case, the minutes were correctly filled with all the information. The only exception in "Al Haraz School in district 4 in Zarqa" where a broken seal and an open polling box were neither reported nor corrected.



A broken seal at polling station
"Al Haraz School in district 4 in Zarqa",
23 January 2013

2.2. Presence of unauthorized people inside the polling room.

We did not notice the presence of any unauthorized person inside the polling room during our visits.

2.3. Personal acquaintance of own assignment.

As a general rule the staff seems to have been correctly briefed on their mission with the exception of a polling room chief who was not properly instructed on the procedure of marking escort people.

2.4. Correct implementation of the voting procedure.

A variety of situation was noticed ranging from excellent reaction to improper attitude. This goes from a proper reaction of the polling station chief to a broken seal on a polling box, which was immediately replaced, to a non-

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reported open ballot box, to failure to observe the rules regarding the use of mobile phones in the polling room and mixed cover of polling boxes.

2.5. Respect of the voting procedure for disable people.

Each local situation was different, but as far we could notice, the rights of disable, elderly and illiterate persons were reasonably well respected. We noticed some discrepancies such as an escort under age of 18 and incorrect knowledge of the marking procedure for escort people. Finally, there was a case of a taxi driver holding the voting cards of several elderly persons and, at the same time, acting on behalf of a candidate.

2.6. Global appreciation among voters after voting.

From discussions at the polling stations, people were quite happy with the fulfillment of their civil rights.

2.7. Global appreciation on polling station staff.

From discussions with quite a number of staff, most of the polling station chiefs reckon the day was excellent and the polling station staff were quite happy with the voting day.

3. Counting of votes

We decided to assist to the counting of votes from the beginning till the end. And we divided into two teams.

One team observed a very clean count, taking into consideration the very limited experience in this exercise within the six members of the polling team. In less than two hours the complete count of the votes for the general assembly was correctly completed and verified.

As regard the second team, the procedure was not correctly followed.

- The minutes were not filled in before the first ballot box was opened.
- The polling staff did not count the total numbers of ballots in the polling boxes and did not control the match between ballots and the number of voters.
- The staff did not make separate piles of ballots for each list. After our observation they started again to count but still without any organization. After three hours they were not half way in the counting of the first box. So we decided to leave.

Zarqa area team conclusions

As a general statement we assisted to quiet elections, no violence, no willingness to do bad or no open bribes. All the negative points we pinpointed were technicalities but surely not any sabotage whatsoever. This exercise of democracy has been quite a successful one.





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The national counting process

The preliminary results were presented from polling stations to the electoral committees late in the night. The results were supposed to be sent by fax from the polling stations but as we were told, all centers did not have a fax, so it took more time to deliver the results to the electoral committees. This became a point of concern for the observers since the preliminary results could be transferred only by phone or e-mail.



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Table 1: Summarized results of the GNRD Mission polling center check-lists (three teams)¹

	Team Amman	Team Zarga	Jarash	In summary (average)
Number of the visited polling centers	8	15	21	
Polling Station and immediate surrounding				
Security forces attitude	3,25	3,00	3,07	3,11
Polling Boards and lobbying around premise	1,38	2,79	2,93	2,36
Organization and attitude of the Queue	3,50	2,93	2,93	3,12
General Atmosphere	3,33	3,00	2,85	3,06
Inside the Polling Station				
Minutes of the Polling Station	3,67	2,64	3,15	3,15
Presence of unauthorized people inside the polling station	No	No	Yes	
Personal acquaintance of proper assignment	2,88	2,93	2,85	2,88
Correct implementation of voting procedure	2,88	2,57	2,73	2,72
Respect of voting procedure for disabled persons	4,00	2,80	2,73	3,18
Global appreciation among voters after voting	3,33	3,00	3,00	3,11
Global appreciation on polling station staff	3,00	3,00	2,86	2,95

¹ The summarized results for each team is presented in Appendix 2.



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Rating	Very good =	4			
	Quite good =	3			
	Average=	2			
	Poor=	1			
	Very poor=	0			



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Conclusions and recommendations

We are pleased to see that the turnout percentage of this year's election is higher than what has previously been experienced. This is positive.

At the same time we note that an important part of the voters decided not to participate in the election as they felt that the present law would not leave them with a fair representation. To enhance the turnout in coming elections, it is indispensable that the election law will be seen, by all parties, to bring results that, in a fair manner, reflect the real political situation in the country. This will call for a further revision of the election law.

Furthermore we see a need for additional training of the election committees in order to improve their overall understanding of the election procedure.

The same advice goes for the awareness among the voters of the real significance of their votes as well as better understanding of the election procedures. In this respect it has been noticed that the larger part of the votes in one of the voting rooms were the invalid ones.

We also recommend an evaluation of the situation in the immediate vicinity of the polling station, which, in a number of places, was totally unorganized. In particular the involvement of children in heavy traffic triggered many dangerous situations.

Finally, we would recommend a thorough investigation as regards the unexplained circulation of money inside in the polling rooms and within the polling areas.

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Appendix 1: The GNRD Mission polling station check-list

Governorate:..... Elec.District:.....Area:..... Polling center Name and number:.....

Observers Name:

Time In :h. Time Out:h.....

1. Polling Station and immediate surrounding:

a. Security forces attitude

☐ very good ☐ quite Good ☐ average ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐ not available

b. Polling Boards and lobbying around premises

☐ very good ☐ quite Good ☐ average ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐ not available

c. Organization and attitude of the Queue

☐ very good ☐ quite Good ☐ average ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐ not available

d. General Atmosphere

☐ very good ☐ quite Good ☐ average ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐ not available

Comments :.....

.....

2. Inside the Polling Station

a. Minutes of the Polling Station (Article 5 letter D, see annexe), seal of Ballot Boxes

☐ very good ☐ quite Good ☐ average ☐ poor ☐ very poor ☐ not available

Comments :.....

.....

b. Presence of unauthorized people inside the polling station

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments :.....

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c.

Personal acquaintance of proper assignment (Article 3 letter A to F, see annexe)

☐

very good

☐

quite Good

☐

average

☐

poor

☐

very poor

☐

not available

Comments :

d.

Correct implementation of voting procedure (Article 7 letter A to L, see annexe)

☐

very good

☐

quite Good

☐

average

☐

poor

☐

very poor

☐

not available

Comments :

e.

Respect of voting procedure for disabled Persons

☐

very good

☐

quite Good

☐

average

☐

poor

☐

very poor

☐

not available

Comments :

f.

Global appreciation among voters after voting

☐

very good

☐

quite Good

☐

average

☐

poor

☐

very poor

☐

not available

Comments :

e.

Global appreciation on polling station staff

☐

very good

☐

quite Good

☐

average

☐

poor

☐

very poor

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not available

Comments :

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Appendix 2: Summarized results of the GNRD Mission polling center check-lists

	Team Amman	Team Zarqa	Jarash	In summary (average)
Number of the visited polling centers	8	15	21	
Polling Station and immediate surrounding				
Security forces attitude	3,25	3,00	3,07	3,11
Polling Boards and lobbying around premise	1,38	2,79	2,93	2,36
Organization and attitude of the Queue	3,50	2,93	2,93	3,12
General Atmosphere	3,33	3,00	2,85	3,06
Inside the Polling Station				
Minutes of the Polling Station	3,67	2,64	3,15	3,15
Presence of unauthorized people inside the polling station	No	No	Yes	
Personal acquaintance of proper assignment	2,88	2,93	2,85	2,88
Correct implementation of voting procedure	2,88	2,57	2,73	2,72
Respect of voting procedure for disabled persons	4,00	2,80	2,73	3,18
Global appreciation among voters after voting	3,33	3,00	3,00	3,11
Global appreciation on polling station staff	3,00	3,00	2,86	2,95

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Rating	Very good =	4			
	Quite good =	3			
	Average=	2			
	Poor=	1			
	Very poor=	0			

Zarqa area	average	P.S. 1	P.S. 2	P.S. 3	P.S. 4	P.S. 5	P.S. 6	P.S. 7	P.S. 8	P.S. 9	P.S. 10	P.S. 11	P.S. 12	P.S. 13	P.S. 14
Security forces attitude	3,00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Polling Boards and lobbying around premise	2,79	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	3	3
Organization and attitude of the Queue	2,93	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
General Atmosphere	3,00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Minutes of the P.S.	2,64		3		3	0		2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Presence of unauthorized people inside the P.S.	4,00	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

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Personal acquaintance of proper assignment	2,93	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Correct implementation of voting procedure	2,57	4	3	1	3	2	0	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
Respect of voting procedure for disabled Persons	2,80	3	3	1	3	1			4	3	3	4	3		
Global appreciation among voters after voting	3,00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Global appreciation on P.S. staff	3,00	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3		3
PS = Polling station															

Amman area	average	P.S. 1	P.S. 2	P.S. 3	P.S. 4	P.S. 5	P.S. 6	P.S. 7	P.S. 8
Security forces attitude	3,25	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Polling Boards and lobbying around premise	1,38	3	0	1	1	1	1	1	3
Organization and attitude of the Queue	3,50	4			3				
General Atmosphere	3,33	4	3	3			3	3	4
Minutes of the P.S.	3,67	4	4	3					



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Presence of unauthorized people inside the P.S.	3,50	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Personal acquaintance of proper assignment	2,88	4	4	2	4	3	1	1	4	4
Correct implementation of voting procedure	2,88	4	4	2	4	3	1	1	4	4
Respect of voting procedure for disabled Persons	4,00		4		4				4	4
Global appreciation among voters after voting	3,33	3	4		3					
Global appreciation on P.S. staff	3,00	4	4	3	4	3	1	1	4	4

Jarash area	average	P.S. 1	P.S. 2	P.S. 3	P.S. 4	P.S. 5	P.S. 6	P.S. 7	P.S. 8	P.S. 9	P.S. 10	P.S. 11	P.S. 12
Security forces attitude	3,07	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	2	3
Polling Boards and lobbying around premise	2,93	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	4	3	2	3
Organization and attitude of the Queue	2,93	2	2	3	3	3	1	3	4	4	4	3	3
General Atmosphere	2,85		2	3	3	1	3	3	4	4	3	3	2
Minutes of the P.S.	3,15	3	3	3	3	3	3		4	4	4	4	3
Presence of unauthorized people inside P.S.	3,08	4	4	0	0	4	4		4	4	4	4	4
Personal acquaintance of proper assignment	2,85	3	2	3	2	3	3		3	3	3	3	3
Correct implementation of voting procedure	2,73	3	2	2	3	3			3	4	3	3	2
Respect of voting procedure for disabled	2,73	3	3	2	3	2	2		3	3	4		



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Persons													
Global appreciation among voters after voting	3,00	2	2	3	2	3	2	4	4	3	4	3	4
Global appreciation on P.S. staff	2,86	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	4	4	4	3	2

Jarash area (continuation)	P.S. 13	P.S. 14	P.S. 15	P.S. 16	P.S. 17	P.S. 18	P.S. 19	P.S. 20	P.S. 21
Security forces attitude	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1
Polling Boards and lobbying around premise	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1
Organization and attitude of the Queue	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1
General Atmosphere	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Minutes of the P.S.	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	1
Presence of unauthorized people inside the P.S.	4	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
Personal acquaintance of proper assignment	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	0
Correct implementation of voting procedure		2	3	3	2	3	2	2	
Respect of voting procedure for disabled Persons	3	2		4		3			
Global appreciation among voters after voting	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2
Global appreciation on P.S. staff	3	3	4	3	E	3	3	3	1

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Appendix 3: IEC Executive Instructions related to Polling and Counting

Executive Instructions No. (10) of the year 2102

Executive Instructions related to Polling and Counting

Issued pursuant to the provisions of Article (69 / B) of the 2102 Parliamentary Election Law No. (25) and its amendments

Article (1)

These instructions shall be called "the Executive Instructions Related to Polling and Counting for the Year 2102" and they shall enter into force as of the day of publication in the Official Gazette.

Article (2)

For the purpose of these instructions, the definitions contained in the 2102 Parliamentary Election Law No. (25) and its amendments shall apply.

Tasks of the polling & counting committee, data entry personnel, and assistant staff

Article (3)

With reference to the roles and responsibilities stipulated in the applicable House of Representatives election law and executive instructions thereof, the tasks of the head of the polling and counting committee, the data entry personnel, and the assistant staff are as follows:

A. The head of the polling and counting committee shall do the following:

1. Manage and supervise the process of polling and counting inside the polling center.
2. Sign and stamp the ballot papers
3. Return the National ID card to the voter and keep the election card after marking it to indicate that it has been used.
4. Prohibit any act, inside the polling center, which may disrupt the electoral process, and he may ask any person doing so to leave the center and request security personnel's help if the person refuses to leave.

B. The first member of the polling and counting committee shall do the following:

- a. Check the ID of the voter and the voter's escort (if any).
- b. Match the ID card with the elections card.

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- c. Ensure that the name of the voter is listed in the voter register
- d. Ensure that the voter does not have an ink mark or insulating substance on the index finger of his left hand and the smallest finger of the escort's left hand.

C. The second member of the polling and counting committee shall:

- a. Hand over the two ballot papers to the voter, after making sure they are signed and stamped with the local electoral district stamp and the head of the polling and counting committee's signature.
- b. Explain how to vote to the voter and his escort, if any.

D. The date entry clerk shall:

- a. Ensure that the name of the voter is on the electronic voter information system.
- b. Mark, electronically, that the voter has voted.
- c. Enter the results of the two ballot boxes in the electronic voter information system.

E. The first assistant shall:

- a. Organize the queue of voters to the polling and counting room.
- b. Ask the voter to present his ID card and election card

F. The second assistant shall:

- a. Monitor that the voter has placed the two ballots in their designated ballot boxes.
- b. Supervise that the voter and his escort, if any, have dipped their fingers in the ink, as the case may be.

Organizing presence inside the polling and counting center

Article (4)

- a. The list's delegate may, at least 10 days before the election day, request from the Board to allow his agents to enter the polling centers for monitoring, on a form adopted by the Board.
- b. The local electoral district's candidate may, at least 10 days before the election day, request from the head of election to allow his agents to enter the polling centers for monitoring, on a form adopted by the Board.
- c. Every candidate may attend the polling and counting process in the local electoral district and monitor it. Every list will get the same treatment as the candidate for that purpose
- d. 1- A candidate on the list may attend and monitor the polling and counting process in person and he may not deputize another for this, except for the list's delegate.
2- A candidate in the local electoral district or any list may not have more than one agent





at the same time at each ballot box.

Article (5)

- a. On the day of elections, the polling and counting committees, the data entry officers, and the assistant staff shall adhere to the following:
 1. They should be present at the polling and counting center at 06.00 am.
 2. They should ensure the availability of all supplies and materials needed for the polling and counting and that these supplies and materials are properly arranged.
 3. The data entry officers shall check and ensure that the data entry system is functioning properly.
- b. The head of the committee shall invite the attendees – candidates and their agents, and representatives of lists who are authorized to enter the polling room as well as local and international observers and accredited media representatives – to enter the room.
- c. If the abovementioned are not present, the committee shall go ahead with the polling procedures, and this shall be recorded in the minutes.
- d. The head of the polling and counting committee, before the polling starts, shall prepare minutes for each box, signed by him and the committee's members, as well as whoever wants among the candidates or their agents and agents of the lists present, on the form approved by the Board for this purpose. The minutes shall contain the following:
 1. Governorate.
 2. Local electoral district.
 3. The name of the polling and counting center.
 4. The ballot box number.
 5. The ballot box seal numbers.
 6. Date and time.
 7. Acknowledgement that the box is empty.
 8. The number of ballot papers for each district (local and general).

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Polling Procedures

Article (6)

At 07.00 am, the head of the polling and counting committee shall invite the voters to start entering the polling and counting room.

Article (7)

When the voter enters the polling and counting room, the following procedures and steps shall be followed in order:

- A. Verify the identity of the voter by examining his identity card and his election card and ensure that the two cards belong to the same person. (If the voter is a veiled woman, a woman in the polling and counting committee shall verify her identity.)
- B. Make sure that the name of the voter is registered in the election list of the box in the polling and counting room.
- C. Make sure that the index finger of the voter's left hand is not stained with the special ink approved by IEC for elections or covered with an insulating substance.
- D. Give the voter the two ballot papers stamped and signed.
- E. Mark the hard copy of the election list and the electronic version to indicate that the voter has exercised his voting right.
- F. The voter shall head towards the polling booth and shall write on the ballot paper of the local electoral district the name of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote, adjacent to that candidate's printed name. If the voter is illiterate, he shall mark next to the photo of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote.
- G. The voter shall mark adjacent to the name, the number, and code of the list he wants to vote for on the ballot paper of the general electoral district.
- H. The voter shall then fold the two ballot papers separately in a way that does not show the name of the local electoral district candidate or the list.
- I. The voter then shall head towards the box allocated for the local electoral district to put the respective ballot paper in it. Then, he shall head towards the ballot box of the general electoral district to insert the ballot paper of this district.

The voter shall return back to the polling and counting committee and shall dip the index finger of his left hand in the special ink.

- K. The head of the polling and counting committee shall give the voter back his ID card.
- L. The head of the polling and counting committee shall keep the election card and mark on it that it has been used (by cutting the bottom left side of it) in a way that does not affect its contents and data.

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Procedures for persons with disabilities

Article (8)

- A. Priority for polling shall be given to voters with disabilities.
- B. Persons with disabilities shall exercise their right to vote by themselves if they are able to do so, according to the same steps and procedures stipulated in Article (7) of these instructions.
- C. Voters with disabilities who are not able to vote by themselves shall exercise the right to vote through the use of an escort of their choice (the escort should not be less than 18 years of age on election day), according to the provisions stipulated in Article (7) of these instructions, taking into consideration the following procedures:
 - 1- The polling and counting committee shall verify the identity of the person accompanying the person with disability by examining his ID and checking that there is no ink on the smallest finger of his left hand, and shall register his name in a special list prepared for this purpose.
 - 2- The two ballot papers shall be handed over to the voter himself or to the person accompanying him if the voter is unable to take them.
 - 3- The person with a disability and his escort shall be informed that the latter shall write the name of the candidate on the ballot paper of the local electoral district and mark the name, number, and code of the list the voter wants to vote for.
 - 4- The person accompanying the disabled voter shall write down the name of the candidate chosen by the voter on the ballot paper of the local electoral district and shall mark the name, number, and code of the list chosen by the voter on the ballot paper of the general electoral district.
- 5- The person accompanying the disabled voter shall fold each of the two ballot papers separately and shall head, together with the disabled person, towards the two boxes to put each paper in the box allocated to it.

The voter and the person accompanying him shall then head towards the polling and counting committee and the disabled voter shall dip the index finger of his left hand in the special ink. The person accompanying him shall dip the smallest finger of his left hand in the same ink.
- D. If one of the persons with disabilities comes to the polling room unaccompanied by a person to help him, the head of the polling and counting committee shall help him in the voting booth, confidentially, by writing down the name of the candidate for whom the voter wants to vote on the ballot paper of the local electoral district and marking the list which he wants to vote for on the general electoral district's ballot paper. The name

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of the head of the polling and counting committee shall be recorded in a special log stating that he helped the voter cast his vote.

E. An escort cannot assist more than one voter with a disability.

Adjudicating challenges submitted during the polling

Article (9)

- A. The polling and counting committee shall take decisions with regard to challenges submitted by candidates, their agents, or the lists' agents regarding the application of the polling provisions, in accordance with the provisions of the election law and instructions issued pursuant thereto. Its decisions shall enter into force upon their issuance.
- B. These challenges shall be submitted on the form approved by the Board, in two copies, one of which shall be returned to the submitter of the challenge after the committee takes its decision thereon.
- C. The challenges, decisions, and procedures taken under this article shall be written down and recorded in a special record.

Article (10)

- A. If the polling and counting committee discovers that a person has impersonated the identity of another person to vote, he shall be prohibited from voting, and the head of the polling and counting committee shall refer the case of this person to the competent prosecutor, together with the two cards, on the form designated for this.
- B. The voter is prohibited from using a mobile phone or any means of photography or videotaping inside the polling room, whatsoever.

Article (11)

- A. Voting shall end at 07.00 pm.
- B. Unless it is extended by the Board of Commissioners in any electoral district, polling shall end with the elapse of the extension period which may not exceed two hours.
- C. The polling room shall be closed when voting time ends, and voters shall not be allowed to enter therein. If there are still voters inside the polling and counting center upon the end of voting time, they shall be allowed to proceed with their voting procedures.
- D. Taking into consideration what was stipulated in paragraph (C) of this article, the head of the committee shall ask the public security personnel not to allow any voter or any unauthorized person to enter the polling and counting room [after the voting time ends]





Article (12)

After the voting process ends and before the start of counting, the polling and counting committee shall prepare minutes for each box, in two copies, on the form approved by the Board. These minutes shall be signed by the head of the polling and counting committee and its two members, as well as those who wish to do so from among the candidates or their agents and the lists' agents who are present. The minutes shall include the following info:

1. Governorate.
2. Local electoral district.
3. The name of the polling and counting center.
4. The ballot box number.
5. The ballot box seal numbers.
6. The number of ballots received by the committee.
7. The number of voters who cast their votes, according to the hard-copy voter register.
8. The number of ballot papers used.
9. The number of ballot papers unused.
10. The number of ballot papers cancelled or spoiled and the reason thereof.

Counting and Sorting of Ballots

Article (13)

- A. The process of counting shall be conducted in the same room where the polling was conducted, and in the presence of whoever desires from candidates, their agents, lists' agents, and accredited local and international observers and media.
- B. The head of the polling and counting committee shall assign one of the assistant staff to write down the number of votes received by each candidate or list on the board allocated for this purpose and which is placed clearly in front of those who are present.

Article (14)

- A. The polling and counting committee shall first open the general electoral district's box and count the number of ballot papers inside it. It shall verify that the number of the ballots inside matches the number of voters on the hard-copy voter register.
- B. The head of the committee or any of its members the head assigns, shall read, in a clear voice, the ballot paper and shall display it in a clear way before the attendees, and then shall record the vote marked for the list on the ballot on the special board opposite to the name of that list.

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- C. The ballot papers received by each list shall be put separately and shall be counted and compared with the number of votes recorded on the board that the list had received.

After the completion of counting of the general electoral district ballots, the polling and counting committee shall prepare minutes in 5 copies, on the form approved by the Board for this purpose. The minutes shall be signed by the head of the committee and its members and by those who desire from among the candidates, their agents, or the lists' agents. The minutes shall contain the following information:

1. Governorate.
2. Local electoral district.
3. The name of the polling and counting center.
4. The ballot box number.
4. The ballot box seal numbers.
5. The number of general district ballots received by the committee.
6. The number of ballots in the ballot box.
7. The number of voters who cast their votes, according to the hard-copy voter register
8. The number of uncounted ballots, including:
 - a. The number of unapproved ballots, if any.
 - b. The number of ballots not stamped with the local electoral district's stamp or those not signed by the head of the polling and counting committee, if any.
 - c. The number of blank ballots (or white ballots), invalid, and canceled ballots and the reason for that.
9. The names and numbers of the lists in the general electoral district and the number of votes received by each list.
10. The names of the candidates, their agents, or the lists' agents and the names of observers who are present at the polling and counting room.

E. The data entry officer shall enter the minutes stipulated in paragraph (D) of this article in the electronic electoral information system, under the supervision of the head of polling and counting committee.

F. The head of the committee or any of its members shall place a copy of the minutes stipulated in paragraph (C) of this article on the entrance of the polling and counting room.

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Article (15)

- A. After the completion of vote counting of the general electoral district's box, in accordance with the provisions of Article (04) of these instructions, the polling and counting committee shall open the box allocated to the local electoral district, count the ballots therein, and verify that the ballots' number matches the number of voters on the hard-copy voter register.
- B. The head of the committee or whoever he assigns of its members, shall read, in a clear voice, the ballot paper and shall display it in a clear way before the attendees, then he shall record the vote which the candidate gained on the special board opposite to the name of that candidate.
- C. The ballot papers for each candidate shall be put separately and shall be counted and compared with the number recorded on the board for each candidate.
- D. After the completion of vote counting of the local electoral district's box, the polling and counting committee shall prepare minutes in 5 copies on the form approved by the Board for this purpose. The minutes shall be signed by the head of the committee, its members and by those who want to do so from among the attending candidates, their agents, or the lists' agents. The minutes shall contain the following information:
1. Governorate.
 2. Local electoral district
 3. The name of the polling and counting center.
 4. The ballot box number.
 5. The ballot box seal numbers.
 6. The number of local district ballots received by the committee.
 7. The number of ballots in the ballot box.
 8. The number of voters who cast their votes, according to the hard-copy voter register.
 9. The number of uncounted ballots, including:
 - a. The number of unapproved ballots, if any.
 - b. The number of ballots not stamped with the local electoral district's stamp or those not signed by the head of the polling and counting committee, if any.
 - c. The number of blank ballots (or white ballots), invalid, and canceled ballots and the reason for that.
 10. The names of the candidates in the local electoral district and the number of votes received by each candidate.
 11. The names of the candidates, their agents, or the lists' agents and the names of observers who are present at the polling and counting room.

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E. The data entry officer shall enter the minutes stipulated in paragraph (D) of this article in the electronic electoral information system, under the supervision of the head of polling and counting committee.

F. The head of the committee or any of its members shall place a copy of the minutes stipulated in paragraph (D) of this article on the entrance of the polling and counting room.

Article (16)

If, during the counting of the votes in the two ballot boxes, according to the provisions of Articles (14) and (15) of these instructions, a ballot is found put in the undesignated ballot box thereto, by mistake, it shall be calculated as among the ballots of the box designated therefor, and the incident shall be recorded in the counting minutes of the two ballot boxes

Invalid ballots

Article (17)

- A. The ballot paper shall be considered invalid in any of the following cases:
1. If it is not stamped by the local electoral district's stamp or if it is not signed by the head of the polling and counting committee.
 2. If it contains specific phrases or additions which could indicate the voter's name.
 3. If it was not possible to read the name of the candidate written on it or if it is not possible to determine the list which has been marked.
 4. If there was a mark on more than one list on the ballot paper of the general electoral district.
- B. If the ballot paper [for the local electoral district] contained two names, written or marked, the first name shall be counted.
- C. If the name of one candidate is repeated more than one time on the same ballot paper, the name shall be counted one time only.

Article (18)

If the committee finds out, after counting the votes in any of the boxes, that the number of ballot papers signed and stamped by the head of the polling and counting committee is more or less than the number of those who cast their votes, the following steps shall be followed:

- A. the polling and counting committee shall recount the ballots and recount the number of voters more than once to make sure of the discrepancy.
- B. The head of the polling and counting committee shall notify the head of elections immediately, who in turn shall notify the chairman of the IEC.





- C. The polling and counting committee shall continue with its counting procedures.
- D. The Board may assign the special election committee with the task of investigating such discrepancy.
- E. If the special committee confirms the discrepancy of a rate exceeding 2%, then it shall notify the chairman of the Board. The Board shall decide what it deems appropriate in light of how this discrepancy would affect the final results of election in the electoral district.

Adjudicating the challenges submitted during the counting process

Article (19)

- A. The polling and counting committee shall take decisions with regard to the challenges submitted by candidates or their agents, or the lists' agents during the counting process. Its decisions shall become effective immediately after issuance thereof, and they shall be recorded in special minutes prepared for this purpose.
- B. The challenges referred to in paragraph (A) of this article shall be submitted on the form approved by the Board and shall come in two copies, one of which shall be returned to the submitter of the challenge after the committee decides on it.

Procedures related to the delivery of the minutes to the election committees

Article (20)

- A. When the committee completes the counting process of the two ballot boxes and the preparation of minutes for the two boxes, the committee shall perform the following:
 - 1. Put the first copy of each of the two ballot boxes' minutes in two envelopes to be closed: One for the local electoral district and the other for the general electoral district.
 - 2. Batch the rest of the polling and counting minutes, the special minutes, voter registers, and used and unused, invalid, and cancelled ballot papers of these two ballot boxes, then place each pack in its designated envelope.
- B. The head of the polling and counting committee shall immediately hand over the envelopes stipulated in paragraph (A) of this article to the competent head of elections.
- C. The hand-over and receipt procedures of the envelopes referred to in this article shall be documented in special minutes.

Article (21)

- A. The election committee shall add up all the votes gained by the local





electoral district candidates from all the counting minutes of the polling and counting committees and shall prepare minutes in 5 copies of these results. The head of election shall announce the preliminary results of the winner or winners of the local electoral district seats and shall send a copy of the minutes, all the committee's decisions, envelopes, and electoral-related papers of that district to IEC.

- B. The election committee shall add up all the votes gained by the lists of the general electoral districts from all the counting minutes of the polling and counting committees and shall prepare minutes in 5 copies of these results. The head of election shall send a copy of the minutes, all the committee's decisions, envelopes, and electoral-related papers of the general district to IEC.
- C. The hand-over and receipt procedures of the envelopes referred to in this article shall be documented in special minutes.

Article (22)

The administrative liaison officer of the polling and counting center shall retain the following materials, collect them, and ensure that they are delivered to the election committee's headquarters:

- The empty ballot boxes.
- The voting booths.
- The indelible ink.
- Any other polling and counting materials or supplies.

Article (23)

The Board shall prepare the required forms for the implementation of these instructions.

Board of Commissioners

Independent Election Commission

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