



NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC
INSTITUTE

FINAL REPORT ON ALGERIA'S LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

MAY 10, 2012



NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE

**FINAL REPORT ON ALGERIA'S
LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS**

MAY 10, 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT NDI	4
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
INTRODUCTION	11
POLITICAL CONTEXT	12
FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS	15
Electoral Framework	15
Electoral Administration	16
Voter Registration	18
Party and Candidate Registration	19
Campaign Period	19
Voter Mobilization and Education	21
Silence Period	22
Voting	22
Counting and Tabulation of Results	24
Observation	25
ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS AND POST-ELECTION PERIOD	27
RECOMMENDATIONS	30
APPENDICES	35
A. Statement of the Pre-Election Assessment Mission (April 5, 2012)	35
B. Summary of Election Results	46
C. International Election Observation Delegation Members and Staff	55

ABOUT NDI

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that responds to the aspirations of people around the world to live in democratic societies that recognize and promote basic human rights.

Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to support democratic institutions and practices by strengthening political parties, civic organizations, and parliaments; safeguarding elections; and promoting citizen participation, openness, and accountability in government.

With staff members and volunteer political practitioners from more than 100 nations, NDI brings together individuals and groups to share ideas, knowledge, experiences, and expertise. Partners receive broad exposure to best practices in international democratic development that can be adapted to the needs of their own countries. NDI's multinational approach reinforces the message that while there is no single democratic model, certain core principles are shared by all democracies.

The Institute's work upholds the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also promotes the development of institutionalized channels of communications among citizens, political institutions, and elected officials, and strengthens their ability to improve the quality of life for all citizens. For more information about NDI, please visit www.ndi.org.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APN	National Popular Assembly (<i>Assemblée Populaire Nationale</i>)
FIS	Islamic Salvation Front (<i>Front Islamique du Salut</i>)
FFS	Socialist Forces Front (<i>Front des Forces Socialistes</i>)
FLN	National Liberation Front (<i>Front de Libération Nationale</i>)
FNA	National Algerian Front (<i>Front National Algérien</i>)
LTO	Long-term observer
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MSP	Movement of Society for Peace (<i>Mouvement de la Société pour la Paix</i>)
NDI	National Democratic Institute
PEAM	Pre-election assessment mission
PT	Workers' Party (<i>Parti des Travailleurs</i>)
PV	Results form (<i>procès verbal</i>)
RCD	Rally for Culture and Democracy (<i>Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie</i>)
RND	National Democratic Rally (<i>Rassemblement National Démocratique</i>)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NDI extends its gratitude to the five members of its pre-election assessment mission and the seven long-term observers who contributed their time and expertise to the success of this mission. NDI thanks the many government authorities, candidates, polling staff, political party leaders, and civic activists who facilitated the work of the mission. Similarly, NDI expresses its appreciation to the Algerian people for the generous welcome and cooperation they offered throughout the mission.

The Institute would like to thank the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for extending the invitation to NDI to conduct this international election observation mission in Algeria, and to the Ministry of the Interior and Local Collectivities for accrediting NDI's observers.

In addition, the Institute expresses its gratitude to the political, government, civic, and political leaders whose reports, briefings, and input served as valuable resources for NDI's pre-election assessment mission, long-term observer delegation, and this report.

This program was made possible by a grant from the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) of the United States Department of State. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of MEPI or the Department of State.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite its unique history and economic standing in the region, Algeria has not been immune to the demands for greater transparency, accountability, and political freedom sweeping across the Middle East and North Africa. In response to growing public protests and pressure for political change, in April 2011 President Abdelaziz Bouteflika announced the launch of a reform process, to include the revision of Algeria's constitution. The president also indicated that, for the first time, the country's National Popular Assembly (*Assemblée Populaire Nationale*, or APN) would play a lead role in that revision process. As a consequence, the regularly scheduled May 2012 legislative elections assumed heightened importance. After years of elections widely perceived as manipulated, leaders announced new measures to guarantee transparency as the polls came to be seen as an important test of citizens' political engagement and trust in the credibility of the electoral process.

To demonstrate international support for Algeria's democratic development, NDI organized a limited election observation mission comprised of a five-person pre-election assessment team and seven long-term observers (LTOs). NDI conducted its activities in accordance with Algerian law and with the *Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation*, which has been endorsed by 40 intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations.¹

NDI's pre-election assessment team reviewed newly introduced measures designed to promote greater transparency ahead of the elections. New and reconstituted oversight commissions, invitations to international observers, and a new quota for women's representation on party candidate lists indicated increased political will to organize more transparent and participatory elections. At the same time, a lack of clarity about the roles of the various oversight commissions,



NDI's pre-election assessment mission held a press conference on April 5 in Algiers to announce findings from its assessment.

doubts over the accuracy of the voters register, and authorities' refusal to accredit independent citizen observers cast doubt on the new spirit of reform. Many Algerians expressed hope that this electoral process would serve to launch more fundamental reform of Algeria's political system, but they became more skeptical as the process unfolded. Moreover, NDI observers witnessed halfhearted campaigning by parties and weak voter engagement, which was reflected in the unenthusiastic election day turnout.

¹ The declaration is available in multiple languages at <http://www.ndi.org/node/13494>.

The limited size of NDI’s election day mission did not permit the Institute to cover a significant portion of Algeria’s 45,000 polling sites. In the sites observed by the Institute, however, election day proceeded peacefully and relatively smoothly, with necessary voting materials and polling staff in place. Turnout in many areas appeared low, particularly among young voters. Confusion over voting procedures on the part of polling staff and voters occasionally led to disorder. The inconsistent application of regulations resulted in additional confusion during vote counting and tabulation. These steps took place under greater scrutiny in locations where party representatives took advantage of new regulations allowing their presence during this stage of the election process. Electoral authorities declared a final turnout rate of 43.1 percent, though 18.2 percent of ballots were ruled invalid, an indication of a substantial protest vote.² In the absence of a legal framework for election observation by civil society, a coalition of 25 Algerian civic groups conducted an informal monitoring exercise with over 500 observers in 15 *wilayas*, and released a statement shortly after election day noting preliminary findings. The coalition expects to release a comprehensive final report.



Candidate list posters line a street in Algiers.

Most parties and citizens were surprised when announced results showed that the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) had won nearly half of the APN’s 462 seats. An Islamist-oriented coalition, the Green Algeria Alliance, was particularly disappointed with its distant third-place finish, as it had hoped to make major gains—in line with recent Islamist victories in neighboring Morocco and Tunisia. The alliance and many other parties immediately alleged fraud, but failed to

present evidence to support their claims. In part thanks to a new quota law, women increased their representation in the APN from 7.7 percent to 31.6 percent—now the highest legislative representation of any Arab country.

When the new assembly convened on May 26, 77 deputies from the Green Algeria Alliance and a coalition representing 14 smaller parties, collectively accounting for almost 17 percent of the APN, walked out of the chamber in protest over the alleged fraud.³ Seeking to come to terms with the elections’ outcome, many parties have spent the weeks since the elections mired in contentious internal debates. As Algeria heads toward local elections expected in November 2012, President Bouteflika has prolonged the atmosphere

² With more complex single ballot systems, international election observers typically consider an invalid ballot rate of 10 percent or higher to be outside the range of what could be called “normal” errors, usually due to voters’ poor understanding of voting procedures. With a comparatively simple multiple ballot system like Algeria’s, the threshold for what could be considered to indicate a deliberate protest vote is much lower.

³ None of the deputies who walked out of the new APN’s first session had returned by the session’s close in early July.

of political uncertainty by delaying the nomination of a new prime minister and government, which he had previously done within days of the announcement of election results.

Based on its delegation's observations and in the spirit of international cooperation, NDI offers the following recommendations to enhance future electoral processes and Algeria's democratic progress as a whole:

To the Algerian Government and Political Leaders:

1. Establish an independent electoral commission, supported by more permanent monitoring and supervision commissions and empowered to review and recommend improvements to the electoral process.
2. Encourage and support public engagement in political decision-making processes, particularly in the upcoming constitutional reform process.

To Electoral Authorities:

3. Develop procedures for the accreditation of independent citizen monitors to observe future electoral processes.
4. Maintain a secure electoral environment without impairing the ability of political parties, candidates, citizens, or observers to play their appropriate roles in the election process.
5. Increase access to the voters register by political parties and citizens and allow for independent and comprehensive audits of the register.
6. Develop a comprehensive voter education program to inform voters on all aspects of the election process.
7. Revise the training program for polling staff to ensure it provides them an understanding of all election day procedures.
8. Consult with political parties and civic groups in an inclusive review of ballot design.
9. Take steps to allow greater and more systematic oversight of tabulation and compilation processes.

To Political Parties:

10. Improve outreach to youth to promote their engagement in the electoral process as voters, activists, and future leaders.
11. Support elected women representatives and give women greater opportunities to participate in party decision-making processes.
12. Develop party platforms that respond to the aspirations of voters.
13. Improve training of party agents to enhance their ability to observe and comment on all election day operations and procedures.

To the Media:

14. Increase measures to ensure impartial reporting on election processes, to include consideration of the development of a media code of conduct.

To Civil Society Organizations:

15. Continue to monitor election processes while advocating for the formal accreditation of citizen election observers.
16. Educate voters and encourage public debate to facilitate public engagement in future elections.

INTRODUCTION

As elsewhere in the Arab world, Algerian citizens took to the streets in 2011 to demand political change. In response, the Algerian government touted legislative elections scheduled for May 2012 as the gateway to a larger reform process and put considerable effort into encouraging voters to participate. Public participation in recent elections had been minimal, as popular faith in elected institutions had steadily eroded after years of what were perceived as manipulated polls. Despite the government's efforts, the three-week campaign period was lethargic and no party seemed to fully inspire voters. Ultimately, the long-serving National Liberation Front (FLN) increased its share of seats in an election marked by the same tepid turnout figures, high rate of invalid ballots, and allegations of fraud that characterized previous polls. Although the elections were largely peaceful, rates for voter turnout and invalid ballots—officially reported as 43.1 percent and 18.2 percent, respectively—suggest that many Algerians remain disillusioned by their country's political process.

NDI deployed an international election observation mission comprised of 12 electoral experts and long-term observers from eight countries to assess the pre-election environment, election day proceedings, and the immediate post-election period. The mission began with a five-person pre-election assessment delegation organized from March 30 to April 5. Through meetings in Algiers and the *wilayas* of Chlef and Tizi Ouzou, the delegation sought to build a comprehensive understanding of the electoral context and preparations that had been made to date. In a public statement at the close of its mission, the delegation suggested measures that could be implemented before election day to improve the transparency of the process, including allowing party representatives to observe tabulation procedures, accrediting Algerian citizen observers, clarifying the women's quota system, and resolving ambiguities in newly promulgated election procedures. The Institute subsequently fielded seven long-term observers from April 14 to May 16. Based in the key population centers of Algiers, Constantine, and Oran, with visits to surrounding *wilayas* during their stay, the LTOs met with political parties, election officials, civic leaders, and citizens in the lead-up to elections, observed voting and tabulation procedures on election day, and held follow-up discussions after the announcement of results. The mission built on NDI's 25 years of experience observing more than 300 elections around the world, including as participants in the United Nations-organized observation of Algeria's 1997 parliamentary elections.

This report summarizes the findings of the NDI mission and offers recommendations to strengthen democratic practices, enhance transparency and citizen engagement, and improve the conduct of future elections.

POLITICAL CONTEXT

Since winning independence from France in 1962, Algeria has had a history of troubled elections. Until the late 1980s, elections under the military-dominated, one-party state were little more than a formality organized to periodically re-legitimize the FLN's rule. A political opening in 1988—in response to popular pressure sparked by economic hardship—offered Algerians the hope of participating in a genuine democratic process for the first time. Citizens, particularly young people, joined the political debate in unprecedented numbers, with many eventually coming together under the banner of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), an Islamist party that Algerians came to see as the antithesis of the ruling regime. After the FIS won a landslide victory in the first round of legislative elections in December 1991, the military intervened to head off an Islamist takeover by cancelling the second-round elections and arresting several thousand FIS members. The cancellation of Algeria's first competitive elections ushered in a decade of violent guerrilla conflict between Islamist militants and the army. Civil strife claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and scarred an entire generation of Algerians. While the past 10 years have seen a return of stability under President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, many Algerians describe recent elections as carefully managed and manipulated affairs.

With Algeria's political process seen as the exclusive domain of the country's elites, many citizens have disengaged from politics, particularly at the national level. Even official turnout figures for recent elections were low and accompanied by strikingly high rates of invalid ballots that are widely recognized as protest votes.⁴ But as such protest votes suggest, popular apathy toward official politics does not mean that Algerians are inherently apolitical. On the contrary, even as they have shunned the ballot box, in the last decade Algerians have embraced a “protest culture” of labor strikes and demonstrations over social and economic grievances. Analysts point to the ability of the government's extensive security apparatus and vast oil wealth to suppress, fracture, and otherwise quash protest movements, preventing them from achieving a scale that could threaten the status quo. Despite this, the signs of popular discontent are increasingly visible. Young people in particular, frustrated by corruption, unemployment, chronic housing shortages, and an overly bureaucratic system that stifles economic opportunity, express their anger through small-scale protests, acts of vandalism, and desperate attempts to immigrate to Europe.

The popular uprising that began in Tunisia in late 2010 activated citizens' frustration across the region, including in Algeria. When the already prevalent localized protests grew stronger, the government met them with security crackdowns and economic concessions. In April 2011, President Bouteflika promised

⁴ Over 50 percent of voters abstained from Algeria's last two parliamentary polls, in 2002 and 2007. Invalid ballot rates for those polls of 10.4 and 14.4 percent, respectively, consistently fell outside international standards for what could be considered a normal rate of invalidity and pointed instead to deliberate spoiling of ballots fed by popular disenchantment.

political reforms in hopes of further undercutting the appetite for revolution. Economic measures to allow greater foreign investment and loosen restrictions on domestic stock trading helped to reinforce support from business leaders. Algerians also cite the images of civil war in neighboring Libya and the memory of Algeria's own "Black Decade" as factors discouraging widespread popular revolt. But popular dissatisfaction with the perceived failings of Algeria's political process, compounded by economic insecurity in a nation with extensive oil wealth, remained palpable as the halting reform process unfolded.

In January 2012, President Bouteflika announced that the elections would take place on May 10. A new electoral law, promulgated that month, included numerous measures—some consistent with the previous law, some revived from older iterations, and some previously unseen—intended to increase public trust in the integrity of the process. A revised political party law codified party registration procedures, and a new law on women's participation defined quotas for women in candidate lists. Some provisions within these laws were the subject of considerable debate among political leaders and in the press in the months preceding passage, though perhaps none was as harshly criticized as the revised associations law, which imposed significant constraints on independent groups that might have otherwise played an important role in supporting the credibility of the elections. While the legislature has traditionally exercised little decision-making authority, Bouteflika has repeatedly indicated that the new parliament will play a key role in shaping an anticipated constitutional revision process. Beyond changes to the legal framework, the government introduced other new measures—including registration of new political parties and invitations to a broader array of international observers—to demonstrate its commitment to organizing transparent and competitive elections. In a December 2011 speech, Bouteflika stated that the elections "will be held amid unprecedented plurality," with participation by new political parties and efforts to mobilize citizens and break with the recent trend of low participation.

Political leaders quickly came to see the elections as a test of the ability of the two governing parties—the FLN and National Democratic Rally (RND)—to hold off the Islamist wave sweeping the region. Parties like Tunisia's *Ennahda*, Morocco's Justice and Development Party, and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood had recently won legitimate electoral victories by emphasizing their anti-corruption credentials as much as by appealing to religious conservatism. Buoyed by this trend, the Islamist Movement of Society for Peace (MSP or *Hamas*) split from its longtime governing coalition partners on January 1. The FLN, meanwhile, approached the campaign period embroiled in an



A young woman passes by an RND party campaign office in central Algiers.

internal struggle between the old guard of the independence generation, led by Secretary General Abdelaziz Belkhadem, and a reformist branch dominated by younger members. The media reported closely on the internal conflict, which led to a no-confidence vote in Belkhadem just one month before the elections—and a dramatic shouting match between the Secretary General and his reformist opponents in the streets outside the party’s national headquarters on the eve of the campaign period. At the same time, longstanding opposition party Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) opted to boycott the polls, citing concerns about their credibility, while the Front of Socialist Forces (FFS) rejoined the political fray after boycotting all national elections for the previous decade.

With the government’s decision to invite greater outside scrutiny and stake considerable credibility on voter participation, the elections assumed increased significance. As preparations began, the polls came to be seen as a test of the government’s willingness to permit genuine political pluralism, its ability to instill confidence in the electorate, and its broader intentions in advance of promised constitutional reforms. Perhaps most importantly, the elections came to represent an important measure of the Algerian people’s support for President Bouteflika’s reform agenda.

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Electoral Framework. In reality, the new electoral legal framework, promulgated in January 2012, was not significantly different from its predecessor. The revised electoral law maintains the proportional representation, largest remainder system with multi-member districts.⁵ It also retains the requirement that a party must win at least five percent of votes in a district in order to be eligible to earn seats in that district. The legal framework also regulated campaign spending limits and state contributions.⁶ In line with the legal requirement that representation correspond to population distributions, the number of seats in the parliament was expanded from 389 to 462 based on new census figures. At the same time, a new political parties law allowed a brief window for the registration of new political parties ahead of the elections, and a new women's quota expanded opportunities for women to participate in electoral politics and win seats in the Assembly.

Political actors indicated to NDI observers that much of the renewed electoral framework was passed without significant public discussion. Civil society groups and political parties lamented that the revisions had not been made through a more consultative process, but did not communicate explicit criticisms or concerns regarding the type of electoral system, the five percent threshold, or district delineation. The choice to forego a participatory approach reinforces public perceptions that, despite official assertions about a new era of transparency and inclusion, decision-making continues to take place behind closed doors. Moreover, the fact that Algeria's electoral system translates votes into seat allocations only through a complex mathematical formula contributes to confusion on the part of political parties and citizens, as well as to the still-pervasive belief that electoral authorities assign seats arbitrarily rather than on the basis of the actual voting results. The complexity and lack of transparency in the seat allocation process may have contributed to misunderstandings and suspicions among parties and citizens upon the announcement of the election results.

Observers also repeatedly heard complaints about the ambiguity of numerous key articles within the legal framework. Some regulations or guidelines referenced in the electoral law were not promulgated or clarified until late in the process, complicating parties' efforts to manage effective campaigns and respect regulations. Poor efforts to educate parties and citizens on both existing and new regulations and procedures contributed at numerous points to differing interpretations and inconsistent application. Examples include

⁵ Under the *method of largest remainder*, seats are effectively distributed in two rounds: first, seats are awarded to parties that have achieved the electoral quota, which is defined according to the Hare method as total votes divided by total seats. The quota is then subtracted from those parties' vote totals. Next, all parties with votes above the legal threshold—five percent, as specified in the Algerian electoral law—are awarded seats according to which has the greatest number of votes (or “largest remainder”) until all seats are allocated. The Algerian system is a closed-list system, meaning each party fixes the order in which the candidates are listed.

⁶ Articles 207 and 208 of the 2012 electoral law limit campaign spending to 1 million Algerian dinars (approximately US\$12,600) for each candidate list, and provide for reimbursement of up to a quarter of campaign costs for lists that receive at least 20 percent of the vote.

regulations on the registration of military personnel, voter identification requirements, the handling of unused electoral materials, and the mandates of special political party and magistrates commissions. A particularly strong example is the new law on women's participation, which establishes minimum numbers of female candidates on each party candidate list based on constituency size, but does not specify the mechanism by which seats will be allocated to also respect this formula.⁷ As a result, the Ministry of Interior was obliged to create a mathematical system for ensuring that the proportions specified for candidate lists would be reflected in the eventual seat allocations. Although the Ministry indicated that it devised this system in consultation with the Ministry of Justice and a special political party commission before making further efforts to inform parties, public education seems to have fallen short. Even in the final days before the elections, party activists, women's organizations, and citizens continued to express to NDI observers their confusion over how the electoral list quota would translate into seat allocations once votes were cast.

Electoral Administration. The revised electoral framework reconfigured the election administration and introduced two new oversight bodies, at least one of which had existed in similar form in previous cycles. Overall authority for administration of the elections remained with the Ministry of Interior, though separate political party and magistrates commissions with limited oversight functions were added. Government officials pointed repeatedly to these commissions as guarantors of electoral transparency and credibility. However, a lack of clarity about their roles and authority seemed to contribute to confusion at multiple stages of the process. In addition, fundamental questions about the impartiality and limited mandates of these bodies hindered their ability to serve as genuinely independent monitors. While many polling staff were women, NDI observers repeatedly noted the dearth of women represented in either the commissions or the leadership of the electoral administration, an absence that raises questions about their commitment to gender equality. For example, women make up 60 percent of Algeria's magistrates,⁸ but very few were present among the magistrate commission's leadership when NDI observers visited its headquarters.

Ministry of the Interior: As in previous elections, the Ministry of the Interior maintained responsibility for overall electoral administration, including the appointment of polling staff, and managed logistical preparations through *wilaya*- and communal-level administrative committees. At the communal level, committees appointed by the governor consisted of a presiding judge, a vice president, and two other poll officials. At the *wilaya* level, the minister of justice appointed three magistrates to comprise each committee. Ahead of the elections, few actors with whom NDI observers spoke expressed concerns about the material preparations for the elections. Criticism of the administration's neutrality was more common, however, with some parties, candidates, and citizens recalling an alleged history of manipulation. While acknowledging the Ministry's proven capacity to manage electoral logistics, many questioned its political will to conduct genuinely transparent elections.

⁷ According to Article 2 of the law in question, Organic Law N° 12-03, these are: 20 percent for constituencies with four seats; 30 percent for five or more seats; 35 percent for 14 or more seats; 40 percent for 32 or more seats; 50 percent for seats for the national community abroad. Article 3 states: "The seats are assigned in function of the number of votes obtained by each list. The proportions fixed in Article 2 above are necessarily reserved to women candidates according to their position within the lists."

⁸ *Jeune Afrique*, April 1, 2012, page 65.

National Commission for Election Monitoring: The reinstated National Commission for Election Monitoring, composed of representatives from all parties and candidates participating in the elections, was modeled on a similar commission that existed in previous electoral cycles, with the notable difference that the new commission's president was selected by its members rather than appointed by the president of the republic. The national commission, along with subsidiary commissions at the *wilaya* and municipal levels, was charged with monitoring various actors' compliance with the electoral law and regulations, though its ability to do so was hindered by its late start in monitoring the process. (The commission was only put in place on March 14, three weeks after the end of the voter registration process.) Its members expressed frustration that they had no enforcement authority, as they were simply supposed to report violations to the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and the magistrates of the National Commission for Election Supervision—and went so far as to briefly suspend their work in protest on several occasions. Violations communicated to the

Ministry of Interior or to the magistrates commission occasionally prompted responses, but commission members indicated that recommendations were most often ignored. The party commission's suggestion, communicated to the MOI more than one month before the elections, to employ a single ballot rather than multiple ballots to dissuade fraud and vote-buying went unanswered for weeks and was ultimately declined, reinforcing parties' contentions that electoral authorities are not responsive to their demands.

By law, the commission also allocated public media spots, designated public spaces for campaign posters, time slots and venues for campaign rallies, and openings for party agents in polling stations on election day. Allocation systems and processes were often contentious and disorganized, resulting, for example, in parties being assigned numbered posting spaces that differed from their designated ballot numbers. Despite the challenges of seeking consensus among diverse party representatives, the concept of an organized forum for political parties to resolve election-related disputes and manage questions affecting all parties during election periods is a promising one, and with even modest improvements the commission could play a more effective role in future elections.

ELECTORAL TIMELINE

- Jan. 12: Electoral law published
- Feb. 9: President Bouteflika announces elections
- Feb. 12: Extraordinary voter registration begins
- Feb. 21: Extraordinary voter registration ends
- Mar. 26: Last day for candidate registration
- Apr. 5: Last day for notification of rejected candidate lists
- Apr. 8: Last day for appeals of rejected candidate lists
- Apr. 10: Last day for replacement of rejected candidates; Polling officials named
- Apr. 13: Last day for courts to rule on appeals
- Apr. 15: Campaign period begins
- Apr. 20: Candidate representative lists submitted
- Apr. 30: Alternative candidate representative lists submitted
- May 6: Campaign period ends
- May 7: Silence period begins
- May 10: Election day
- May 13: *Wilaya* tabulations sent to Constitutional Court
- May 16: Final results announced by Constitutional Court



A government-produced poster in Tamazight encourages Algerians to vote.

National Commission for Election Supervision: This third body, composed of 316 appointed magistrates, was newly created to enforce compliance with the electoral law. Magistrates at both the national and regional levels interpreted the commission's role as purely technical, and limited to only enforcing electoral regulations written by the ministry. Established on February 28, it—like the party commission—would have benefited from greater time to prepare for its role in the election process. Some party leaders voiced skepticism about the ability of this small number of magistrates to oversee some 45,000 polling stations across Algeria, even with logistical support from local officials, while many actors questioned the independence of the national-level magistrates and associated administrative commissions at the regional and local levels. Perception of the magistrates improved as election day neared, however, and their presence in tabulation centers following voting seemed to allay many party pollwatchers' fears of manipulation of results. Beginning with the campaign period, the commission posted complaints and their resolution publicly on its website.

Voter Registration. The voters list for the 2012 elections was based on a registry that is updated annually. The new law limits the direct role of the MOI, and instead delegates the revision process to local commissions, consisting of the elected local council president, communal secretary general, and two private citizens, all overseen by an appointed judge. The MOI also opened an extraordinary voter registration process for a 10-day period in February. Some political parties and the Algerian authorities reportedly made efforts to encourage voter registration, though the timing of NDI's observation mission did not allow it to monitor the voter registration.

The voters list stood out as one of the most significant areas of concern for most political parties and civic groups with whom NDI observers met. Numerous interlocutors noted that the final registry for the 2012 polls had grown inexplicably by a dramatic four million people since 2009. Many highlighted concerns over the registration of security forces, noting that some soldiers were registered in their home districts as well as in multiple deployment sites, and were also given extra time to register. Others complained that deceased voters or voters who had moved to other cities and registered anew were not removed from the lists, raising the potential for fraud. While the electoral law allows any voter to confirm his or her place on local electoral lists and guarantees parties access to communal electoral lists, only a few parties that requested lists reported receiving copies in time for review and verification before the polls. Moreover, they noted that many of the lists they received contained only limited information, such as just the first and last names of voters, or were disaggregated only to the wilaya level and made available in a read-only electronic format that rendered them virtually useless for verification or electoral preparations.

Party and Candidate Registration. Of the 44 parties and independent lists that competed in the May 10 elections, more than 20 of the parties were registered for the first time in January and February, allowing them little time to prepare for the polls. Several of them had been seeking registration for more than a decade. Algeria’s oldest opposition party, the Front of Socialist Forces (FFS), re-entered parliamentary elections after boycotting the last three legislative polls. Another prominent opposition party, the Rally for Culture and Democracy, boycotted the elections even though one of its key demands, accreditation for international observers, was met. The Green Algeria Alliance, a coalition of Islamist parties—the MSP, the Movement for National Reform (*Islah*), and the Islamic Renaissance Movement (*Ennahda*)—ran joint slates across the country, hoping to capitalize on Islamist momentum in other recent North African elections.



Parties' efforts to engage activists and voters met with limited success during the 21-day campaign period.

According to electoral authorities, by the March 26 deadline some 25,000 candidates had registered, approximately twice as many as in 2007. According to officials, only 58 of more than 2,000 candidate lists were rejected, leaving a total of 24,916 registered candidates on 2,038 lists, including 186 independent lists. While the observation mission’s timing did not permit NDI to monitor the candidate registration process, the Institute heard numerous testimonies from would-be candidates, many of them independents, who experienced difficulties with registration, often due to the large number of signatures and level of supporting documentation required. Lacking a party structure on which to lean, many were unable to overcome the considerable bureaucratic challenges. Some even suggested that authorities were creating additional obstacles to prevent the submission of their lists.

While many expressed to NDI that they did not understand the mechanism by which the quota for women’s seat allocations would work, parties largely respected the electoral list quota, nominating some 7,500 women candidates, or 29 percent of the total candidates. The law did not specify where women had to be placed on the lists, and women candidates did not often head lists and were sometimes deliberately weighted toward the bottom. Party activists repeatedly told NDI observers that Algeria is “not ready” for women candidates and that voters would be hesitant to accept them. Only a few parties in a handful of districts presented lists that alternated men and women candidates.

Campaign. Ahead of the April 15 launch of the official 21-day campaign period, the Institute saw evidence of many parties planning their campaigns in earnest, particularly at the local level. However, parties were slow to begin campaigning and blamed their delayed start on several days of rain and on the official

mourning period following the death of former president Ahmed Ben Bella. Parties seemed to increase voter outreach efforts after the slow first week, and NDI observers noted more signs of campaigning, particularly in the form of rallies and posters, with more limited grassroots efforts such as door-to-door canvassing or vans blaring campaign songs in urban areas. Voter enthusiasm lagged, however, and last-minute cancellations of campaign rallies were common. (NDI observers in the Oran region estimated that, in the campaign's final week, more scheduled rallies were cancelled than were held.) As parties attempted to demonstrate their ability to draw crowds, some attendees at rallies admitted that they had been paid to attend or that they were not old enough to vote. At one local rally, observers estimated that only 10 to 15 percent of attendees were of voting age, the rest being neighborhood



An April campaign event attracts voters in Chlef.

children lured by free snacks. NDI observers witnessed party members trying to maintain control of one rally as youths broke into chants for a local football club. Women were often well represented in crowds at campaign rallies, and to a lesser extent among campaign staff. In the final days of the campaign, several of the largest parties, including the ruling FLN and RND, mobilized supporters for major rallies in Algiers, but such events remained the exception.

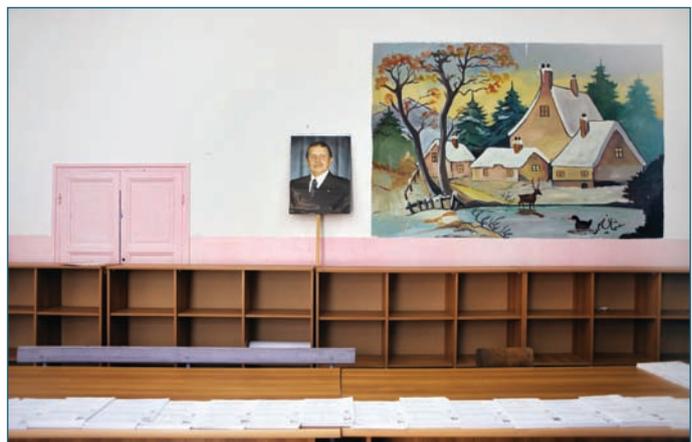
Regulations specified that parties could post public campaign materials only in designated spaces, and ahead of the campaign period authorities erected special placards or painted special spaces on walls for this purpose. Within the *wilaya*-level party commissions, observers drew lots to determine the order of their numbered spaces, but NDI observers witnessed many posting violations during the campaign. Large numbers of campaign posters were defaced or torn down; some parties replaced their posters on an almost daily basis, while others said they would wait until the campaign's final days to make a major visibility push. Party commission representatives generally seemed to accept that this was part of the campaign process, and only a limited number of complaints on this issue were brought before the supervision commission. The party commission also offered designated time slots on television and radio, though a number of candidates—particularly from independent lists or smaller parties—did not feel that traveling to Algiers to record a brief campaign message for broadcast would be worth the time or expense. Some citizens, seeing broadcast slots go unused, told NDI observers it was a sign that candidates were not serious about seeking popular support.

Party campaign messages were vague and voters reported difficulty in differentiating among them. To varying degrees, candidates touched on unemployment, housing shortages, the challenges faced by young people, and other key issues of public concern. However, they largely neglected to propose concrete

solutions to these problems. Voters and journalists noted the use of “archaic speech” referencing the country’s past rather than forward-looking solutions. Parties of the ruling majority added messages about the importance of national unity, political stability, and participation in the elections. On at least one occasion, NDI observers witnessed a party campaign event focused specifically around the party’s policies on issues of concern to women. In the latter half of the campaign, some parties increased negative campaigning against the Islamist-led coalition. As per the legal framework, campaigning was conducted entirely in “national languages” (Arabic and Berber), a measure that some opposition parties described as intended to discourage the use of French, which some of them prefer for communicating with supporters.

Voter Mobilization and Education. To try to counter public apathy and encourage turnout, during the campaign period the government stepped up a voter mobilization campaign that had begun weeks earlier. Via state-run television and radio, text messages, and posters throughout the campaign period, citizens were implored to vote as a national duty.

Authorities explicitly emphasized the importance of popular participation in these elections, Algeria’s first since the regional “Arab Spring” uprisings, with posters depicting a ballot box and the words “Our Spring is Algeria.” But while going to considerable effort to encourage voting, the electoral authorities did very little to ensure that citizens actually knew how to vote. In discussions with NDI observers, authorities at various levels



Ballot papers line desks in a polling station on election day.

repeatedly stated that it was the responsibility of political parties and the media to educate voters on electoral procedures. The lack of publicly available information and the inconsistent interpretations of procedural regulations, however, suggest that greater efforts by electoral authorities to explain the election process might have increased both voter participation and confidence in its results.

The mobilization push was briefly countered by a citizen-led effort to discourage voting. In March, a group of activists, including representatives of several small political parties and youth-based civic groups, began calling for an election boycott. It is unclear how large the movement or its support base was. Leaders of the group told NDI that they wanted voters to “actively” boycott by publicly expressing their contempt for the system, rather than just by not coming to vote. The movement attempted to organize several rallies in Algiers before and during the campaign period, but participants were usually arrested upon arrival or dispersed by security forces, sometimes with minor injuries.⁹ The boycott movement was much less visible in the final days before the elections.

⁹ Although a 19-year state of emergency was lifted in March 2011, separate regulations still bar unauthorized rallies in the capital.

In general, citizens appeared equally unresponsive to party campaigning, the voter mobilization drive, and the boycott movement. Localized protests and workers' strikes, which occurred regularly over the past year, continued during the campaign period. Some public sector workers capitalized on the elections by threatening to call for a boycott if contract-related demands were not met. In the campaign's final days, riots broke out in the town of Jijel after a frustrated youth set himself on fire, exemplifying citizens' frustration over their perceived inability to influence the political process through formal channels.

Silence Period. The end of the campaign on May 6 was followed by a three-day silence period designed to allow voters to reflect on party platforms and consider their choices. While political parties and candidates were prohibited from making campaign statements, posting flyers, or hosting rallies, public officials capitalized on the silence period to encourage participation. On May 8, just two days before the polls, President Bouteflika delivered a televised speech equating Algeria's independence struggle with the national duty of citizens to vote—a historical symbolism that many analysts believe is lost on young Algerians but that continues to resonate with the independence generation and many middle-aged people. Paradoxically, Bouteflika also noted that, "Our generation has reached its time," and encouraged citizens to vote for young candidates. Heading into elections, however, many citizens, political analysts, and even some party members told NDI observers that they anticipated a low turnout.

Voting. The limited size of NDI's observation mission did not allow for significant coverage of Algeria's 45,000 polling centers on election day, but the observations made and impressions gathered from other observers, political parties, and citizens offered the Institute a general sense of the voting process. Four pairs of NDI observers deployed to the areas around Algiers, Constantine, Oran, and Tizi Ouzou on election day, visiting over 40 polling stations in total. In this limited circuit, NDI observers did not witness violence or significant



In most polling centers, polling stations were segregated by gender. Above, a voter casts her ballot on May 10.

disruptions that would have prevented citizens from casting their ballots, and it did not hear major concerns about such incidents elsewhere in the country. Many polling centers were located in school buildings with multiple stories, presenting access challenges to the elderly and people with disabilities.

Turnout was low throughout the day in most of the sites NDI observers visited, which allowed polling staff greater opportunity to address the frequent confusion over procedural steps. At the opening of the polls at 8:00 AM, essential materials and requisite polling staff members were present at polling stations that NDI observers visited. Voters verified their identity and their presence on the electoral list by presenting government-issued

photo identification (though precise ID requirements caused confusion at several points), then picked up one copy of each ballot paper and an envelope to take into the voting booth. Ballots—individual sheets of paper with the political party name, assigned number, photo of the lead candidate, and numbered candidate list printed on one side—were aligned in a row across desks in each polling station. In the voting booth, voters were instructed to fold up one ballot and place it in the envelope, which they then placed in the transparent plastic ballot box in front of polling staff. Voters could discard unused ballots in trash bins in the voting booth, but were not required to do so. After casting their ballot, they dipped one finger in indelible ink and signed the voter register to indicate that they had voted. Perhaps due to poor understanding of regulations, these steps often occurred in a different order in different polling stations, and the process appeared far more chaotic in stations with higher turnout or at particularly busy times.

Women voters appeared less numerous than men, but women made up over half of the polling staff members that NDI observers met, as well as a significant minority of the political party agents. Despite making up a sizable majority of Algeria's population, young people—men and women—were conspicuously absent as voters, although they made up the majority of polling staff in stations NDI observers visited. Political party agents—also mostly young people—were present in all stations visited, though rarely were the maximum five party agents permitted by the electoral law all present.¹⁰ More commonly, two to three agents were in each station; agents from the FLN, RND, and Green Algeria Alliance were overwhelmingly more common than other parties. Their levels of capacity, preparation, and connection to their party varied widely, with some party agents being unable to even name the party they were representing, and others clearly being young, passionate party militants with an extensive knowledge of electoral regulations.

Based on a sampling of polling stations nationwide, the MOI released estimated turnout figures to the media at several intervals throughout election day.¹¹ These figures, along with wilaya-specific figures released at the same times, provoked skepticism from some citizens, particularly when certain areas showed dramatic increases in turnout during the day's hottest hours. After the afternoon turnout figures were announced on national television, NDI observers heard one citizen in Algiers remark, "Do they take us for idiots?" State-run media, however, spent the day imploring citizens to "perform their patriotic duty" and extolled the turnout figures—even the lowest among them—as a sign of Algerians' embrace of the electoral process.

While polls were scheduled to close at 7:00 PM, in 36 *wilayas* MOI officials extended voting by one hour, as allowed by the electoral law "to facilitate voters in exercising their right to vote."¹² In some cases, polling

10 Article 120 of the 2012 electoral law states that "All candidates have the right to assist in voting operations or be represented by a person of their choice who is part of the electoral college. However, more than five (5) candidate representatives may not, in any case, be present simultaneously in the polling station. ..." Electoral authorities explained that this limitation existed because of space constraints in polling stations, though many countries face similar challenges without such restrictions. Though the law did not specify that the five spaces must be designated in advance, prior to the elections party commissions at the communal and wilaya levels supervised the drawing of lots to determine which party observers would be present in which stations.

11 The cumulative turnout figures announced were as follows: 4 percent as of 10:00 AM, 15.5 percent as of 12:00 PM, 27.0 percent as of 4:00 PM, and 36.59 percent as of 5:30 PM (already surpassing the official 35.6 rate for the 2007 legislative polls).

12 Article 29.

staff who did not receive the order to extend voting chose not to close their doors at 7:00 as expected, in anticipation of receiving the order to extend.

Counting and Tabulation of Results. As soon as polls closed, the polling staff proceeded to the counting process within each polling station, under the supervision of party agents, as mandated by the electoral law. The electoral law gives individual voters—though not, unfortunately, civil society groups as in many other countries in the region—a very significant role in observing and even participating in counting at their station,¹³ but NDI observers did not witness any citizens doing so. As was the case with voting, precise counting procedures often deviated from official regulations and varied from one polling station to another. These problems, often the result of polling staff's poor understanding of procedures, caused extreme delays in many cases, but did not seem to significantly impact electoral results in the few stations where NDI observers were present. In some cases, polling staff required assistance from more knowledgeable political party agents in order to count the ballots and fill out multiple copies of the detailed results forms (*procès verbaux*, or PVs). PVs were publicly posted outside many stations in accordance with the electoral law, though some did not respect this requirement. Invalid votes were counted and announced at the polling station level.



Voters in the capital wait to show identification before collecting ballots and casting their vote.

granted, instead waiting in a group to the side to receive final PVs to take back to the commission and their respective parties. In one municipal-level tabulation center in Algiers for example, NDI observers did not see any party observers question the situation when, after ballot review and tabulation had

On election night, polling station heads brought ballots and PV forms to tabulation centers at the municipality level for review by local judges and data entry, under the oversight of a representative of the supervision commission. Party agents nominated by the monitoring commission were present,¹⁴ but were only actively watching the ballot review and data entry in some of the centers visited by NDI observers; elsewhere, they seemed not to take advantage of the access they were

¹³ Article 48 notes that “The counting process is public and must take place in the polling station.... The tables on which the counting occurs must be arranged so that voters can circulate around them.” Article 49 states, “Counting is undertaken by ‘scrutineers’ under the watch of polling staff. The ‘scrutineers’ are designated by the polling staff from among the voters registered in each polling station, in the presence of the candidate or candidate list representatives. In case of an insufficient number of ‘scrutineers’, all members of the polling staff may participate in counting.”

¹⁴ During the pre-election assessment mission, NDI delegates heard mixed messages about the rights of political parties and citizens to observe the tabulation of results at the municipal and *wilaya* levels and their transfer to the national level. While election authorities described it as a purely technical process of transcribing numbers, several civil society and opposition groups contended that this was the stage at which most manipulation of results had occurred in previous contests. Many actors interpreted the new electoral law as barring any observation of this stage by party agents, citizens, or members of the various oversight commissions. As a result, the NDI pre-election delegation recommended to Algerian authorities that this process be opened to public scrutiny in order to increase transparency and encourage confidence in the election results. (See Appendix A for the delegation's full statement.) Several weeks before the elections, the MOI announced that the political party commission would be allowed to nominate party agents to observe all levels of counting and tabulation.

concluded, the presiding magistrate and two MOI representatives left the tabulation center for a separate room and closed the door, sequestering themselves for several hours before emerging with the completed PV. It is particularly unfortunate that party representatives did not exercise vigilance at this point, since the officials' actions closely resembled those that many citizens allege facilitated fraud in previous elections.

Following tabulation at the municipal level, party observers in some, but not all, centers were given official PVs, and results were transmitted to the *wilaya* level for further tabulation and allocation of seats—also open to a limited number of senior representatives from the party commission—and finally to the national level for compilation and the announcement of results.

Observation. With election observation becoming an increasingly common practice globally and in the North Africa region, the Algerian government invited a wider profile of international observers to these elections than it had in previous contests. Multilateral organizations invited to send observers included the African Union, Arab League, European Union, Organization of the Islamic Conference, and United Nations. NDI and the Carter Center were the only non-governmental organizations invited. Ultimately, the Ministry of Interior reported accrediting slightly more than 500 international observers. Among Algerians, responses to international observation were mixed. Some citizens, candidates, and political party activists expressed confidence that the presence of outside observers would encourage transparency while others, referencing past missions of dubious credibility, said that outside observers would be either not interested in ensuring or not numerous enough to ensure that the elections were free of manipulation. Though sometimes initially wary, most political actors and ordinary citizens opened up to NDI observers and shared candid assessments of the process.

In its initial invitation letter from the Algerian government and in subsequent conversations with high-level Ministry of Foreign Affairs representatives, NDI received repeated assurances that its observers would be allowed to move uninhibited and gather information freely throughout the electoral process, and the Institute declined an offer for state security escorts. Within Algiers, NDI pre-election and long-term observers reported no concerns about their freedom of movement. Outside the capital, however, the actions of security forces repeatedly impinged on the operations of NDI's observers, may have intimidated individuals with whom the observers met, and jeopardized the observers' ability to collect information freely. In Constantine, security forces insisted on photographing and recording personal information of every outside visitor who came to the LTOs' hotel for meetings. Security forces frequently followed observers into public campaign rallies and, on at least one occasion, without the knowledge of the observers, entered a meeting with local activists representing an independent candidate list. When traveling in vehicles, several observer teams were flanked by government security escort vehicles, slowing their movements and drawing undue attention. Observers' repeated verbal requests to dismiss the escorts were refused, and government officials claimed that these measures were designed to protect observers' safety.

In late April, on the recommendation of MOI officials, NDI addressed a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs requesting an end to this undue attention, but observed no significant change in security forces' posture.

Paradoxically, while encouraging the presence of international observers, the government did not permit monitoring by Algerian civil society organizations, though doing so might have inspired greater public confidence in the electoral process. Observation by domestic civil society organizations has become a relatively widespread and common practice around the world, and its value in presenting an independent and comprehensive overview of the electoral process to fellow citizens is widely recognized.¹⁵ Even as they struggled to convince voters of the elections' credibility through new laws, government-sanctioned oversight institutions, and a public get-out-the-vote campaign, Algerian authorities declined to respond to a request for accreditation from the *Observatoire de la Société Civile pour l'Observation des Elections*, a coalition of some 25 civil society organizations that hoped to monitor the election process. (MOI officials maintained that there was no need to accredit domestic observer groups because voting and counting were legally open to individual voters and political party representatives were permitted to observe throughout the day.) Despite not receiving official accreditation for its observers that would have allowed them access to polling stations, the coalition moved forward with a pilot observation exercise to demonstrate the value of independent citizen observation and build the capacity of its members for future elections. (While authorities never authorized civil society observation initiatives, the electoral law does not expressly forbid such actions.) Equipped with simple forms and rudimentary training, over 500 volunteer observers monitored operations in their own polling stations and took testimony from voters, electoral authorities, party activists, and others in 15 of Algeria's 48 *wilayas* on election day. The *Observatoire* released a preliminary press statement the day after the elections and is preparing a final report.

¹⁵ The elections in Algeria came just over one month after the launch at the United Nations of the *Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations*, available at www.gndem.org/declaration-of-global-principles. This declaration establishes international standards for citizen election observation and was developed by the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM), which includes 160 member groups from over 70 countries on five continents.

ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS AND POST-ELECTION PERIOD

The Minister of the Interior held a press conference on May 11 to announce provisional election results. In contrast to widespread expectations and to the surprise of many in attendance, he announced that the FLN had won a near-majority with 220 of 462 seats, amounting to 48 percent of seats. The FLN's figure far outpaced all other parties and expanded on the 35 percent of seats it held in the previous parliament. The minister also announced that women had won 31 percent



On May 11, the Minister of Interior announced preliminary results of the polls.

of seats, significantly increasing their existing 7.7 percent. Equally significant was the announced turnout of 9.18 million, representing 42.36 percent of registered voters, and the fact that of these, more than 18 percent cast invalid ballots. Given the simplicity of the voting system—which requires voters to place their single chosen ballot into an envelope, with no writing or marking necessary—it is hard to conclude that this remarkably high invalid rate is anything other than an expression of popular disenchantment with the electoral process. Final results, officially validated by the Constitutional Council on May 15, showed that invalid votes exceeded those cast nationwide for any party—even the FLN.

Revised results awarded the FLN an additional seat, bringing its total to 221 seats, though in reviewing 167 appeals filed after the elections, the Constitutional Council lowered the FLN's share to 208 seats, or 45 percent of the APN. In total, 27 political parties and a series of smaller independent lists won seats in the assembly. Yet the FLN's victory gave it more seats than the next seven parties in the list combined, and all but assured it a renewed governing majority. Its likely coalition partner, RND, earned the second-highest total with 68 seats, followed by the Green Algeria Alliance with 49. The FFS and PT also won modest representation, with 27 and 24 seats respectively.¹⁶ Detailed results showed considerable disparities between vote totals and representation, a function of the way in which seats are allocated under Algeria's electoral system.

Many parties immediately cried foul upon the release of the results, accusing the administration of rigging the count or the FLN of stealing the election. The Green Algeria Alliance, aiming to continue the post-Arab Spring pattern of Islamist party victories across North Africa, was perhaps the most disappointed by

¹⁶ See Appendix B for detailed final results.

the results. Its leaders immediately disputed the preliminary results, which they said did not track with their own estimates, though they never released alternative figures to back up their claim that they placed a close second behind the FLN. The FLN's large gains surprised many, given its internal divisions. While Secretary General Belkhadem managed to regain control before the elections and see the FLN to victory, the party has yet to resolve its internal struggles.

Due to the mechanics of Algeria's electoral system, the announced breakdown of seats, though surprising, is a plausible outcome even without fraud. With a proportional representation, largest remainder system like Algeria's, it is possible for many small parties to receive votes but fail to reach the critical five percent threshold that would allow them to be eligible for seats. Many smaller parties and newly registered parties may have gotten votes but failed to surpass the threshold. Thus, with near-universal name recognition and even moderate support among those likely to turn out at the polls, in a given district the FLN could have won enough votes to be one of the only parties eligible for seats. This scenario, replicated across most of the 48 *wilayas*, could well account for the announced results. The opening of the political party field earlier this year may also have contributed to the fracturing of votes among a greater number of parties, enabling a known entity such as the FLN to outdo them even without overwhelming support. Many political commentators have also theorized that President Bouteflika's appeal to voters just before the elections



On May 11, Green Alliance leaders held a press conference to denounce the election results shortly after they were announced.

encouraged higher turnout by the traditionalist base of the FLN. Even so, the announced turnout figures remain particularly hard for many Algerians to believe. Some parties immediately accused the government of inflating the rate and alleged that the actual turnout was as low as 18 percent.

NDI long-term observers remained in Algeria until May 16. In meetings with civil society leaders, opposition political parties, media, and citizens during the immediate post-election period, they heard frequent allegations of electoral fraud and irregularities. Citizens told observers on several occasions that they do not believe election results or turnout rates published by the government, exemplifying yet again the deep mistrust that characterizes so many Algerians' attitudes toward the electoral process. Some political parties lodged official appeals of results with the Constitutional Council within the 48-hour deadline, while the national party commission decried the release of results while tabulation was still being finalized. The commission's final report, released June 2, called the elections "not credible" and the final results "illogical." Of the commission's 44 party representatives, 35 signed onto the report, with the FLN and RND refusing and the remaining parties absent or abstaining from the vote.

On May 24, the Constitutional Council announced that it had examined the 167 appeals it received, finding 47 of them “inadmissible” for procedural reasons and 107 of them without merit. Adjustments to seat totals were made based on the final 13 appeals that were accepted. Final results increased the total number of women elected to 146, or 31.6 percent of the APN’s 462 seats, a historic high for Algeria and currently the highest percentage in the Arab world. Many women won their seats by campaigning hard while overcoming significant sociocultural barriers, and were helped by the women’s quota law as implemented by the MOI.

While President Bouteflika would normally name a new prime minister following the conclusion of the appeals process, the shock of the results cast the opening session of the new parliament into disarray. The new session opened to chaos on May 26, as the 49 Green Algeria Alliance coalition deputies raised placards and walked out of the session to protest alleged electoral fraud. Close behind them were 28 more deputies representing the 14 parties of the Political Front for the Safeguard of Democracy, a coalition formed several days earlier with the intent of withdrawing from the Assembly, also in protest of alleged fraud. One deputy from the coalition later explained the parties’ actions to the press by calling the elections “a blatant violation of the guarantees of election transparency that were given by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika.” In total, the 77 deputies who withdrew represent 16.7 percent of the APN’s 462 members. The following day, the parliament elected 74-year-old Mohamed-Larbi Ould Khelifa of the FLN to a five-year term as speaker, earning criticism from commentators and youth leaders who saw his age as confirmation that the ruling party remains out of touch with young people. A prime minister was still not named by the end of the APN’s inaugural session in early July, as the FLN and other parties work through leadership conflicts and other internal struggles. Significantly, President Bouteflika has yet to clarify what authority the new parliament will have in the promised constitutional reform process, or what the timetable for that process will be.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the spirit of international cooperation, NDI and its delegation offer the following recommendations to the Algerian government, electoral authorities, political parties, media, and civil society. While the recommendations touch on technical issues including the electoral framework, administration, and procedures, each stems from the need to foster greater confidence and participation in Algeria's political and electoral processes.

To the Algerian Government and Political Leaders:

- 1. Establish an independent electoral commission, supported by more permanent monitoring and supervision commissions and empowered to review and recommend improvements to the electoral process.** If convened earlier in the electoral process and tasked with clear mandates, the monitoring and supervision commissions can play even more valuable roles in future elections than they did in this one. But while these commissions offer important contributions, the establishment of a permanent, independent electoral commission empowered to interpret and regulate the electoral legal framework could alleviate popular concerns about the neutrality of the electoral administration and increase public confidence in the integrity of elections. Centralizing administrative functions under a single independent body, rather than dividing those responsibilities across several institutions as done in this election, could also minimize confusion in the process. The MOI has an important role to play in supporting the logistical and security aspects of election material distribution and collection, even as an independent electoral commission takes the lead role in electoral management. Between elections, in periods like the current one, the commission could lead an inclusive review process of recent elections and recommend changes that lawmakers can enact to the legal framework to enhance the transparency and credibility of future elections.
- 2. Encourage and support public engagement in political decision-making processes, particularly in the upcoming constitutional reform process.** Many Algerians expressed little interest in the 2012 elections because they felt the resulting parliament would have little power to make decisions that would impact their lives. Expanding the authority vested in elected institutions like the APN could fundamentally expand citizen engagement in the political process while increasing the accountability of elected officials to the electorate. The current moment is an opportune one, with a constitutional revision process promised in the coming months. As a first step in this direction, Algeria's political leaders should demonstrate their sincerity by offering the APN a major role in steering the new constitutional revision, to include public dialogues as part of deputies' early constituent

outreach efforts. A key component of this revision process could include an open dialogue among Algerians, including representatives of the government, citizens, political parties, press, academia, and civil society, to debate the roles and responsibilities of elected institutions.

To Electoral Authorities:

- 3. Develop procedures for the accreditation of independent citizen monitors to observe future electoral processes.** While the monitoring and supervision commissions have the potential to fill important roles in the electoral process, and party agents and international observers can make valuable contributions to the process as well, independent citizen observation has a separate function by virtue of private citizens' unique interest in ensuring the credibility of the polls. Civil society observers can cover far more polling stations than international observers, can be present for every step of the electoral process, and can help increase confidence in election results among their fellow citizens to the degree warranted. Guided by new international standards,¹⁷ citizen monitoring is increasingly becoming an international and regional norm as recognition grows that there is no substitute for civil society oversight of elections. By embracing this increasingly common practice, the Algerian government can take a major step toward building public faith in the electoral process.



Candidates speak at an independent list's rally near Oran.

- 4. Maintain a secure electoral environment without impairing the ability of political parties, candidates, citizens, or observers to play their appropriate roles in the election process.** Historical incidents of politically motivated violence as well as continuing threats mean that vigilance by security forces remains essential to ensuring public order at all times, including during election periods. However, authorities should ensure that security forces conduct their duties in a way that does not interfere with any step of the electoral process or hinder political actors from exercising their right to participate in elections. Intrusive shadowing of international observers and the presence of security forces in small-scale internal party meetings are more likely to contribute to popular suspicions over security forces' motives than to public safety.

¹⁷ The *Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations*, established in April 2012, are available in multiple languages at www.gndem.org/declaration-of-global-principles.

5. **Increase access to the voters register by political parties and citizens and allow for independent and comprehensive audits of the register.** Complaints about the voters register began as soon as the extraordinary registration period ended, if not before, and continued through election day. Such widespread concerns about the soundness of the register, even if unfounded, undermine the credibility of the vote in citizens' eyes. Authorities should make the voters register more easily accessible to citizens to allow them to verify that they are on the list before election day, alleviating fears of manipulation and encouraging engagement with the election process. Easier and earlier access for political parties would also allow them to submit changes as needed and consider the register when developing their campaign plans in order to maximize outreach to potential supporters. More broadly, an immediate, independent, and comprehensive audit of the register will determine definitively the extent of problems and allow sufficient time before the 2014 presidential election for measures to correct any problems identified. Such an audit can then become part of the regular legal framework and be open to parties and other outside bodies wishing to verify that the register is sound, reinforcing the credibility of this key element of the electoral process.
6. **Develop a comprehensive voter education program to inform voters on all aspects of the election process.** Significant confusion exists among the population about the various stages of the electoral process, the function of elections, voters' role in that process, and how voters should go about fulfilling that role. This is particularly true in cases where changes have been made to the process and/or the legal framework. Because changes to improve the process and framework will always take place, voter education should become a broader element of ongoing civic education initiatives.
7. **Revise the training program for polling staff to ensure it provides them an understanding of all election day procedures.** While minor procedural mistakes are inevitable in every election, electoral authorities must make every effort to minimize these errors in order to allow all voters to cast their ballots freely and without complications that can jeopardize the secrecy, validity, or credibility of the vote. Polling staff must be well versed in all applicable electoral principles and regulations and have opportunities to practice guiding voters through the voting process. Future training processes could also be more effective if begun earlier, and if particular emphasis is placed on informing polling staff of new procedures that differ from previous elections.
8. **Consult with political parties and civic groups in an inclusive review of ballot design.** No one ballot design is perfect for every country. Some countries opt for a single ballot system on the basis that it can minimize vote buying and fraud, while saving resources. Others choose multiple ballots for their relative simplicity, particularly where illiteracy, disability, or other barriers are common. The choice of what system is right for Algeria is a choice for Algerians to make, but the strong feelings expressed on this question in the weeks before the recent elections indicate that a more open

and inclusive discussion is needed in order to weigh the pros and cons against Algeria's unique context. A new independent electoral commission could include such a discussion among its early agenda items as a means of demonstrating its commitment to inclusive decision-making and to begin earning the trust of parties, citizens, and other key electoral actors.

9. Take steps to allow greater and more systematic oversight of tabulation and compilation processes.

Numerous political actors identified the tabulation of results as the point in the process where they believe manipulation has occurred in previous electoral contests. Authorities should take steps to meet these suspicions head-on, by making the tabulation process as publicly accessible as possible—if necessary, for example, by



The FFS participated in these legislative elections for the first time in a decade.

setting up television screens to allow party representatives and citizens to watch data entry as it progresses at each level of the compilation process. Authorities should make efforts to ensure that all steps of the process are consistent and timely at all centers, and are visible and comprehensible to observers and citizens in attendance. All observers, political party representatives, and citizens in attendance should have the opportunity to record official results.

To Political Parties:

10. Improve outreach to youth to promote their engagement in the electoral process as voters, activists, and future leaders.

While no such statistics are currently available, in its limited observation and in comparing with other observation missions, NDI noted remarkably low rates of registration and voting among young people. As a majority of Algeria's population, citizens under 30 are a critical part of the country's political and economic future. Parties should take the lead in active youth outreach, establish avenues for young people to access leadership opportunities within their party, and offer youth chances to influence Algeria's political debate so that electoral campaigns and day-to-day political debate more closely reflect issues of importance to this critical demographic group.

11. Support elected women representatives and give women greater opportunities to participate in party decision-making processes.

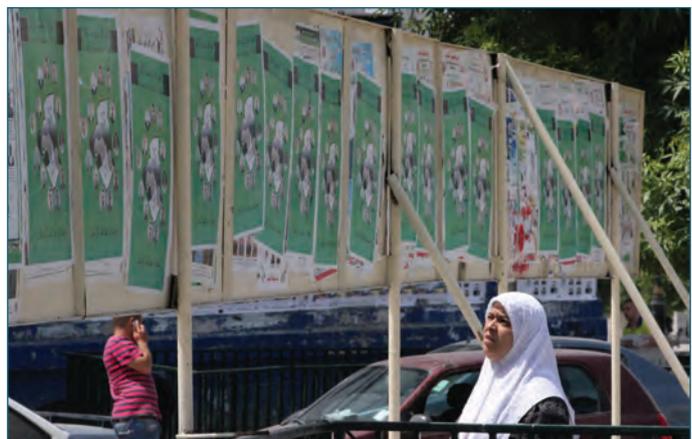
The election of so many women to Algeria's parliament has placed the country at the forefront of the Arab world in this regard. Political parties should support these leaders, many of them elected for the first time, to allow them to reach their full potential as legislators and representatives of their constituents. Access to training and resources and an active

role in internal party decision-making will be key components of successful women deputies' growth and ability to represent their parties on the national stage.

12. **Develop party platforms that respond to the aspirations of voters.** The high frequency of workers' strikes, protests over socioeconomic problems, and other societal challenges in Algeria demand political solutions. Each of these problems presents parties with an opportunity to distinguish themselves from their opponents and appeal to voters with policy solutions that can make a tangible impact on citizens' lives. Parties should use the period between elections to reflect on their principles and on the needs of their constituents and communities—particularly the large but neglected youth bloc—and to develop concrete policy platforms that address those concerns. Municipal elections anticipated later this year represent an early opportunity to place citizens' concerns at the forefront of party platforms.
13. **Improve training of party agents to enhance their ability to observe and comment on all election day operations and procedures.** Given the inconsistent performance of party agents on election day, parties need to review the objectives and methodologies of their pollwatcher training programs. Effective party agents are well informed about electoral procedures and regulations, and remain vigilant at all stages of the electoral process to protect their party's interests. Greater preparation is needed to ensure that party agents meet this standard and are able to both deter visible, localized fraud and gather and quickly report results data back to their party to allow the party to conduct a parallel tabulation process to deter fraud on a larger scale and promote the credibility of election results.

To the Media:

14. **Increase measures to ensure impartial reporting on election processes, to include consideration of the development of a media code of conduct.** Media can play a vital role in helping voters to make informed decisions at the polls. While many Algerian print media outlets seemed to embrace this view, state-sponsored television and radio and partisan print media clearly held a different agenda.



A woman examines campaign posters during the three-day silence period ahead of the elections.

The media should avoid echoing the talking points of particular political parties in order to build their reputation as a neutral agent whose sole interest is informing citizens.

To Civil Society Organizations:

- 15. Continue to monitor election processes while advocating for the formal accreditation of citizen election observers.** While many parties and citizens criticized civic groups as partisan and incapable of presenting unbiased perspective on the overall electoral process, the experience of the *Observatoire* shows that Algerian citizens can play a unique and constructive role as independent observers. Citizen groups should press for official recognition, with reference to international norms and standards. They should also take steps to build their capacity to monitor electoral processes effectively and professionally so that they can play a greater role in ensuring the transparency and credibility of future elections in Algeria. Municipal elections anticipated later this year and presidential elections expected in 2014 represent good opportunities to begin this effort.

- 16. Educate voters and encourage public debate to facilitate public engagement in future elections.** As neutral groups distinct from government or any political party, independent civil society groups can also play an important role in providing trustworthy, credible information to citizens on the voting process. Moreover, such groups can play an important role in promoting discussion and debate on critical policy issues at stake in elections. Marginalized groups, in particular the disabled, the illiterate, women, and youth, could benefit from targeted voter engagement efforts to facilitate their greater participation in future elections. However, the limited voter turnout across all segments of society suggests that increased voter education and engagement could benefit all Algerians.

Statement of the International Pre-Election Assessment Delegation to Algeria's 2012 Parliamentary Elections

Algiers, 5 April 2012

At the invitation of the Algerian government, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) organized a pre-election assessment delegation from March 31 to April 5 as part of an international election observation mission to Algeria's May 10 parliamentary elections. The purposes of NDI's mission are to express the international community's support for democratic governance and the conduct of competitive multiparty elections in Algeria, and to provide an impartial and accurate report on the electoral process to the Algerian people and the international community.

The delegation included: Carole James, member of the legislative assembly in British Columbia (Canada); Irena Hadžiabdić, president of the European Association of Election Officials (Bosnia and Herzegovina); Anis Ghodbane, vice president of communications for *l'Association Tunisienne pour l'Eveil Démocratique* (Tunisia); Sarah Johnson, assistant director of the democracy program at The Carter Center (U.S.); and Jeffrey England, NDI resident director in Morocco (U.S.).

During the course of the mission, members of the delegation met in Algiers with representatives of political parties and independent candidates; officials of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; special commissions composed of magistrates and party representatives charged by law with election supervision and monitoring, respectively; leaders from human rights groups, women's organizations, and other civic organizations; academics; bloggers and media representatives; and representatives of the international community. Delegation members also traveled to the provinces of Chlef and Tizi Ouzou to meet with election supervision commission members, candidates, political party leaders, and other activists.

This pre-election assessment is part of NDI's overall international election observation mission. In mid-April, NDI intends to field a team of seven long-term observers who will continue to observe the pre-electoral period and campaigning, polling day, and the immediate post-election period across the country, including the announcement of results and the processing of any electoral complaints.

This delegation neither seeks to interfere in the election process, nor to render a final assessment of the election process. All aspects of the assessment were conducted in accordance with Algerian law and international standards for election observation set forth in the *Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation*. All recommendations are offered in the hope of supporting and strengthening Algeria's democratic processes and institutions.

NDI and the pre-election delegation appreciate the hospitality, openness, and frankness of all those who participated in the assessment. The delegation is grateful to the government and the people of Algeria for the invitation to observe this important process.

Executive Summary

On May 10, Algerians will elect a new lower house of parliament in elections that some in the country characterize as a critical early step in a longer-term political reform process. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has stated that the new parliament will play an important role in shaping a planned constitutional reform process in the coming year—a process in which the legislature has previously not participated. Cognizant of the new pressures and increased expectations posed by recent events in the region, the Algerian government introduced several new measures to promote greater transparency in these elections. Citizens, however, have for years placed little faith in the ballot box or in elected officials' ability to produce real change. Algerians desire genuine reform, yet seem skeptical that the new measures will increase the transparency of the contest or produce a more credible body capable of significantly influencing the reform process. Some five weeks before the elections, the delegation believes that a number of steps can be taken to address shortcomings, promote openness, and increase public faith in these elections and in Algeria's broader political process.

In preparing for these elections, the Algerian government revised several elements of the electoral legal framework and made other changes that have the potential to improve the transparency of the process. While overall these changes are positive and bring Algeria's electoral framework more in line with international best practices, the ultimate impact of these changes will be determined in their implementation. In January, a new electoral law created a National Commission for Election Monitoring, composed of political party representatives mandated to observe the electoral process and report infractions to a newly established National Commission for Election Supervision, made up of judges tasked with enforcing the electoral framework. The law requires that vote counting occur within the polling station and be public, that the vote count be posted at the station, and that copies of results be shared with candidate agents. Invitations for international observers and quotas for women's representation on party candidate lists and in seat allocations can be seen as indicators of increased political will to organize more open and competitive elections. In this environment, parties are preparing for the upcoming campaign period with renewed energy, and expressed to the delegation a near-universal belief in the importance of

these elections for the advancement of Algeria's democratic reform process. A number of party representatives noted the role of political parties in developing more meaningful electoral programs that could inspire higher participation and further deter fraud.

At the same time, other aspects of the electoral process as they currently stand appear to fall short of citizen aspirations for a fundamentally more transparent process that could produce more credible results. Political actors noted that a number of regulations and procedures remain vague or undetermined, and election authorities have been slow to respond to requests for clarification. In numerous discussions, the delegation heard complaints about the efficacy of the political party commission and about the independence of the judges on the supervisory commission. Though somewhat similar to previous institutions, both bodies were established recently and face significant organizational challenges as they seek to quickly define their role in the electoral process. The delegation also heard of irregularities in the voter registration process, and numerous complaints from voters and parties of difficulties in accessing the voters' register for purposes of verification. Significantly, no provisions currently exist for the accreditation of nonpartisan domestic observers from Algerian civil society despite their requests, even as the Algerian government has extended to international observers. An area where the presence of observers could be particularly useful is in the vote tabulation process, which at this time is not open to observation by either partisan or nonpartisan monitors.

While tied to larger structural issues, many of the immediate challenges to the credibility of these elections result from confusion surrounding electoral framework revisions—in particular newly added provisions and institutions. Such challenges are not unexpected given that the legal revisions were passed less than three months ago, and can be mitigated through a series of relatively simple measures. Even at this late stage, Algerian authorities and other actors can take several steps to increase transparency, which could encourage greater public participation and promote confidence in these elections. Such measures include the following:

1. Authorities should open the entire vote tabulation process to all types of observers, including domestic observers, political party agents, and international observers, to dissuade broad concerns that this step of the process is susceptible to manipulation.
2. Electoral authorities should permit Algerian civil society to organize observation initiatives, should clarify the accreditation process, and should disseminate the information widely and in a timely manner.
3. Political parties and citizens should take advantage of opportunities to maximize transparency, for example by attending the counting of ballots and the publication of results at polling stations.
4. Outstanding regulations should be published and procedural ambiguities clarified as quickly as possible by the election authorities, in open partnership with the National Commissions for Election Supervision and Election Monitoring.

5. Election authorities should clarify how the allocation of seats will be made for women in order to ensure that the proportional results intended by the law are achieved in an equitable manner.
6. Political parties should strive to earn the trust of voters through responsive platforms and voter outreach efforts, and maximize participation of youth and women in campaigns.

The Electoral Context

A comprehensive assessment of any election must consider all aspects of the electoral process, including information from the pre-election period, election day, and the immediate post-election period. The political context in which the upcoming parliamentary elections will be held is as important in determining their outcome as are electoral preparations or even the events of election day. From beyond Algeria's borders, the popular movements of the Arab Spring have raised Algerians' expectations of their political leaders. From within the country, Algeria's colonial struggle and the civil strife of the 1990s, as well as its political structures and decision-making processes, also influence the electoral process and its outcomes. A comprehensive assessment must also take into account these factors in order to evaluate the degree to which the election process will be able to respond to—and will be perceived to respond to—Algerians' expectations and aspirations. Viewed in this way, this electoral process can be seen as one of the most important tests yet of the Algerian government's willingness to permit genuine political pluralism, and of its broader intentions as the country heads toward promised constitutional reforms.

While Algeria's historical experience sets it apart from its neighbors in many ways, the country is not immune to the demands for greater transparency, accountability, and political freedom that have characterized the past year and a half in North Africa and the Middle East. Responding to new pressures and popular expectations, in April 2011 long-serving President Bouteflika promised new constitutional revisions and sweeping reforms. Coupled with economic concessions and security crackdowns, the launch of an as-yet-incomplete reform process succeeded in curbing three months of nationwide political protests but largely failed to address popular desires for increased political space and economic security. Participation in the upcoming parliamentary elections will provide an important indication of Algerians' views on the intended reforms, as well as on the degree to which citizens are engaged in the electoral and broader political processes.

These elections, though regularly scheduled, have taken on new importance in the context of the Arab Spring and Algeria's new reform effort. President Bouteflika has said that the next parliament—which will expand to 462 members from the current 389—will play a key role in shaping an anticipated constitutional revision process. Recognizing the higher stakes, the government is also taking new measures—including invitations to international observers, registration of new political parties, and a revised legal framework—intended to demonstrate its commitment to organizing transparent and competitive elections. In a December

2011 speech, Bouteflika stated that the elections “will be held amid unprecedented plurality,” with participation by new political parties and efforts to engage citizens through a government-led voter education drive. Multilateral organizations invited to send observers include the African Union, Arab League, European Union, United Nations, and Organization of the Islamic Conference. NDI and the Carter Center are the only non-governmental organizations to have received invitations. In contrast, while Algerian civil society groups have voiced an interest in observing the elections, no local organizations have yet received accreditation.

Also of note is the fact that the May elections will take place under a revised regulatory framework. The new electoral law, promulgated in January, includes the creation of new institutions, the National Commissions for Election Supervision and Election Monitoring, designed to increase public trust in the integrity of the process, though similar institutions have existed in the past. It also maintains provisions requiring that ballots be counted at the polling station and in front of both party agents and voters in attendance, and that results be posted publicly at the polling station. A revised party law codifies political party registration procedures, and a new law on women’s participation defines quotas for women in party candidate lists. Provisions of each law were the subject of considerable debate in parliament and in the press in the months preceding passage, though perhaps none was as harshly criticized as the revised associations law, which imposes significant constraints on independent groups who could otherwise play an important role in supporting the credibility of the elections.

The upcoming elections will be a major test of both the government’s recent reform measures and of its ability to instill confidence in the electorate. Algeria’s recent history includes numerous elections plagued by fraud, and citizens appear hesitant to embrace the ballot box as an effective means of creating political change. As one Algerian political analyst told the delegation, however, “citizens are still waiting” for broad changes that would lend elections legitimacy. In the last decade, participation rates have consistently been low, with over 50 percent of registered voters reportedly abstaining in the last two parliamentary polls, in 2002 and 2007. The frequency of boycotts and high invalid ballot rates (at least 10 percent in both 2002 and 2007) also point to considerable popular disenchantment. The Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) already announced its decision to boycott the 2012 polls, and last month a prominent coalition of Islamist parties stated that it would encourage supporters to boycott the elections if it sees significant indications of fraud in the pre-election period. Unsuccessful calls by some parties in recent months to install a neutral interim administration to administer the elections point to low expectations for the polls’ integrity. While the Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)—a secular opposition party that has boycotted every national election for the last 15 years—has begun preparations for participation in May, it too has mentioned the possibility of a renewed boycott as recently as this week.

Some of the specific aspects of the electoral context leading into the 2012 parliamentary elections are discussed below.

Electoral Framework: Revisions to the electoral law and other relevant legislation in January 2012 left the electoral system relatively unchanged. The revised electoral law maintains the proportional representation, largest remainder system with multi-member districts.¹ It also keeps the minimum threshold for earning seats in the parliament at five percent of the district lists. The delegation heard no criticisms or major concerns regarding the type of electoral system or threshold from the political parties or other actors with whom it met. Several parties did point to the fact that, in combination with the large number of competing political parties (numbering 44 for this election), this system naturally leads to a splintered legislature, contributing to the weakness of the parliament. The complexity of the allocation of votes and the fact that it inherently produces outcomes other than those expected could also contribute to misunderstandings and suspicions among citizens.

Virtually all of the actors with whom NDI met noted that the revised election-related laws as written were not generally problematic, though they remain ambiguous in many regards. Rather, in the view of most, it is the application of elements within the law that seem to regularly fall short. Several political parties noted that a large number of regulations or guidelines referenced in the law have yet to be promulgated or clarified. If more confidence is to be given to the system, such regulations need to be quickly finalized and disseminated broadly. Civil society and many political parties expressed regret that neither the legal revisions nor the development of supporting regulations has taken place through an open, inclusive process of consultation. The choice to forego a collaborative approach raises concerns and reinforces public perceptions that decision-making processes are proceeding as before rather than in a new spirit of reform.

Candidate Lists: According to election officials, by the March 26 deadline more than 25,800 candidates registered on over 2,050 lists, approximately twice as many as in 2007. Of these, approximately 7,500 are women, conforming to a new law that sets minimum numbers of female candidates based on constituency size without specifying any requirement for where they must be placed on the lists.² Although in theory the law could oblige parties to automatically advance women on the lists, the delegation was unable to determine how authorities would apply this provision, particularly within a proportional representation, largest remainder system. The views of various actors interviewed, ranging from political parties to women's organizations, demonstrated conflicting interpretations and highlighted their own confusion over the ambiguities.

According to some officials, only 58 of over 2,000 candidate lists were rejected. However, the delegation heard of numerous cases of independent candidates experiencing difficulties with registration, often due to the large number of signatures and level of supporting documentation required. Lacking a party structure

1 Under the *method of largest remainder*, seats are effectively distributed in two rounds: first, seats are awarded to parties who have achieved the electoral quota, which is defined according to the Hare method as total votes divided by total seats. The quota is then subtracted from those parties' vote totals. Next, all parties with votes above the legal threshold are awarded seats according to who has the greatest number of votes (or "largest remainder") until all seats are allocated. The Algerian system is a closed-list system, meaning each party fixes the order in which the candidates are listed.

2 According to Article 2 of Organic Law No 12-03, these are: 20 percent for constituencies with four seats; 30 percent for five or more seats; 35 percent for 14 or more seats; 40 percent for 32 or more seats; 50 percent for seats for the national community abroad.

on which to lean, many were unable to overcome the considerable bureaucratic challenges and, in several cases, suggested that authorities were creating additional obstacles to the successful submission of their lists.

Election Administration: Virtually all of the actors with whom the delegation spoke noted that they expect the material preparations for the elections will be technically sound and professional. While the Ministry of the Interior remains the body responsible for the overall administration of the elections, the electoral law's establishment of several commissions has, on the surface, distanced the Ministry from many of the day-to-day functions of administrative oversight, though they remain somewhat similar to previous institutions. The National Commission for Election Monitoring includes representatives from all political parties and candidates participating in the elections, and has responsibility for identifying legal violations and reporting them to the National Commission for Election Supervision. This second body, composed of 316 magistrates, is mandated to oversee the electoral process and enforce compliance with the electoral law. Magistrates at both the national and regional levels interpreted their commission's role as being purely technical, and limited to simply enforcing electoral regulations written by the ministry. The establishment of these key commissions so late in the electoral process—after the close of the voter registration period—has prevented them from overseeing key stages of the process, such as voter and candidate registration, and left both with considerable organizational challenges even as they seek to define their roles.

Many of those with whom NDI met expressed doubts that the administration of the elections would remain neutral. In particular, many actors questioned the independence of polling station presidents and of the magistrates within the National Commission for Election Supervision and associated administrative commissions at the regional and local levels. Some party leaders have voiced skepticism about the ability of this small number of magistrates to oversee some 45,000 polling stations across Algeria, even with logistical support from local officials. While not feasible before the upcoming May elections, the future establishment of an independent election commission empowered to interpret and regulate the electoral legal framework could alleviate popular concerns about the neutrality of the electoral administration, increasing public confidence in the integrity of elections.

Voters' List: The voters' list for the 2012 elections is based on a registry that is updated annually. Under the new law, which takes the positive step of limiting the direct role of the ministry, local commissions overseen by an appointed judge and consisting of the elected local council president and several private citizens is responsible for the revision process. The Ministry of Interior opened an extraordinary voter registration process for a 10-day period in February. Some political parties and the Algerian authorities reportedly made efforts to encourage voter registration.

The voters' list remains one of the most significant areas of concern for most political parties and civic groups with whom the delegation met. In separate discussions, a number of actors noted that the number

of people registered nationwide increased without explanation by a dramatic four million people over the number in 2009. Similarly, these same actors highlighted concerns over registration of security forces, noting that some soldiers were registered in their home districts as well as in multiple deployment sites. Although some parties noted that they had received copies of the revised voters' list to allow them to review and verify it, others indicated that they had not yet received these, just five weeks before the election. Some parties with whom the delegation met noted that the lists they received contained only limited information, such as just the first and last names of voters. In the past, they said, such lists had been disaggregated only to the wilaya level and in a read-only electronic format—containing hundreds of thousands of names and making it virtually useless at the level of electoral districts.

Transparency of Vote Counting: Many political actors noted that the counting of votes at the level of the polling station and polling center is a transparent and open process. The law requires that the vote count take place within the polling station and be open to the public. Authorities with whom the delegation met said that this means that registered voters can attend counting at the polling station where they are registered, and that a limited number of political party agents can also attend at the discretion of the station's president. The NDI delegation heard mixed messages about the rights of political parties and citizens to observe the tabulation of results at the municipal and *wilaya* levels and their transfer to the national level. While election authorities described it as a purely technical process of transcribing numbers, several civil society and opposition groups contend that this is the stage at which most manipulation of results occurs. Many actors interpreted the new electoral law as barring any observation of this stage by party agents, citizens, or members of the various oversight commissions. Yet in some cases, magistrates suggested that this process, like those at the polling station and polling center, would be public.

Clarifying procedures to eliminate such confusion remains imperative. More importantly, opening the process to observation at every level would be a relatively simple and effective way of increasing transparency and building confidence in the election results. If authorities fail to take such measures, however, enforcement of the legal provision requiring vote counts to be publicly posted, and vigilance by parties and citizen groups to access that information, could help ensure a minimum of accuracy in the subsequent tabulation process.

Political Parties: Forty-four parties are competing in the May 10 elections, with over 20 of them having been registered in January and February. A number of opposition parties are participating, including one—the FFS—that has boycotted the past two legislative elections, while at least one opposition party—the RCD—has called for a boycott. Ahead of the April 15 campaign period launch, the delegation saw evidence of many parties planning their campaigns in earnest, particularly at the local level.

The new electoral law ostensibly gives political parties a channel for communicating and resolving concerns in the form of the National Commission for Election Monitoring, composed of representatives of all of competing political parties and independent candidate lists. The commission, which maintains parallel structures at the national, *wilaya*, and municipal levels, is charged with monitoring various actors' compliance with the electoral law and regulations. It also coordinates a variety of elements involving political parties, such as the allocation of equitable access to public media, the allocation of designated public spaces for campaigning, and the coordination of party agents in polling stations and polling centers.

Although a potentially constructive mechanism for representing political parties in discussions on electoral issues and defending the rights of political parties as a whole, the commission has had little time to organize itself and, given the large number of parties represented, coordination and decision-making seem to prove challenging. Further, the commission has no executive authority over electoral procedures and can merely refer such matters to the magistrates and the Ministry of Interior. During the delegation's visit, strained relations between these bodies were highlighted by the question of whether Algeria would use a single ballot paper or multiple ones. A single ballot was used for several decades after independence, and is favored by the party commission, which felt it would minimize fraud. More recent elections employed multiple ballot papers, and the Ministry of Interior had chosen to maintain this system despite concerns that it promotes vote-buying. The party commission temporarily suspended its work multiple times in recent weeks out of frustration with the Ministry of Interior's refusal to respond to its recommendation. This week the ministry formally declined the commission's recommendation on the ballot, further accentuating parties' feelings that electoral authorities are not responsive to their demands. Members of the monitoring commission noted that of some 20 issues they had raised on procedural clarifications, only three had been addressed.

Voter Participation: With several notable exceptions, those with whom the delegation met acknowledged Algerians' low confidence and general apathy toward elections. Many speculated that despite efforts to improve the process, there would be a low turnout. Algeria's recent history suggests this may be likely; official turnout in the last legislative elections, in 2007, was officially reported at only 35.6 percent, with a high invalid ballot rate of over 14 percent. Few of those the delegation met expect to see significant turnout among young Algerians, who make up an overwhelming majority of the country. The last time youth played a major role in determining an electoral outcome was during Algeria's 1988-91 political opening, when youth came out in force to cast protest votes against the ruling party, precipitating a political fallout that Algeria's leaders are loathe to repeat. Today, as one young activist told the delegation, youth see only "old faces" on candidate lists—even those of newly registered parties. Others who spoke to the delegation said that the existing parties and candidates did not have the ability to address their concerns, particularly economic ones.

Amid vague promises of a more meaningful role in a promised constitutional revision process, it remains unclear to voters whether the new parliament will truly hold more power than its relatively subdued predecessors. These questions, paired with profound doubts about the transparency and credibility of the electoral process itself, are reinforcing popular apathy. Political parties have an opportunity to regain at least some support through effective outreach to voters and present programs more directly addressing public concerns and aspirations for reform during the campaign period, but a fundamental shift in public perceptions of elections will require that authorities swiftly take measures to increase the transparency of the process.

Election Observation: The delegation commends the Algerian government for inviting a wider profile of international observers than it has in the past, such as international non-governmental organizations, which has become a common practice internationally and in the North African region. A number of citizens, civic organizations, and political parties with whom NDI spoke believe the presence of foreign observers will help to discourage some of the substantial fraud that they feel have characterized previous elections in Algeria. Although the authorities have indicated that they anticipate over 500 international observers, criteria and processes for accreditation have not yet been made available.

Paradoxically, though the government has encouraged international observation, monitoring by Algerian civil society organizations is discouraged even though it could inspire greater public confidence in the electoral process. As a number of legal experts involved in the process noted to the delegation, while authorities have not granted authorization for civil society observation initiatives, the law does not expressly forbid such important action. Observation by domestic organizations has become a relatively widespread and common practice around the world. The elections in Algeria will follow just over one month after the launch at the United Nations of the *Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations*.³ This declaration establishes international standards for citizen election observation and was developed by the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM), which includes 150 member groups from 65 countries on five continents.

While the Algerian government seems to hope to build confidence in the electoral process through the establishment of the National Commissions for Election Supervision and Election Monitoring, these bodies face fundamental questions about their independence and limitations in their mandates. Such questions prevent them from fulfilling the role of genuinely independent citizen monitors in verifying the credibility and integrity of any electoral process.

³ The declaration is available at www.gndem.org/declaration-of-global-principles.

Recommendations

In the spirit of international cooperation and of the democratic values we share, the delegation respectfully offers the following recommendations:

1. Authorities should open the entire vote tabulation process to all types of observers—domestic observers, political party agents, and international observers—including the tabulation processes at the municipal, wilaya, and national levels. Even if these are considered merely administrative or procedural steps by election authorities, a public perception exists that they provide an opportunity for manipulation.
2. Electoral authorities should permit Algerian civil society to organize observation initiatives as an important balance to party and state oversight mechanisms. The government should move quickly to clarify the accreditation process and should disseminate the information widely and in a timely manner. As they do so, authorities should demonstrate flexibility as domestic observers tackle practical challenges in deploying within such a short timeframe and with limited experience and resources.
3. Political parties and citizens should take advantage of opportunities to maximize transparency, for example by attending the counting of ballots and the publication of results at polling stations.
4. Outstanding regulations should be published and procedural ambiguities clarified as quickly as possible by the election authorities, in open partnership with the National Commissions for Election Supervision and Election Monitoring. The decisions should be disseminated widely to political parties, local election authorities, and other actors. It should be made freely available and explained to the voting public through the Internet, print media, television, and radio.
5. Election authorities should clarify how the allocation of seats will be made for women as quickly as possible and prior to voting in order to ensure that the proportional results intended by the law are achieved in an equitable manner.
6. Political parties should strive to earn the trust of voters through responsive platforms and voter outreach efforts, and maximize participation of youth and women in campaigns.

Contacts

For further information, please contact: in Algiers, Andrew Farrand at +213-555-994-016; in Washington, DC, Barrie Freeman at +1-202-728-5482.

APPENDIX B

Participation by Region

No.	Electoral District	Registered Voters	Votes Cast		Valid Votes Cast	
			Number	Turnout Rate	Number	Validity Rate
1	Adrar	190,346	123,282	64.77%	108,735	88.20%
2	Chlef	659,603	270,911	41.07%	216,025	79.74%
3	Laghouat	225,466	137,925	61.17%	118,103	85.63%
4	Oum El Bouaghi	379,503	169,736	44.73%	146,813	86.49%
5	Batna	587,243	226,790	38.62%	201,017	88.64%
6	Béjaïa	500,153	125,687	25.13%	112,208	89.28%
7	Biskra	405,592	198,223	48.87%	165,809	83.65%
8	Béchar	190,869	111,830	58.59%	87,742	78.46%
9	Blida	664,698	270,390	40.68%	198,649	73.47%
10	Bouira	482,897	164,559	34.08%	135,767	82.50%
11	Tamenghasset	113,325	66,888	59.02%	56,552	84.55%
12	Tébessa	413,868	211,405	51.08%	186,110	88.03%
13	Tlemcen	634,311	307,337	48.45%	245,552	79.90%
14	Tiaret	512,995	276,998	54.00%	227,722	82.21%
15	Tizi Ouzou	648,854	129,497	19.96%	115,518	89.21%
16	Alger	1,811,081	560,265	30.94%	442,058	78.90%
17	Djelfa	476,281	198,164	41.61%	166,655	84.10%
18	Jijel	389,404	169,067	43.42%	138,678	82.03%
19	Sétif	879,390	408,637	46.47%	320,684	78.48%
20	Saïda	225,736	111,117	49.22%	91,910	82.71%
21	Skikda	560,875	273,511	48.77%	218,324	79.82%
22	Sidi Bel Abbès	440,795	236,107	53.56%	182,471	77.28%
23	Annaba	428,677	216,071	50.40%	162,965	75.42%
24	Guelma	353,947	206,658	58.39%	175,857	85.10%
25	Constantine	573,763	225,066	39.23%	169,370	75.25%
26	Médéa	520,746	237,579	45.62%	185,758	78.19%
27	Mostaganem	441,832	210,061	47.54%	169,341	80.62%
28	M'Sila	553,380	278,574	50.34%	246,093	88.34%
29	Mascara	500,374	247,991	49.56%	197,690	79.72%
30	Ouargla	264,977	120,622	45.52%	104,807	86.89%
31	Oran	1,004,732	445,127	44.30%	331,122	74.39%
32	El Bayadh	166,527	101,514	60.96%	86,230	84.94%

33	Illizi	38,105	22,722	59.63%	19,423	85.48%
34	Bordj Bou Arréridj	379,311	195,306	51.49%	169,928	87.01%
35	Boumerdès	457,154	156,335	34.20%	120,678	77.19%
36	El Tarf	278,333	167,613	60.22%	139,722	83.36%
37	Tindouf	67,019	56,063	83.65%	47,971	85.57%
38	Tissemsilt	166,167	83,800	50.43%	68,692	81.97%
39	El Oued	278,397	117,422	42.18%	105,849	90.14%
40	Khenchela	213,202	119,433	56.02%	111,514	93.37%
41	Souk Ahras	299,916	149,784	49.94%	124,648	83.22%
42	Tipaza	397,088	198,383	49.96%	147,222	74.21%
43	Mila	465,421	209,004	44.91%	178,290	85.30%
44	Aïn Defla	444,810	189,060	42.50%	151,094	79.92%
45	Naâma	122,382	67,509	55.16%	55,170	81.72%
46	Aïn Témouchent	264,514	153,291	57.95%	119,809	78.16%
47	Ghardaia	195,982	100,705	51.38%	91,548	90.91%
48	Relizane	385,440	172,616	44.78%	142,658	82.64%
National Total		20,655,481	9,196,635	44.52%	7,506,551	81.62%
Zone 1 (Paris)		491,237	61,575	12.53%	56,536	91.82%
Zone 2 (Marseille)		312,682	45,646	14.60%	41,341	90.57%
Zone 3 (Tunis)		60,587	18,620	30.73%	16,433	88.25%
Zone 4 (Washington)		125,854	16,550	13.15%	14,118	85.31%
Overall Total		21,645,841	9,339,026	43.14%	7,634,979	81.75%

Source: Constitutional Council proclamation of May 15, 2012. (Journal Officiel, No. 32; May 26, 2012)

Summary of Election Results

No.	Electoral District	Total Number of Seats	Parties/Lists Winning Seats	Number of Seats Won
01	Adrar	5	National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Touat Elkobra	1
			Front El Moustakbal	1
02	Chlef	13	National Liberation Front (FLN)	5
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	2
			Patriotic Republican Rally (RPR)	2
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
			Workers' Party (PT)	2
03	Laghouat	6	National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Front National des Indépendants pour la Concorde (FNIC)	1
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
			El Foursane	1
04	Oum El Bouaghi	8	National Liberation Front (FLN)	8
05	Batna	14	National Liberation Front (FLN)	8
			Etaassil	2
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
			National Algerian Front (FNA)	2
06	Béjaïa	12	Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)	7
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
07	Biskra	9	National Democratic Rally (RND)	3
			Nour El Chebab A	3
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
08	Béchar	5	National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
			National Front for Social Justice (FNJS)	1
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
			Mouvement El Infitah	1
09	Blida	13	National Liberation Front (FLN)	7
			Ramz El Assil	2
			National Algerian Front (FNA)	2
			Workers' Party (PT)	2

10	Bouira	9	National Liberation Front (FLN)	4
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	3
			Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)	2
11	Tamenghasset	5	National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
			National Front for Social Justice (FNJS)	1
12	Tébessa	8	National Liberation Front (FLN)	4
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	2
13	Tlemcen	12	National Liberation Front (FLN)	10
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
14	Tiaret	11	National Liberation Front (FLN)	11
15	Tizi Ouzou	15	Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)	7
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	4
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	3
			Workers' Party (PT)	1
16	Alger	37	Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	13
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	10
			Workers' Party (PT)	7
			Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)	4
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	3
17	Djelfa	14	National Democratic Rally (RND)	6
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	6
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	2
18	Jijel	8	Union of Democratic and Social Forces (UFDS)	2
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	2
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
			National Algerian Front (FNA)	1
			Front for Justice and Development (El Adala)	1
19	Sétif	19	National Liberation Front (FLN)	8
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	5
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	3
			National Republican Alliance (ANR)	3
20	Saïda	5	National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			El Fedjr El Jadid Party (PFJ)	1
			Ahd 54	1
21	Skikda	11	National Liberation Front (FLN)	5
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	3
			Workers' Party (PT)	2
			Front for Justice and Development (El Adala)	1

22	Sidi Bel Abbès	8	National Liberation Front (FLN)	8
23	Annaba	8	National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Front National Démocratique (FND)	1
			Front for Justice and Development (El Adala)	1
			Workers' Party (PT)	1
			Popular Algerian Movement (MPA)	1
24	Guelma	6	National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
			National Movement of Hope (MNE)	1
			Workers' Party (PT)	1
25	Constantine	12	National Liberation Front (FLN)	5
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
			Front for Justice and Development (El Adala)	2
			Workers' Party (PT)	2
			Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)	1
26	Médéa	11	National Liberation Front (FLN)	5
			Rassemblement Algérien (RA)	2
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	2
			Youth Party (PJ)	2
27	Mostaganem	9	National Liberation Front (FLN)	4
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	3
			Workers' Party (PT)	2
28	M'Sila	12	Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	3
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
			Front of Change (FC)	2
			El Fedjr El Jadid Party (PFJ)	2
29	Mascara	10	National Liberation Front (FLN)	4
			Popular Algerian Movement (MPA)	3
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
30	Ouargla	7	National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
			National Movement of Hope (MNE)	1
			National Party for Solidarity and Development (PNSD)	1
			El Fedjr El Jadid Party (PFJ)	1
			El Karama Party	1
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	1

31	Oran	18	National Liberation Front (FLN)	12
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	3
			Workers' Party (PT)	3
32	El Bayadh	5	National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
			Front of Change (FC)	1
			El Fedjr El Jadid Party (PFJ)	1
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	1
33	Illizi	5	National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			National Party for Solidarity and Development (PNSD)	1
			Ahd 54	1
34	Bordj Bou Arréridj	8	National Liberation Front (FLN)	4
			Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)	2
			Independent "G"	2
35	Boumerdès	10	National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)	3
			Elwatania	1
			Front of Change (FC)	1
36	El Tarf	5	National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Front for Justice and Development (El Adala)	1
			Workers' Party (PT)	1
37	Tindouf	5	National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Algerian Renewal Party (PRA)	1
38	Tissemsilt	5	National Democratic Rally (RND)	2
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
			Popular Algerian Movement (MPA)	1
39	El Oued	8	Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	6
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
40	Khenchela	5	El Wihda	3
			Ennour El Djazairi Party (PED)	2
41	Souk Ahras	6	National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
			Front for Justice and Development (El Adala)	1
			El Karama Party	1
42	Tipaza	7	National Liberation Front (FLN)	5
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			National Front for Social Justice (FNJS)	1

43	Mila	10	National Democratic Rally (RND)	3
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			Free Citizens' Movement (MCL)	1
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
			Ahd 54	1
			Front for Justice and Development (El Adala)	1
44	Aïn Defla	10	National Liberation Front (FLN)	5
			National Algerian Front (FNA)	3
			National Party for Solidarity and Development (PNSD)	2
45	Naâma	5	National Liberation Front (FLN)	3
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
46	Aïn Témouchent	5	National Liberation Front (FLN)	2
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	1
			Al Afak	1
47	Ghardaia	5	El Wihda Wa Etadaoul	1
			National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			National Algerian Front (FNA)	1
			El Wafa Wa Tawassol	1
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	1
48	Relizane	10	National Liberation Front (FLN)	6
			Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	2
			Popular Algerian Movement (MPA)	2
	Zone 1 (Paris)	2	Union of Democratic and Social Forces (UFDS)	1
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	1
	Zone 2 (Marseille)	2	Front El Moustakbal	1
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	1
	Zone 3 (Tunis)	2	National Democratic Rally (RND)	1
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	1
	Zone 4 (Washington)	2	Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)	1
			National Liberation Front (FLN)	1
Total				462

Source: Constitutional Council proclamation of May 15, 2012, adjusted in function of the Council's May 24, 2012 decisions. (Journal Officiel, No. 32 May 26, 2012)

Results by Party

No.	Party/List	Number of Votes *	Percentage of Total Vote **	Number of Seats Won ***	Percentage of Seats Won
1	National Liberation Front (FLN)	1,324,363	17.35%	208	45.02%
2	National Democratic Rally (RND)	524,057	6.86%	68	14.72%
3	Green Algeria Alliance (AAV)	475,049	6.22%	49	10.61%
4	Front of Socialist Forces (FFS)	188,275	2.47%	27	5.84%
5	Workers' Party (PT)	283,585	3.71%	24	5.19%
6	Independent Lists (see detailed list below)	671,190	8.79%	18	3.90%
7	National Algerian Front (FNA)	198,544	2.60%	9	1.95%
8	Front for Justice and Development (El Adala)	232,676	3.05%	8	1.73%
9	Popular Algerian Movement (MPA)	165,600	2.17%	7	1.52%
10	El Fedjr El Jadid Party (PFJ)	132,492	1.74%	5	1.08%
11	Front of Change (FC)	173,981	2.28%	4	0.87%
12	National Party for Solidarity and Development (PNSD)	114,372	1.50%	4	0.87%
13	Ahd 54	120,201	1.57%	3	0.65%
14	National Republican Alliance (ANR)	109,331	1.43%	3	0.65%
15	National Front for Social Justice (FNJS)	140,223	1.84%	3	0.65%
16	Union of Democratic and Social Forces (UFDS)	114,481	1.50%	3	0.65%
17	Front El Moustakbal	174,708	2.29%	2	0.43%
18	National Movement of Hope (MNE)	119,253	1.56%	2	0.43%
19	Youth Party (PJ)	102,663	1.34%	2	0.43%
20	El Karama Party	129,427	1.70%	2	0.43%
21	Ennour El Djazairi Party (PED)	48,943	0.64%	2	0.43%
22	Rassemblement Algérien (RA)	117,549	1.54%	2	0.43%
23	Patriotic Republican Rally (RPR)	114,651	1.50%	2	0.43%
24	Front National Démocratique (FND)	101,643	1.33%	1	0.22%
25	Front National des Indépendants pour la Concorde (FNIC)	107,833	1.41%	1	0.22%
26	Free Citizens' Movement (MCL)	115,631	1.51%	1	0.22%
27	Mouvement El Infitah	116,384	1.52%	1	0.22%
28	Algerian Renewal Party (PRA)	111,218	1.46%	1	0.22%
Total		6,328,323	82.89%	462	100.00%

List	Number of Seats Won	Percentage of Seats Won
El Wihda	3	0.65%
Nour El Chebab A	3	0.65%
Etaassil	2	0.43%
Independent "G"	2	0.43%
Ramz El Assil	2	0.43%
Al Afak	1	0.22%
El Foursane	1	0.22%
El Wafa Wa Tawassol	1	0.22%
El Wihda Wa Etadaoul	1	0.22%
Elwatania	1	0.22%
Touat Elkobra	1	0.22%
Total	18	3.90%

* The Constitutional Council validated these vote totals in its May 15, 2012 proclamation. After this date, in the course of reviewing appeals the Council made some minor changes to these figures, but a final definitive list was not published.

** The percentage of total vote figures are calculated on the basis of valid votes retained (7,634,979) after eliminating spoiled ballots.

*** Source: Constitutional Council proclamation of May 15, 2012, adjusted in function of the Council's May 24, 2012 decisions. (*Journal Officiel*, No. 32; May 26, 2012)

APPENDIX C

Delegation Members and Staff

International Pre-Election Assessment Delegation

Jeffrey England

Resident Director, Morocco and Algeria
National Democratic Institute
United States

Irena Hadžiabdić

President
European Association of Election Officials
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sarah Johnson

Assistant Director, Democracy Program
The Carter Center
United States

Anis Ghodbane

Vice President, Communications
L'Association Tunisienne pour l'Eveil
Démocratique
Tunisia

Carole James

Member
Legislative Assembly of British Columbia
Canada

Long Term Observation Delegation

Abbas Abou Zeid

Lebanon

Andrew Farrand

United States

Vera Lourenço

Portugal

Casper Wuite

Netherlands

Katie Day

Canada

Luc Lapointe

Canada

Lesley Richards

Trinidad and Tobago

Delegation Staff

Karima Kassi

Program Officer, Algeria
National Democratic Institute
Algeria



National Democratic Institute
455 Massachusetts Ave, NW, 8th Floor, Washington, DC 20001-2621
p: 202.728.5500 | www.ndi.org