

Fraud Mitigation Measures for the Iraqi Council of Representatives Election – Out of Country Voting

International best practice and the experience of countries around the world have determined that the following measures are successful in combating efforts to commit fraud during in country and out of country voting. IHEC is undertaking to implement all these measures with the support of the United Nations.

General fraud mitigation measures applicable to the in and out of country vote:

Production and planning of Election Cycle

Ballot security features (e.g. watermarks, ballot batch serial numbers); timely production of procedures and training for polling officials; planning for polling locations – easy access and equitable distribution; engagement of civil society and political parties; challenge period and complains system.

Material Distribution and Retrieval

Chain of custody procedures for the transportation and storage of sensitive material; election material security measures including the use of tamper evident bags, serial numbers and confidential reporting lines; Security and contingency planning; political entities should be encouraged to accompany all sensitive material transfers and confirm storage is secure.

Registration and Voting

Transparent hiring of staff; clear training and procedures; Fraud attempted through simultaneous registration on the three days of OCV voting election will be countered by the display of the final voters list outside of the polling stations; analysis and audit of list for repeat registrations; complaints system; stringent documentation requirements; security at centres and materials storage locations

Use of conditional ballots; display of the voters list; transparent ballot boxes and indelible ink; ballot stamp and serial numbered ballots; seals on ballot boxes; secure and transparent transportation of ballots and ballot boxes; widespread dissemination of procedures

Counting and Results

Timely counting procedures; count at polling station level; posting of polling station results; comprehensive training on procedures and reconciliation; transparent tabulation of results; complaints procedures put in place; contingency plans

Additional detail on Fraud Mitigation Measures for the OCV:

Conditional Ballot Envelope – In the absence of a voters list prior to polling day this is a major fraud prevention mechanism against multiple voting during OCV and will reduce possibilities or attempts of fraud. This augments application of indelible ink. The conditional ballot envelope and voter details it contains will allow the opportunities to separate votes that might be subject of challenges. The use of conditional ballots, in conjunction with the opportunity for challenges to registrations, maximizes opportunities for identifying and cancelling fraudulent registrations and voting.

OCV Fact Sheet 3

Display of the voters' list/challenges & complaints on voter eligibility – while the in country vote will have voters lists created from a pre-registration, no such list exists prior to polling day for the out of country process. It is therefore essential and legally required, that a list is compiled on polling day. It is also essential, and a legal requirement, that the list is available for inspection. Fraudulent or multiple attempts at voting may be detected by IHEC, through the verification process, but they may also be detected by Political Entities and their agents. Therefore in order to maximize detection both measures will be used. Voters' lists will be given to the data entry clerk for immediate cross referencing and subsequently returned to the custody of the polling station manager and can be viewed upon request. Therefore the display of the voters list, after polling, will be a realistic and effective anti-fraud measure.

Division of the voters list – On each day of polling, every polling centre will use a voters list that is divided into three segments. One segment will be used between the opening of polling at 8am and 12pm, the second segment between 12pm and 3pm and the third segment between 3pm and the close of polling at 6pm. At the end of each of time period the voters list will be underscored to prevent any further entries and given to a data entry clerk for immediate data entry and cross referencing. On the second and third days of polling the previous days cross referenced voters lists will be in the custody of the polling centre manager and available for inspection by eligible voters, accredited political entity agents and accredited observers. On the fourth day the twelve cross referenced segments that form overall polling station voters list will be in the custody of the polling station manager and can be viewed upon request. While complicating polling procedures, the division of voter's lists in such a manner is an anti-fraud mechanism that limits fraudulent additions to the voters list and stuffing of ballot boxes after the close of polling by polling staff. This is a high visibility anti-fraud mechanism.

Contingency materials – In the absence of a pre assigned voters list, in order to deal with possible problems on polling day, such as damaged material or unforeseen high turnout, the IHEC will distribute limited amounts of contingency material to all ocv countries. This material will be strictly controlled, will only be issued under strict conditions and will have to be accounted for at all times. At the end of polling and counting all polling centres and country offices will be required to provide a report on if and how the contingency material was used.

Storage of materials in a guarded location within the polling centre – At the end of each day of registration and voting all ballot box top slots will be sealed and recorded. Ballot boxes and sensitive materials placed in one guarded and lockable location within the polling centre; if no single room exists the materials will be left in the polling station over night. Unused ballots will also be sealed in an additional ballot box and seals recorded. At the start of each day all material will be removed from the safe location and opened in the presence of observers (if present).

Chain of custody – Maintaining the chain of custody in the transportation of sensitive materials will be vital to the integrity of the election process through registration voting to counting and storage of the counted ballots pending announcement of results.

Audit Teams – Following any evidence of fraud identified through the conditional ballot system or through complaints Iraqi IHEC staff will conduct audits of selected ballot boxes and forms completed at polling stations after Election Day. If evidence of fraud is proven, votes or even polling station results will be excluded.

Complaint Procedures – The IHEC has a system in place, through the complaints committee, to investigate, citizen and political entity complaints on irregularities in the electoral process. A separate fact sheet on complaints procedures will be available in early February.