

GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

THE 2006 PALESTINIAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS



**CENTRAL ELECTIONS COMMISSION
PALESTINE**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword by the CEC chairman	5
Section I:	
Role and Obligations of Observers and Campaigners	7
1. Election Observation	
2. Accreditation of International Observers	
3. Code of Conduct for International Observers	
4. Code of Conduct for Election Campaigning	
Section II:	
Electoral Operations	21
1. The New Electoral System	
2. Polling Centers, Ballot Boxes and Election Kits	
3. Polling, Counting and Reporting Procedures	
Section III:	
Election Timetable and Voter Statistics	35
1. Timetable for the Second PLC Elections	
2. Table of Registered Eligible Voters	
Section IV:	
The Central Elections Commission (CEC), Information and Resources	41
1. The Structure and Functions of the CEC	
2. Information and Reference Sources	
3. Contact Us	
4. Electoral District Map	

A WELCOME LETTER FROM THE CEC CHAIRMAN

On behalf of the Central Elections Commission (CEC), I would like to welcome you to Palestine as we prepare for another step in our leap towards the building of democratic institutions. Last year, we successfully conducted presidential elections that were held in the wake of the sudden death of President Yasser Arafat. These elections inaugurated Mr. Mahmoud Abbas as the new President of Palestine. At present, we are preparing for a more complex process, namely the election of members to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC).

During the last presidential elections held on 9 January, 2005, more than eight hundred international observers monitored the elections. The majority judged them as generally free and fair. There can be little doubt that the presence of international observers on Election Day itself significantly helps impartial reporting and monitoring. Their presence also plays a major role in monitoring the elections in East Jerusalem – occupied by Israel and illegally annexed by it in 1967. The disruptions that occurred in Jerusalem last January represented a serious setback in which the vast majority of Palestinians in East Jerusalem were subject to unwarranted treatment and intimidation by the Israeli authorities, which left many without an opportunity to vote. The PLC elections are being conducted under similarly difficult circumstances and there are serious factors that could once again undermine the success of elections in Jerusalem.

The CEC is doing its utmost to ensure that the current elections are being conducted in a fair and transparent manner and it is our belief that the involvement of the international community will facilitate this process to a great extent. The work of international observers undoubtedly enhances accountability and guarantees the integrity and neutrality of the electoral process. It is the international observer who is best placed to ensure that electoral procedures guarantee free, fair and democratic elections. More specifically, the CEC sees the role of international observers as a dual one: firstly, to monitor the elections and to ensure that they are being held in accordance with

internationally accepted standards and, secondly, to monitor the activities of Israeli authorities so that Palestinians can vote without trepidation or interference.

For Palestinians, the presence of observers demonstrates first and foremost that the international community is supportive of our democratic-building efforts and this serves as a real confidence-building measure. By giving legitimacy to the electoral process, the process of observation contributes to the stability of Palestinian society.

This guide has been prepared by the CEC's Electoral Affairs Department. It contains informative material to guide you as you observe the forthcoming elections. We hope that it assists you in your work and enhances your understanding of the electoral process.

Once again, I welcome you to Palestine and extend my sincerest wishes for a rewarding and exciting experience. It is a momentous time in our history and it is our hope that the elections will usher in a period of stability and security for Palestinians and contribute to the establishment of a free Palestinian state.

Dr. Hanna Nasir
Chairman, CEC

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "H. Nasir". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Section I: Role and Obligations of Observers and Candidates

1. *Election Observation*
2. *Accreditation of International Observers*
3. *Code of Conduct for International Observers*
4. *Code of Conduct for Election Campaigning*



1. Election Observation

Election observation by the international community is generally accepted as a means of contributing to voter confidence and assessing the relative legitimacy of an electoral process and its outcome.

International election observation and reporting have become important mechanisms to help ensure neutrality, integrity, accountability and transparency of the electoral process. They are part of the system that protects the viability and honesty of election administration and the participation by political parties, candidates and interest groups. Election observation encourages compliance with the legal framework and acts as a deterrent to those thinking about undertaking dubious activities.

The presence of observers during an entire election period encourages an atmosphere of openness and transparency, thus enhancing public confidence in the overall election process. Observer access to election and political party offices, campaign events, and all voting opportunities acts as a deterrent to improper practices and attempts at fraud and frivolous or unfounded allegations of wrongdoing.

Coordination between observer groups to develop common information and reporting materials, to divide geographic areas or election activities, to share information gathered, to use joint debriefings and evaluations of findings can enhance coverage, prevent duplication of efforts and provide a greater context for assessment and promote consistency in reporting on the observation exercise.

Observer reports which attempt to deliver assessments on overall election processes without the benefit of long-term observation, or with only limited coverage of the voting and counting, risk narrow judgments.

Assessment reports by observer missions that work independently of each other on small but not necessarily representative samples of election activities, with no common standards against which to make their assessments together with insufficient planning, wanting methodology, not enough access or coverage, sometimes unsuitable observers, and unsupported judgments, undercut credibility and may lead to the misuse of such mission findings.

Reports based on sound technical and democratic, not political, considerations will generally receive acceptance by their audiences. Such reports are useful tools for legislators and election officials in effecting future improvements to election systems in line with internationally accepted standards of good practice.

2. Accreditation of International Observers

a. Application for accreditation as an international observation organization includes:

- (i) An application of accreditation for the international observation body with:
 - a list of the proposed names and passport numbers of the observers
- (ii) An authorization form for the contact person with:
 - a photocopy of the contact person's passport
- (iii) A pledge of the international observer for each observer with:
 - 1- photocopy of the observer's ID or passport
 - 2- photographs (size 1.5 x 2 cm)

Forms are available on the website at www.elections.ps/english/observers/forms.pdf. All items may be hand delivered to the Electoral Affairs Department at CEC HQ in Ramallah. Otherwise forms and passport photocopies may be emailed to info@elections.ps or faxed to + (972) 2 296 9713. ID photos may be emailed to the above address as a .jpg file or delivered by hand.

Accreditation cards and information materials may be picked up at the CEC HQ in Ramallah unless otherwise noted.

b. Assistants to International Observers

Observation delegations should accredit interpreters and assistants that need to accompany international observers into polling or registration centers. Accreditation should be limited to assistants and translators whose presence alongside the international observer is essential to the completion of the observation mission.

Delegations must submit an official and final list of assistants that need accreditation cards. The list should contain the full name, position, and ID number of each person. The organization must also submit a labelled ID picture of each assistant or translator.

All these materials should be submitted in person to the CEC HQ in Ramallah by the officially authorized contact person for the delegation.

c. Guest Observers

In a limited number of cases, the CEC issues guest cards. These are reserved for government officials or dignitaries who do not wish to officially report on the election but want access to registration/polling centers. In order to issue a guest card, the CEC must receive an official letter from the government or representative office, a list of the names and passport numbers of those requesting the cards, a photocopy of each guest's passport, and one ID photo of each guest.

3. Code of Conduct for International Observers

a. Introduction

International election observers are invited to observe all phases of the electoral process including voter registration, candidate registration, national list registration, election campaigning, polling and counting, and post-election complaint procedures. The CEC accreditation procedures, which are laid out in the bylaws regarding the accreditation of international observers, offer interested international organizations and government missions an opportunity to apply for accreditation.

The CEC Code of Conduct for International Observers (hereinafter, the Code of Conduct) highlights the internationally recognized standards of observation and defines the rights and duties of international observers.

b. General Provisions

(i) Right to observe the electoral process

The right to observe the electoral process is guaranteed in the Elections Law No. 9 of 2005. This right may be exercised by any CEC accredited body and its accredited observers.

(ii) Adherence to the Code of Conduct

All accredited international observation bodies and observers must adhere to the provisions, principles and standards stated in the Code of Conduct.

(iii) Immunities

International observers do not enjoy any special privileges or immunities unless otherwise established by the relevant authorities.

c. Principles and Standards of Election Observation

Electoral observation is the systematic collection of information on the electoral process without interference in the process itself. Based on the information collected, election observation bodies issue objective evaluations on the electoral process.

Electoral observation must be:

- (i) Non-partisan and neutral: Observation must be exercised in a politically neutral and impartial manner. All activities must be undertaken without bias toward or affiliation with any Palestinian political party or candidate regardless of the party's participation in the electoral process.
- (ii) Comprehensive: Observers must consider all the factors that affect the electoral process. Any limitation to the scope of observation should be noted in statements and reports.
- (iii) Institutional: Accreditation to observe the electoral process is granted on an institutional basis. Individual observers do not have the right to issue statements concerning their personal observation findings. In contrast, an accredited observation body is entitled to issue reports and make statements regarding the progress of the electoral process through delegated spokespersons.
- (iv) Transparent: Observation bodies and observers should reveal all methods used in information gathering, including assumptions and methodologies upon which the observation and conclusions are based.
- (v) Accurate: Observation bodies and observers should use accurate and reliable information throughout the observation process and always refer to the sources

of such information.

(vi) Respectful of Palestinian law and institutions: Observation bodies and their observers must recognize and abide by the laws of the Palestinian National Authority and the regulations and procedures of the CEC.

d. Rights of the Observers

International observers enjoy the following rights:

- (i) Observe all phases of the electoral process with unimpeded access to all registration/polling and counting centers and the data entry center.
- (ii) Obtain information from electoral authorities at all levels.
- (iii) Issue public observation reports and statements concerning the progress of the electoral process. These must be institutional reports and statements relayed by the spokespersons authorized by the observation body.
- (iv) Meet with any person or organization including partisan entities, candidates, civil society organizations, and other officials.
- (v) Enjoy freedom of movement throughout the Palestinian territories without restriction.

Inside Registration and Polling and Counting Centers

- (i) Talk to voters or registrants inside the registration and/or polling centers. Observers may not do so inside the polling stations or registration rooms. Observers may observe registration and polling and counting procedures at a reasonable distance inside the registration and polling centers and stations.
- (ii) Request a CEC complaints/remarks form and submit it to the registration/polling center presiding officer.

e. Duties of the Observers**Observers have the following duties:**

- (i) Wear the accreditation badge in a visible manner and present formal identification to the competent authorities upon request.
- (ii) Refrain from engaging in partisan activities or activities beneficial to any of the partisan entities or candidates.
- (iii) Do not display, wear, or carry any logos, colors or symbols identical or similar to those of any partisan entity or candidate.
- (iv) Refrain from exerting influence on registrants or voters.
- (v) Undertake duties in an unobtrusive manner without interfering in the election process.
- (vi) Refrain from making personal or premature comments about electoral observation to the media or other interested parties.

Inside Registration Centers, Polling and Counting Centers, and the Data Entry Center

- (i) Abide by the instructions of CEC officials at the registration/polling and counting centers and data entry center.
- (ii) Do not record any personal details relating to registrants or voters, such as their names or the names of the candidates or parties that they vote for.

f. Final Provisions

The CEC may revoke the accreditation of any observation body or observer in the event

that he/she is proven to have violated the provisions of the effective laws, bylaws, or the Code of Conduct.

4. Code of Conduct for Election Campaigning

The Palestinian Elections Law regulates a number of aspects of election campaigning, and places limitations on the location, time, content and funding of election campaigns. The CEC has published the rules and regulations concerning election campaigning, and continuously tracks campaigns in order to verify their observance of the rules and regulations.

a. Election Campaigning is a Legal Right

All candidates seeking election to the PLC are guaranteed the right to campaign in accordance with the rulings of law (Articles 59-64), and the statutes and instructions issued by the CEC.

b. Definition of Election Campaigning

An election campaign consists of legal electoral activities and actions undertaken by registered party organizations and candidates to explain their manifesto to the voting public. Included in the definition of the campaign are any appeals made by candidates and party organizations for the public to vote in the interests of any of the candidates.

c. The Legal Time Period of the Election Campaign

The election campaign commences 22 days before polling day, and all of its activities must be concluded 24 hours before polling day. According to the schedule of the 2006 PLC elections, election campaigning begins on January 3, 2006 and ends on January 23, 2006.

Party organizations, electoral lists, candidates and official and private media are obliged to observe this timing. It is forbidden to undertake any form of election campaigning in accordance with the above definition before the appointed time. This includes a ban on advertisements, press reports, rallies, conferences and speeches explaining the election manifesto, as well as direct or indirect appeals for votes for the candidate before the appointed time.

d. Places where Election Campaigning is Not Permitted

Rallies or public election meetings are absolutely prohibited in mosques and churches and in buildings or places used by the public services or government organizations.

e. Regulations Affecting the Content of the Election Campaign

It is absolutely prohibited for speeches, publications, advertisements or posters to contain any inflammatory propaganda or accusations against other candidates, or material which provokes tribal, family or factional strife among citizens.

f. The Election Campaign and the Media

(i) Official media:

The Central Elections Commission set forth a special program in cooperation with the official Palestinian media, allocating times to be set aside for free advertising for candidates running for PLC membership, on the condition that opportunities were to be equally and equitably provided.

Free advertising: Free advertising provides candidates with advertising time in

which to explain their manifesto without censorship or violation of the public order and without the inclusion of any inflammatory propaganda or accusations against any other candidate.

Free advertising: It is not permitted for the official media to accept any form of remuneration for the airtime that is allotted to each candidate.

Equal opportunities: The conditions for the campaign of each candidate must be made equal, through the provision of corresponding airtime broadcast at equivalent times (for example, broadcasting all the advertisements at peak time, rotating the order in which candidates appear, and providing equal conditions for any advertising time apart from live campaigning).

It is not permitted for the official media to broadcast additional advertisements, either gratis or paid for, on behalf of any candidate.

(ii) Private media (newspapers, radio and domestic stations):

All private media, including radio and television stations, must observe the election campaign regulations set down in the law, the foremost of which are the time at which election campaigning begins, and the ban on inflammatory propaganda and accusations against any of the candidates. It is not permitted, for example, for a daily newspaper to publish paid-for advertisements which constitute election campaign material, or advertisements in the interest of the electoral campaign of one of the candidates, or advertisements in which the candidate explains his/her political program, prior to the time at which the election campaign is scheduled to begin.

The CEC will prosecute any infraction of the above regulations with the Ministry of Communications.

g. Funding of the Electoral Campaign

Candidates and electoral lists are forbidden from receiving funding for electoral campaigning from the Palestinian National Authority, in accordance with the law.

Party organizations, candidates and electoral lists are forbidden from receiving funds for electoral campaigning from any non-domestic or foreign source, in accordance with Article 100/1 of the law.

Each party participating in the elections and each winning candidate must present a detailed statement to the CEC one month after the final announcement of the election results at the latest, listing all the sources from which they received funding and the amounts spent in the course of the election campaign period, in accordance with Article 100/2 of the law.

Section II: Electoral Operations

1. *The New Electoral System*
2. *Polling Centers, Ballot Boxes and Election Kits*
3. *Polling, Counting and Reporting Procedures*



1. The New Electoral System

In August 2005, a new Electoral Law (No. 9 of 2005) was brought into force creating a new system for electing members to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC).

The electoral system is a mixed system incorporating both majority and proportional representation systems.

Under the new law, 132 members of the PLC will be elected: 66 members elected by the majority system from 16 constituencies and 66 members elected by the proportional system, where Palestine is considered one constituency.

The 66 majority system seats are allocated to constituencies in proportion to the population of each constituency (with six seats allocated for Christians) by presidential decree as follows:

11 constituencies in the West Bank:

Jerusalem 6 (2)	Salfit 1	Jenin 4
Tubas 1	Nablus 6	Bethlehem 4 (2)
Tulkarem 3	Jericho 1	Hebron 9
Qalqilya 2	Ramallah & Al-Bireh 5 (1)	

5 constituencies in the Gaza Strip:

North Gaza 5	Khan Younis 5
Gaza 8 (1)	Rafah 3
Deir Al- Balah 3	

The proportional system is a closed list system with the order of names determined

by the parties. There must be a minimum of seven names and a maximum of 66 names. Women are assured a minimum level of representation on the lists. Each list must include at least one woman in the first three names, at least one woman in the next four names, and at least one woman in each of the five names that follow in the list.

Each voter will receive two ballot papers. One ballot will contain the names of the candidates competing for the seat(s) in the constituency and the voter chooses from those a number of candidates not exceeding the number of seats allocated for the constituency. The second ballot includes the names of the competing lists and the voter chooses only one list.

The voter deposits the marked ballot papers into separate ballot boxes, one for each system.

For the majority system, the winning candidates are those who obtain the highest number of votes. For the proportional system, each list obtains a number of seats in proportion to the number of valid votes obtained, after meeting the minimum threshold of 2% of the total vote.

2. Polling Centers, Ballot Boxes and Election Kits

With the Palestinian Legislative Council's removal of the use of the Palestinian Civil Registry as a valid list of eligible voters, the CEC will operate just one type of polling center for the legislative elections.

a. Polling Centers for Registered Voters

The process for registered voters is simple: registered voters vote where they registered. If citizens registered at a temporary registration site, they simultaneously chose a permanent polling site within their locality where they will vote. The one exception is for remote registrants who registered in a city different to the one in which they intend to vote. Remote registrants also have a receipt of registration indicating the location of their polling center. A registered voter must present proof of identity.

b. Polling Centers in Jerusalem

According to Article 8 of the Elections Law No. 9 of 2005, every Palestinian in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including East Jerusalem, who meets all the requirements in the law, has the right to vote. However, given the highly contested status of East Jerusalem, electoral activities in the district are often subject to disruption. While the CEC continues to coordinate with the Palestinian National Authority to secure the voting rights of East Jerusalem residents, and while the Palestinian-Israeli Agreement of December 27, 2004 stipulates that voting arrangements in East Jerusalem follow the framework adopted for the 1996 Palestinian elections, the CEC's ability to conduct smooth electoral operations there continues to be problematic.

The forcible shutting down of six voter registration centers in East Jerusalem in the lead-up to the presidential elections left what is believed to be close to 200,000 eligible voters without the opportunity to register. A similar setback occurred on May 25, 2005 when the Israeli Interior Minister ordered the closure of voter registration centers in East Jerusalem. In addition to banning all CEC activities in the district, this

action brought voter registration in the district to an end and severely curtailed the progress of vital election activities.

The recurrent Israeli infringements in East Jerusalem have made it very difficult for the CEC to conduct elections in accordance with the law and they continue to significantly undermine the prospect for free and fair participation by all in the elections.

c. Ballot Boxes

There will be over 2,800 polling stations in approximately 1,000 polling centers spread across the 16 electoral districts. Each polling station will be supplied with two ballot boxes, one for the electoral list ballot papers and one for the constituency ballot papers. The boxes are semi-transparent to allow polling station staff to see the ballot forms inside while not being able to read their contents.

d. Election Kits

The election kits are comprised of several components, some of which are described below (see the section below “Polling and Counting Procedures”). The components are packaged inside the ballot boxes for ease of distribution.

Ballots

The CEC imported ballot papers from Spain and stored them in a secure warehouse in Ramallah. The CEC has taken measures to prevent the production of fraudulent ballots by using ballots with a unique watermark, irregular paper size, and an undisclosed ballot design.

Electoral Ink

The CEC has decided to continue to use ink as a protection against voter fraud. Every voter will be marked with visible, indelible ink. The ink cannot be removed for at least 24 hours.

e. Polling and Counting Station Staff Training

The CEC set up an extensive two-phase training program for supervisors and officials who will staff the polling and counting centers in the West Bank and Gaza:

- Phase 1: Six workshops will train 300 polling and counting center supervisors of whom 200 are assigned to the West Bank and 100 to the Gaza Strip.
- Phase 2: 480 workshops will be conducted at sites throughout the West Bank and Gaza to train approximately 18,500 polling and counting center staff members.

Preparations for voting day require an extensive technical and logistical effort to ensure the integrity, accuracy and transparency of the election process. Training workshops educate supervisors and staff members on:

- Polling and counting procedures, rules and regulations;
- Completing Legislative Council election forms;
- The use of voting ink;
- Handling special cases.

Supervisors and staff are also trained on how to communicate with different election stakeholders including:

- The voting public.
- Representatives of political parties.
- Independent candidates.
- Local and international observers.
- Local and international media representatives.

3. Polling, Counting and Reporting Procedures

a. Polling Centers

- The same location that was used for voter registration.
- Permitted to have up to eight polling stations within each center.
- Where the polling center is a school, a separate classroom is used for each polling station.
- Polling officials report to the polling station between 6:00 am and 6:30 am to set up the polling station.
- A polling station includes a table at which polling officials sit to ensure that voters are on the register, check their identity and issue ballots to voters; a table with a polling booth for secret voting; and tables for the two ballot boxes.

b. Polling Center Sta

Each polling station has six officials:

- Presiding officer – responsible for set-up, supervision of staff and counting.
- Identification officer – verifies voter registration, crosses off names on the voters list.
- Inking officer – ensure that each voter dips his/her left index finger into the ink.
- Ballot paper officer – stamps ballots and issues them to voters and directs voters to the polling booth.
- Ballot box controller – ensures voters deposit their ballots, and only their ballots, into the correct ballot boxes
- Queue controller – controls the flow of voters into the polling station.

Other persons who may be present at a polling station include:

- Voters.
- Candidate/party representatives and/or agents.
- Domestic and international observers.
- Media representatives.
- Security personnel may enter the polling station at the request of the presiding officer.

c. Election Materials

- Ballot papers: sequentially numbered, stitched in packs of 50 and bundled in packages according to the number of registered voters for a polling station.
- Ballot boxes: semi-transparent and sealed with plastic seals (two per polling station).
- Polling booths: three per polling station (two plus a spare).
- Final voters list: provided for the specific polling station.
- Indelible ink: for voters to dip their finger into.
- Envelopes to package ballots that have been counted.
- General materials and supplies.


 لجنة الانتخابات المركزية - فلسطين
 الانتخابات التشريعية الفلسطينية الثانية 2006
 ورقة اقتراع القوائم
 ضع إشارة (X) أو (✓) فقط في المربعات الموجودة على يمين أسماء
 المرشحين الستة الذين تختارهم.

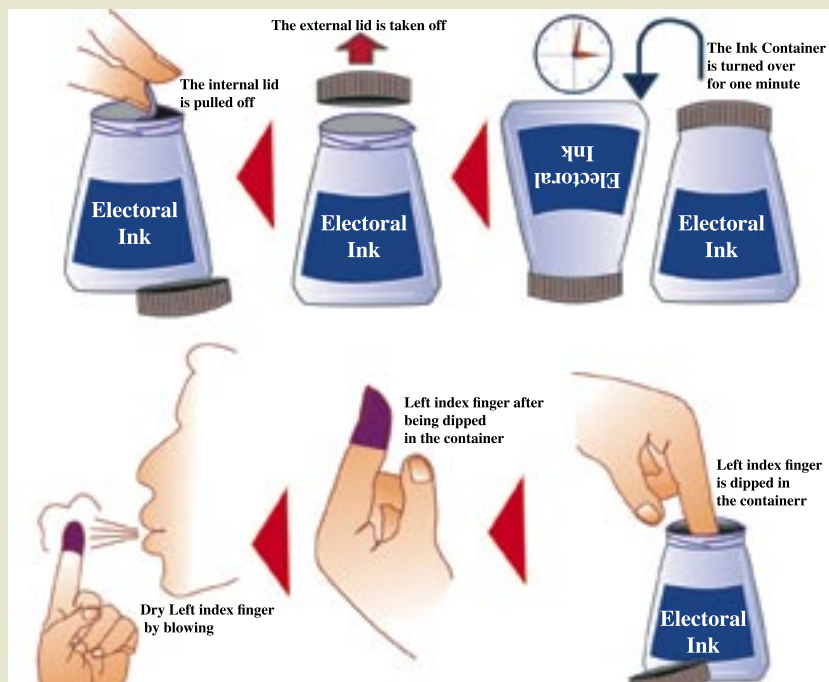
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 لجنة الانتخابات المركزية - فلسطين
 الانتخابات التشريعية الفلسطينية الثانية 2006
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 ضع إشارة (X) أو (✓) فقط في المربعات الموجودة
 على يمين أسماء المرشحين الستة الذين تختارهم.

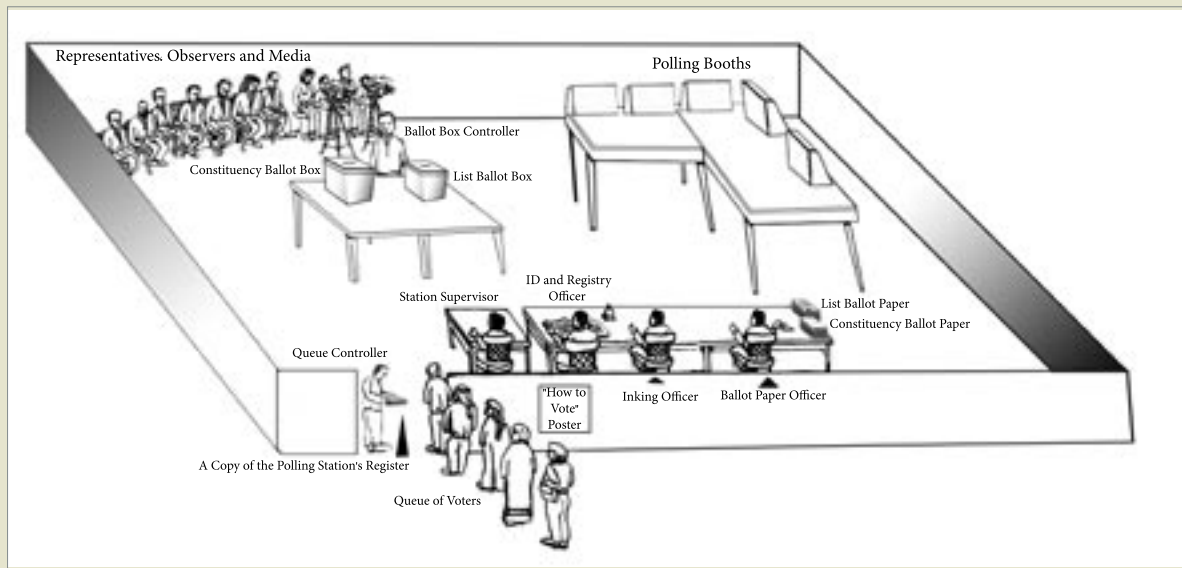
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	حزب الأحامد	(2) أحمد أحمد أحمد (أبو حماد)
	مستقل	(3) محمود محمود محمود (أبوالمحمودين)
	مستقل	(4) نور نور نور نور (أبو الأنوار)

d. Voting Process

- On election day, polling stations will open at 7:00 am and close at 7:00 pm.
- If there is no line at the polling station, the queue controller will direct the voter to the presiding officer.
- The voter's identification is checked and name located on the voters list.
- The voter's name is crossed off the voters list and his/her left index finger is dipped in the ink bottle . The CEC has decided to use electoral ink in order to avoid multiple in voting. Polling station staff will ink the index of each voter just before the voter is handed his/her ballot. The ink is specially made so that it cannot be removed for at least 24 hours. The ink has been presented to representatives of all candidates to allow them to examine it.



- The ballot paper official stamps the back of the ballot papers, issues them to the voter, instructs the voter to fold the ballot once he/she has filled it, and directs the voter to the polling booth.
- The voter shall not mark the ballot for more than one list on the electoral list ballot or for more candidates than the number of seats allocated to the constituency on the constituency ballot. The voter must mark the ballot with a cross (x) or a tick (✓) in the box beside the list and candidates of his/her choice.
- The voter leaves the polling booth, shows the stamp on the back of the ballot papers to the ballot box controller, deposits the ballots into their respective ballot boxes, and promptly leaves the polling center.



e. Special Circumstances

- A disabled, infirm or illiterate voter may be assisted to vote by any person who is trusted by the voter.
- If a voter's name is already crossed off on the voters list, the voter will not be allowed to vote.
- If the voter has a registration receipt but the name is not on the voters list, the voter will not be allowed to vote at that polling station but must check with the polling center manager who can direct the voter to the correct voting location.
- There is no proxy voting.
- There are no mobile ballot boxes.

f. Counting Procedures

- If there is a queue of voters at 7:00 pm, the queue controller will mark the back of the queue and all voters in the queue at that time will be allowed to vote, but no one else may join the queue.
- When the last voter in the queue has voted the members of the polling staff and any observers who are registered at that station will vote then the ballot boxes will be sealed.
- The ballot boxes will be opened (starting with the constituency ballot box), ballots unfolded and counted, and sorted into bundles of 50 to obtain an accurate count of used ballot papers and to ensure that no ballot was deposited into the incorrect ballot box. The boxes will then be closed.
- The polling center committee will first count the votes for the election of council members on the electoral list ballots and then count the votes for members on

the constituency ballots.

- For the electoral list ballots, the presiding officer will determine for which list the vote is cast or declare the vote invalid, and show the face of the ballot to observers.
- The decision of the presiding officer is final but an official challenge can be filed with the presiding officer and reviewed by a higher authority.
- When all of the ballots have been counted the results will be announced.
- The results protocol for the electoral list ballot box will be completed and all election materials packaged before the constituency ballot box is opened for counting.
- Protocols, in booklet form, will be completed with three copies for each ballot box at the conclusion of the count for each box. The third copy of each protocol will be removed from the booklet and posted at the polling station.
- At the conclusion of the counts, all materials will be resealed in their respective ballot boxes and delivered to the district electoral office by the presiding officer.
- The district electoral officer will fax or otherwise digitally transmit the original protocols to the CEC and then dispatch the original results protocol to the CEC
- The district electoral officer will post the first copy of the protocol in the district office and retain the second copy for any court proceedings.
- The faxed/digital copy of the results protocol will be used by the CEC's data entry center to input the ballot tallies into the election results system.
- The results will be double-blind data entered to ensure accuracy and any discrepancies will be reviewed and resolved before being incorporated into the results totals.
- The results will be made available on a real-time basis at the National Tally Room in Ramallah, Regional and District CEC offices and via the Internet.

Section III: Election Timetable and Voter Statistics

1. *Timetable for the Second PLC Elections*
2. *Table of Registered Eligible Voters*



1. Timetable for the Second PLC Elections

No	Electoral process	Date	Details
1	Candidate registration for the electoral districts and lists	Saturday 3/12/2005	1. Commencement of candidate registration in the 16 electoral districts and for electoral lists nationwide at the CEC HQ in Ramallah and the Regional Office in Gaza
		Wednesday 14/12/2005	2. Final day for submitting applications for nomination for the electoral districts and the electoral lists
		Saturday 17/12/2005	3. Final day of processing candidacy applications by the CEC
2	Publishing the preliminary candidate lists	Sunday 18/12/2005	Publishing the preliminary candidate lists for the electoral districts and the electoral lists

No	Electoral process	Date	Details
3	Challenging the preliminary candidate lists for the electoral districts and the electoral lists	Sunday 18/12/2005	1. Submission of applications of challenge for the preliminary candidate lists
		Tuesday 20/12/2005	2. Final day for the submission of applications of challenge
		Wednesday 21/12/2005	3. Final day for the processing of challenges and notification of resolutions
4	Submission of appeals to the competent court	Thursday 22/12/2005	1. Submission of appeals to the competent court
		Saturday 24/12/2005	2. Final day for the submission of appeals
		Thursday 29/12/2005	3. Final day for the settlement of appeals for the electoral districts
		Saturday 31/12/2005	4. Final day for the settlement of appeals for the electoral lists
5	Withdrawal of candidates	Sunday 1/1/2006	Final day for the withdrawal of candidates for the districts and the lists
6	Final candidate lists	Monday 2/1/2006	Publishing of final candidate lists

No	Electoral process	Date	Details
7	Accreditation of agents for the independent candidates and the lists	Monday 2/1/2006	1. Commencement of the accreditation of independent candidate agents in the 16 electoral districts, and the accreditation of list agents at the CEC HQ in Ramallah and Gaza Regional Office
		Tuesday 17/1/2006	End of the accreditation period
8	Electoral campaigning	Tuesday 3/1/2006	Commencement of electoral campaigning
		Monday 23/1/2006	Final day for electoral campaigning
		Tuesday 24/1/2006	Refrain on this day from conducting any electoral campaigning activities
9	Special Polling day - Security Forces	Sun- Tues 22-24/1/2006	Polling: 7am -7pm
10	Polling Day	Wednesday 25/1/2006	Polling: 7am -7pm

2. Table of Registered Eligible Voters

Total Number of Registered Eligible Voters
as of October 4, 2005

District	Estimated Population by mid 2005	Estimated Number of Eligible Voters	Total Number of Registered Voters as of 4/10/2005	Percentage of Regis- tered Voters
Jerusalem	149,150	73,829	49,158	66.58%
Jenin	254,218	125,838	98,925	78.61%
Tulkarem	167,873	83,097	74,159	89.24%
Tubas	46,644	23,089	20,774	89.97%
Nablus	326,873	161,802	127,784	78.98%
Qalqilia	94,210	46,634	33,855	72.60%
Salfit	62,125	30,752	27,336	88.89%
Ramallah	280,508	138,851	105,498	75.98%
Jericho	42,268	20,923	16,048	76.70%
Bethlehem	174,654	86,454	69,899	80.85%
Hebron	524,510	259,632	187,762	72.32%
North Gaza	265,932	131,636	100,924	76.67%
Gaza	487,904	241,512	176,804	73.21%
Deir Al Balah	201,112	99,550	80,348	80.71%
Khan Younis	269,601	133,452	103,995	77.93%
Rafah	165,240	81,794	67,404	82.41%
Total	3,512,822	1,738,847	1,340,673	77.10%

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2005



Section IV: The Central Elections Commission (CEC), Information and Resources

1. *The Structure and Functions of the CEC*
2. *Information and Reference Sources*
3. *Contact us*
4. *Electoral District Map*

1. The Structure and Functions of the CEC

a. The Central Elections Commission (CEC)

The CEC is composed of nine commissioners drawn from the Palestinian judiciary, legal profession and academia, and is exempt from governmental or administrative authority in the exercise of its functions. Adhering to the provisions of the Elections Law, the CEC has adopted procedures which will permit it to carry out elections in an impartial and transparent manner, to monitor the electoral process and announce the results of the elections. The following is the operational framework of the CEC.

b. National Elections Office (NEO)

The NEO is the administrative and executive body of the CEC, focusing on the logistical and administrative plans necessary for the execution of the various phases of the electoral process. The NEO comprises the CEC Headquarters, the Regional Office in the Gaza Strip, District Electoral Offices and Registration and Polling Centers.

c. The CEC Headquarters

The CEC Headquarters (HQ), located in the city of Ramallah, develops and oversees plans for the overall management of the electoral process. It is divided into the four departments: Operations, Administration, Electoral Affairs and Public Relations.

d. The Regional Office

The Regional Office supervises the work of the District Electoral Offices and monitors the progress of electoral processes in the Gaza Strip.

e. District Electoral Offices

Each electoral district has a CEC District Electoral Office. These offices supervise the various phases of the electoral process including voter registration, polling, and counting in their respective electoral district.

f. The Centers

More than 1,000 centers, each with up to five polling stations, are distributed throughout the electoral districts according to population estimates. Each center is responsible for the different phases of the electoral process in its neighborhood. Approximately 2,800 polling stations are distributed among the centers.

2. Information and Reference Sources

The Central Elections Commission (CEC) maintains a comprehensive web site www.elections.ps which presents information on the CEC, legislation, electoral processes of voter, party and candidate registration, polling and counting, and electoral observation, as well as results and statistics, campaign finance information, various publications and multimedia presentations.

Observation Reports on the 2005 Presidential Elections

Local and international observation bodies are entitled to observe the electoral process in all its stages. They gather detailed information pertaining to all aspects of the electoral process from various polling centers and issue reports on the progress of the electoral process which in turn forms the basis for judging elections and enhancing the acceptance of electoral results later on. Listed below are some observation groups and their website addresses where observation reports can be found.

National Democratic Institute (NDI)

www.elections.ps/pdf/Observer_report_NDI_Final_2005_presidential_report.pdf

European Union Election Observation Mission

www.elections.ps/pdf/Observer_report_EU_final_report.pdf

United Civilians for Peace (UCP)

www.elections.ps/pdf/Observer_report_United_civilians_for_peace_2005.pdf

Norwegian Association of NGOs

www.elections.ps/pdf/Observer_report_Norwegian_Association_of_NGOs.pdf

Ibn Khaldun Center for Developmental Studies

www.elections.ps/pdf/Observer_report_Ibn_Khaldun_Center_for_Developmental_Studies.pdf

Electoral Observers from Japanese Foreign Ministry

www.elections.ps/pdf/Observer_Report_of_the_Japanese_official_observers.pdf

Argentine Government Observers

www.elections.ps/pdf/Observer_Report_of_the_Japanese_official_observers.pdf

3. Contact us

Below are the contact details of the CEC Headquarters in Ramallah, the Regional Office in Gaza and the 16 electoral district offices.

To call Palestine from the Arab world the international code “970” must be used. Otherwise, the international code for Palestine is “972.”

Headquarters: (Ramallah)

P. O. Box: 2319

Qasr Al Murjan Building - Al Balou' - Near Jawwal Circle

Ramallah - Palestine

Tel: 02 - 2969700

Fax: 02 - 2969712

info@pal-cec.org

Regional Office: (Gaza)

P. O Box 5209

Medhat Al Wahidi St. - Al Remal - Gaza City - Palestine

Tel: 08 - 2842973 / 4

Fax: 08 – 2842982

District Electoral Offices:

WEST BANK

Jerusalem

Dahiyat Al Barid – Main St.

Tel: 02 - 2345811 / 02 - 234 5812

Fax : 02 - 2345813

Bethlehem

Al Jabal St. - Al Suq Al Markazi Way

Across from the Legislative Council Office

Tel: 02 - 2752001 / 02 - 2752002

Fax: 02 - 2752003

Hebron

Abu Aisha Bldg. - Al Moqata'a St. (Abu Ghannam St.)

Tel: 02 - 2404202 / 02 - 2404203

Fax : 02 - 2293922

Jenin

Al Sheeb Bldg. – Sukayna Bint Al Hussain St.

Near Jenin Girls Sec. Shool.

Tel : 04 - 2437165 / 04 - 243 7166

Fax : 04 - 2437167

Jericho

Abu Jihad St. – Kift El Wad Suburb

Near Al Quds Open University

Tel : 02 - 2325557

Fax : 02 - 2325558

Nablus

Harwash Bldg. - Rafidia St.

Tel : 09 - 2330115 / 09 - 2330116

Fax : 09 - 2330117

Qalqilya

Mala'b Al Baladi St.

Accross from the Court of Reconciliation

Tel : 09 - 2946539 / 09 - 2946546

Fax : 09 - 2946543

Ramallah / Al-Bireh

Al Nijmah Bldg. - Al Bireh /Al Balou'

Tel : 02 - 2404202 / 02 - 2404203

Fax : 02 - 2404204

Salfit

Al Shuhada' St.

Across from the Emergency Hospital

Tel : 09 - 2515921

Fax : 09 - 2515922

Tubas

Sameeh Al Rashid Trading Center - Al Ghoor St.

Tel: 09 - 2573004

Fax: 09 - 2573005

Tulkarem

Al Hafi Bldg.- Shwaika St.

Tel : 09 - 2684327 / 09 - 2684328

Fax : 09 - 2330117

GAZA STRIP

Deir Al Balah

Ibrahim Al Masri Bldg. - Abed Al Kareem Al'Aklouk St.

Southern Al Hadaba.

Tel: 08 - 2537420 / 08 - 2537421

Fax: 08 - 2531001

Gaza

Khartoum St. - Southern Al Remal

Near the Ministry of Housing.

Tel: 08 - 2834618 / 08 - 2833816

Fax: 08 - 2475966

Khan Younis

Salah Abu Nahia Bldg. Al Mahatta St. – Behind Sha'th Tower.

Tel: 08 - 2066563 / 08 - 2066564

Fax: 08 - 2066562

North Gaza

Mahmoud Abu Dan Bldg. - High Buildings St.

Beit Lahia Project

Tel: 08 - 2475964 / 08 - 2475965

Fax: 08 - 2475966

Rafah

Abu Ashraf Qeshta Bldg. - Uthman bin Affan St.

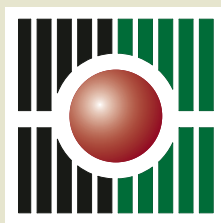
Accross from Martyrs Sq.

Tel: 08 - 2138670 / 08 - 2138720

Fax: 08 – 2138710

PALESTINE'S ELECTORAL DISTRICTS





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Central Elections Commission
Palestine

Headquarters: P.O. Box 2319
Regional Office: P.O. Box 5209

Ramallah - Palestine
Gaza City - Palestine

TEL (02) 296 9700
TEL (08) 284 2973/4

FAX (02) 296 9724
FAX (08) 284 2982