The Municipal elections took place on 31 July 2007, under a new law for the Municipalities... law No:- (14) for the year 2007. which included some positive amendments, compared to the old law... like making voting age 18 years instead of 19 years, which allows more than 150,000 citizens to participate in the election process. It also allows the election of the heads of the municipalities, instead of being appointed as was the case before... with the exception of the municipal council of Greater Amman Municipality. It is to the credit of the new law that it has allocated around 20% of the seats of the municipal council to women.

Yet there is a number of observations that relate to the integrity of the election process.

The National Center for Human Rights has, through the complaints that were received, and the many testimonies and observations as well as press reports... has monitored a number of irregularities that constitute grave violations of the international and national standards relating to the integrity of the elections. These were embodied in the following.

- First:- the flagrant intervention by some administrative and security quarters in the path of the elections on behalf of certain candidates at the expense of their competitors, and the exercise of various pressures on some candidates to withdraw for the benefit of other candidates.

- Second:- exploitation of the members of the armed forces, who has the right in municipal elections, to vote, as groups, outside their areas of residence, and for the benefit of certain candidates... in public (As Illiterate). Taking into consideration that those of the Jordanian Armed forces with university degrees constitute a large percent of the officers. The overwhelming majority of the privates are under the age of forty, and most of them have a secondary school degree at
least. This took place, widely and openly, in more than one governorate… in the governorates of Zarka, Irbid and Madaba. The National Center for Human Rights has also observed that numbers of the military personnel Casted their votes several times in all the polling Centers at the same Governorate.

Third:- within this context, the criteria of equality among the candidates was overstepped. Some election committees used to ask the security personnel, who were present in some polling centers, to make the representatives of some candidates leave outside the elections hall, due to their objection to the electors voting more than once. In addition, some representatives of the candidates were prevented from using their cell phones, while their other competitors were allowed to do so.

Four:- the National Center for Human Rights has monitored numerous cases in which a large number of the names of the voters were dropped from the election lists… despite the fact that there family booklets were stamped. Yet their names were not found in the electoral tables in the polling centers.

Five:- Testimonies were documented in certain areas related to allowing some voters to vote, without presenting their personal identity cards to Asertain the personality of them.

Six:- the National Center for Human Rights Monitored in some polling Centers, cases of non-conformity between the names of the voters and their national numbers…. Which make many of them lose their right to vote. This inaddition to the existence of repetitive names in more than one election table in the same municipality or among different municipalities.
Seven: - the non-conformity of some electors tables that were provided to the candidates…. With the tables that were inside the polling Centers on the elections day.

Eight: - many women voters changed their clothes in designated rooms which allowed them to vote more than one time in the same polling Center.

Nine: - Testimonies were received that children under the legal voting age were allowed to enter the voting halls and cast their votes.

Ten: - the National Center for Human Rights has monitored a number of cases in which security personnel in some elections centers expelled Journalists and abused them… especially in Irbid, Zarka and some areas in Amman.

Eleven: - the Enchroachments that has accompanied the election process led to acts of violence and riots in a number of areas… the most of which was the scuffles that took place in the city of Irbid between the security forces and the supporters of some candidates which caused an injury to the police commandant and the breaking of the glass and walls of Ain Jaloot school. The building of the Municipality of southern Mazar in the Karak governorate, and the building of the administrative governor were attacked. Confrontations Between the police and the citizens took place in the governorate and the city of Madaba.

The National Center for Human Rights Does not need to remind that the terms of reference for all kinds of elections is the constitution and the laws which affirm the basic principles for the elections…. Which are all-inclusiveness, secrecy, direct election, the integrity of
the electoral process and the punishment of those who encroach on the will of the voters. Regretfully, The National Center states that most of these principles were not adhered to. They were violated which cause the elections to lose their integrity. Taking into consideration that the technical abilities available to the relevant machineries of the state could have enabled the running of the electoral process through the highly efficient use of computers, and the issuance of the voters tables in an accurate manner. This did not take place in the municipal elections. We hope that this is not repeated in the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

Finally, The National Center for Human Rights has Addressed a memorandum to his excellency the prime Minister, and a copy of it to his excellency the Minister of Interior and his excellency the minister for political, development regarding the tables of voters registration of the parliamentary elections, and the objection to these unto the civil status department. The memorandum addressed the (instructions) issued by the Ministry of Interior on the first of April 2002, and the (instructions) relating to the affixing of the parliamentary elections data on the personal identity card that is issued by the civil status department on 30 January 2005, and the circular issued by the civil status department on 30 June 2007 ..... Relating to the objection on the voters tables.

The Center has called in this memorandum for the abolition of all the transactions of the transfer of the names of the voters that were done contrary to the law. In addition, the review of all the executive instructions of the election law, and the adoption of the voters tables in the boxes as the basis for the election process, and the determination of the use of the personal identification card according to the National number … As the means of proving the personality so as to take part in the elections., and ensuring the existence of the names of the eligible voters in the tables and their
conformity … so as to assure the soundness, the integrity and the fairness of the election process. The National Center for Human Rights would like to affirm on this opportunity that the answer of his excellency the minister of interior, which is forwarded to his excellency the prime minister, did not address in anyway the substance of the issues to which the memorandum referred so as to guarantee the integrity of the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

The National Center for Human Rights
September 4, 2007