



People's Assembly Elections – Second Round

Second Interim Statement

December 16, 2011, 12:30 a.m.

Tension in Last Hours of Second Round, Flagrant Security Interference in Counting Process Denial of access and expulsion of accredited observers from polling stations and counting centers of serious concern

Project Rakeeb is joint collaboration between two Egyptian civil society organizations – the Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement (EACPE) and the Egyptian Association for Dissemination and Development of Legal Awareness (EADDLA).

On the second day of the second round of voting in the People's Assembly Elections, Project Rakeeb deployed 471 non-partisan citizen observers in all nine governorates where elections are taking place. Rakeeb observers were deployed to a statistically-sound, random and representative sample of polling stations and have been sending observation reports via text message to a Central Data Center in Cairo.

Like the first day of voting, Rakeeb observers reported the voting process was relatively calm on the second day nationwide. Overall, few incidents of violence or intimidation were reported. Tensions heightened with an increase in incidents of violence in the last hours of the voting and the commencement of the counting process.

As part of a continuing negative trend, Rakeeb observers were denied access or expelled from polling stations and counting centers despite having received accreditation from the Supreme Judicial Committee for Elections (SJCE). Project Rakeeb is seriously concerned by SJCE treatment of accredited observers and its failure to address the problem, which violates SJCE regulations, National Council for Human Rights Code of Conduct, and international election standards.

As part of another negative trend, active political campaigning by political contestants remains widespread. While the number of reported incidents was fewer on the second day of voting than on the first day, Rakeeb observers reported active campaigning by a wide range of political contestants, including Freedom and Justice Party, Nour Party, Egyptian Bloc, Wafd Party, Egypt Nationalist Party, and many independent candidates, often identified as former members of the National Democratic Party.

While it is acknowledged that security personnel were instructed to prevent active political campaigning by political contestants, Observers reported that efforts were undertaken by security officials in some locations however prevention efforts were not fully implemented uniformly nationwide. Project Rakeeb hopes that the SJCE and security personnel will exercise their authority and ensure that consistent and appropriate action is taken to prevent this illegal practice going forward.

Qualitative Indicators

Based on data gathered from 97 percent of observers who reported on the voting process and closing of polling stations, Project Rakeeb found some procedural inconsistencies where observers were deployed:

For more information about Project Rakeeb, please visit the website: www.rakeeb.net. Follow Project Rakeeb on Facebook (Project Rakeeb) and Twitter (RakeebEG) to receive updates. For questions about Project Rakeeb, contact Project Manager Sherif Alaa at 01007434708 or email s.abdulazim@mosharka.org.

Findings	Percentage Day 1	Percentage Day 2
Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Some Individuals Not Found on Voters' List	47%	40%
Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Some Individuals Permitted to Vote Without ID	11%	9%
Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Polling Officials Sometimes Did Not Make Tick Next to Voters' Names	16%	12%
Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Polling Officials Sometimes Issued Unstamped Ballot Papers to Voters	6%	5%
Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Voters Not Able to Mark Ballots in Secrecy	18%	17%
Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Polling Officials Did Not Put Ink on Fingers of Some Voters After Voting	19%	21%
Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Voters Did Not Sign / Ink Next to Their Name After Voting	3%	1%

Rakeeb observers generally reported that the voting process was more rapid and orderly on the second day of voting. However, as noted in the statistical indicators above, HEC officials continue to apply inconsistent practices for election administration due to the lack of clarity of the HEC procedures.

Similar to the first day of voting, Rakeeb observers noted that in some locations polling stations closed at 7 PM with voters still in queue. However, pressure from disenfranchised voters prompted a judicial supervisor to reopen some polling stations, notably in Giza. Below is a breakdown of closing times:

Closing Time	Percentage Day 1	Percentage Day 2
Before 7 PM	6%	8%
Between 7 and 8 PM	78%	90%
After 8 PM	16% ¹	2%

Critical Incidents

On the second day of the second round of voting, there were few incidents of violence or intimidation, there were a number of critical incidents that Rakeeb observers reported:

- 13 Rakeeb observers have either been denied access or expelled from polling stations;
- 56 incidents of active campaigning by political contestants in and around polling stations, including 13 in Beheira. Most often, incidents of campaigning were attributed to Freedom and Justice, Nour and Independent candidates.
- 24 incidents of the presence of campaign materials inside polling stations;
- 7 incidents of political party representatives using religious slogans to influence voters;
- 5 incidents of political party or candidate agents being expelled from polling stations;
- 4 incidents of vote buying, 2 cases in Souhag, 1 in Ismailia, and 1 in Sharqiya; and

¹ On the first day of voting, where polling stations opened late, the SJCE announced the extension of voting until 9 PM in those locations.

- 14 incidents of violence, including two cases of physical conflict between political parties in Giza – one involving Freedom and Justice and Egyptian Bloc, another involving Nour and Egyptian Bloc – and one physical conflict between Freedom and Justice and Nour in Menoufiya.

Now that the second phase is coming to an end, we urge the SJCE to use its authority to prevent any security interference in the progress of the electoral process, particularly after the unjustified security interference in the counting process.

Project Rakeeb found that most of the mistakes and violations that have occurred so far are due to undertaking the counting process in counting centers instead of polling stations.

Project Rakeeb reiterates its request to the SJCE to uphold its commitment to rectify mistakes encountered in the first round. Specifically, Project Rakeeb requests that the SJCE:

- Consider undertaking the counting process in polling stations beginning with the runoff for the second round to avoid the deficiencies and errors that have marred the first and second rounds as a result of transporting ballot boxes before counting them;
- Ensure that observers who have been accredited by the SJCE are guaranteed access to polling stations in accordance with the Code of Conduct, international election standards and regulations of the SJCE itself;
- Use its authority to prevent campaigning in and around polling centers and ensure that the period of campaign silence is upheld in accordance with the law;
- Ensure that security officials are acting in accordance with the law and not interfering in the work of the SJCE; and
- Ensure the consistent application of official election procedures by judicial supervisors and polling officials to reduce confusion and errors at polling stations.

Project Rakeeb also calls upon all political parties to refrain from active political campaigning and cease use of religious slogans in accordance with Egyptian law.

Project Rakeeb commends Egyptian voters on their participation during the second day of the second round of elections for the People's Assembly. We hope that all political parties, contestants, and citizens will participate calmly and responsibly in the remaining election days.