



People's Assembly Elections – First Round

First Interim Statement

November 29, 2011, 12:00 p.m

Smaller Queues to Begin Second Day of Voting, Active Campaigning by Islamist Parties Remains Problematic

Accredited Observers continue to be denied access to polling stations by HEC officials

For the second day of the first round of voting in the People's Assembly Elections, Project Rakeeb deployed 413 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.

Unlike the first day of voting, Rakeeb observers have not reported long queues of voters in many polling stations and thus far the voting process has been largely calm and without incident. Moreover, there have been fewer reports of delayed opening of polling stations today than yesterday. However, there have been a few problems, notably continuing trends from yesterday, specifically:

- Seven incidents of observers being denied access to polling stations by judicial supervisors;
- 10 incidents of active campaigning at polling centers by political parties, most often Freedom and Justice Party and Nour Party. Observers noted the use of religious slogans to influence voters, particularly by Nour Party representatives;
- A physical conflict between supporters of the Freedom & Justice Party and Nour Party inside a polling station in Fayyoun which temporarily disrupted the voting process;
- A polling center did not open in Fayyoun due to polling officials refusing to work until they receive higher wages.

Rakeeb observers have also continued to report inconsistent practices due to the lack of clarity of the HEC procedures; this was noted in the manner by which judicial supervisors dealt with unstamped ballot papers, parties and candidates campaigning within polling centers premises and the treatment of accredited observers.

Project Rakeeb calls strongly upon the HEC and judicial supervisors to ensure that observers who have been accredited by the HEC are guaranteed access to polling stations in accordance with the Code of Conduct and international election standards. Project Rakeeb also calls upon all political parties to refrain from campaign activities in accordance with Egyptian law and urges the HEC to use its authority to end the practice of campaigning at polling centers.

Project Rakeeb commends Egyptian voters for their peaceful participation on the second day of the first round of the People's Assembly elections. We hope that all political parties, contestants, and citizens will participate calmly and responsibly as Election Day progresses.

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 010060137246 or email info@rakeeb.net.