



People's Assembly Elections – First Round

First Interim Statement

November 28, 2011, 3:00 p.m

For the first 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 transmitting observation reports via text message to a Central Data Center in Cairo.

Rakeeb observers have reported large queues of voters in many polling stations. Although the voting process has been reportedly slow, voters have demonstrated patience thus far in the process. Despite concerns of possible violence due to ongoing political unrest, observers have reported that voting has been largely calm & without incident, with very few incidents of violence or intimidation.

However, there have been some problems, most notably delayed openings of polling stations; observers being denied access or being expelled from polling stations; and active campaigning by political party supporters at polling stations. Specifically:

- Approximately 62 percent of polling stations where observers were deployed opened before 9 AM; 33 percent opened between 9 AM and 11 AM; and approximately 5 percent of polling stations had not yet opened as of 11 AM, most notably in Cairo. In the majority of these cases, observers reported that ballot papers had not arrived at the polling station as cause for the delay; in a few cases, sensitive materials such as the voters' list and indelible ink had not arrived.
- In approximately 17 percent of polling stations where observers were deployed, observers were either denied access or expelled by judicial supervisors, despite having received accreditation from the Higher Election Commission (HEC), most notably in Cairo, Alexandria and Fayyoun.
- Rakeeb observers have reported some incidents of active political campaigning at polling stations, most often by representatives and supporters of Freedom and Justice Party.

Rakeeb observers have also reported 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 upon the HEC to expeditiously address problems which have hampered the opening of polling stations and ensure that all voters are provided with sufficient opportunity to cast their ballots. We also call upon 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. Moreover, Project Rakeeb also calls upon all political parties to refrain from campaign activities in accordance with Egyptian law.

Project Rakeeb commends Egyptian voters for turning out in large numbers to participate in the election process, despite the political and security situation. 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.