



People's Assembly Elections – Third Round

Second Interim Statement

January 3, 2012, 9:00 p.m.

First day of voting largely peaceful, unlawful political campaigning remains problematic *Continued denial of access to accredited observers to polling stations a concerning trend*

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 first day of the third round of voting in the People's Assembly Elections, Project Rakeeb deployed 383 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.

Throughout the first day of the third round of elections, Rakeeb observers reported the voting process was largely peaceful nationwide. Overall, very few incidents of violence or intimidation were reported. Early in the day, Rakeeb observers noted long queues in many places, particularly in urban areas however such queues subsided in most locations as the day progressed.

Of concern, in a continuing trend from the first and second rounds, active political campaigning by a range of political contestants was found to be problematic. While the overall number of incidents of campaigning has seemingly decreased from previous rounds, Rakeeb observers noted that security officials and electoral authorities rarely intervened to prevent these unlawful activities.

The majority of the 40 reports of campaigning were attributed to Freedom and Justice and Nour however, similar to the second round, observers noted that a wide range of political contestants were engaged in campaign activities, including Wafd, Al-Wasat, Egyptian Bloc, National Party, Freedom Party and independent candidates. Moreover, Rakeeb observers reported in a few cases that Freedom and Justice established party-sponsored information booths outside polling centers similar to the first round.

Also of concern, Project Rakeeb observers continued to be denied access or expelled from polling stations despite having received accreditation from the Supreme Judicial Committee for Elections (SJCE). In total, 31 Rakeeb observers (8 percent) were either expelled or denied access to polling centers on the first day of voting. The denial of access of accredited observers to polling stations is in violation of SJCE regulations, National Council for Human Rights Code of Conduct, and international election standards.

In most cases, accredited observers were expelled by judicial supervisors however, similar to the second round observers were denied access to polling centers by security personnel in a few cases. The expulsion of accredited observers by security personnel constitutes flagrant interference in the electoral process and undermines the integrity of the process and independence of the election authorities.

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.

Qualitative Indicators

Based on data gathered from 94 percent of observers who reported on the voting process and closing of polling stations, Project Rakeeb found some procedural inconsistencies where observers were deployed:

| Findings | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Some Individuals Not Found on Voters' List | 41% |
| Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Some Individuals Permitted to Vote Without ID | 4% |
| Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Polling Officials Sometimes Did Not Make Tick Next to Voters' Names | 10% |
| Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Polling Officials Sometimes Issued Unstamped Ballot Papers to Voters | 2% |
| Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Voters Not Able to Mark Ballots in Secrecy | 4% |
| Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Polling Officials Did Not Put Ink on Fingers of Some Voters After Voting | 19% |
| Percent of Polling Stations Where Observers Reported Voters Did Not Sign or Ink Next to Their Names After Voting | 1% |

Project Rakeeb found that the vast majority of polling stations closed on time or slightly after to accommodate voters in queue at 7 PM. Below is a breakdown of closing times:

| Closing Time | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Before 7 PM | 8% ¹ |
| Between 7 and 8 PM | 91% |
| After 8 PM | 1% |

Critical Incidents

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

- 31 Rakeeb observers were either denied access or expelled from polling stations;
- 40 incidents of active campaigning by political contestants in and around polling stations;
- 21 incidents of the presence of campaign materials inside polling stations;
- 14 incidents of political party representatives using religious slogans to influence voters;
- 7 incidents of violence, including one incident of physical conflict between supporters of the Democratic Peace Party and Nour Party in Gharbiya;

¹ One polling station in Matrouh closed at 2 PM once all 176 individuals registered on the voters' list had voted at the station.

- 5 incidents of circular voting;
- 3 incidents of political party or candidate agents being expelled from polling stations; and
- 5 incidents of vote buying.

Project Rakeeb requests that the SJCE uphold its commitment to rectify mistakes encountered in the first and second rounds. Specifically, Project Rakeeb recommends SJCE:

- 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;
- Ensure that security officials are acting in accordance with the law and not interfering in the work of the SJCE. Armed forces interference has a negative impact on the credibility and transparency of the election process and undermines SJCE authority; and
- 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.

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 first day of the third round of voting in the People's Assembly Elections. We hope that all political parties, contestants, and citizens will participate calmly and responsibly on the second day of voting tomorrow.