



المفوضية العليا المستقلة للإنتخابات في العراق  
كۆميسونىيا ى سه ربه خۆى هه بژارد نه كانله ع راق

The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) of Iraq

International Electoral Assistance Team (IEAT)

# **Procedures for**

# **Accreditation of International Observers**

**Issued By the Independent High  
Electoral Commission (IHEC) of Iraq**

**December 2008**

## Definitions

The following terms and expressions, mentioned in this document, shall have the definitions herein, unless the context determines otherwise:

- **IHEC:** Independent High Electoral Commission for Iraq
- **UNAMI:** United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
- **IEAT:** International Electoral Assistance Team
- **Observation:** The gathering of information regarding the electoral process, without intervening in the process itself and, issuing comments and reports on the conduct of the process and the basis of the information collected by persons accredited by IHEC for such mission.
- **Headquarters:** IHEC headquarters in Baghdad
- **The Authorized Committee:** The committee established by IHEC to manage and administer all international observation registration and accreditation processes.
- **CEO:** Chief Electoral Officer of IHEC
- **Accreditation Card:** An identification card issued by IHEC or UNAMI's electoral support office that qualifies the person to whom it is issued to participate in the electoral process as an accredited international observer.
- **The Electoral Process:** All processes related to the implementation of all phases of the electoral cycle, such as voter registration, registration of political entities, candidate nomination, polling, counting of votes and compilation of results.
- **Eligible Bodies:** Bodies that are eligible to apply to IHEC to participate in the observation of the electoral process.
- **The Contact Person:** The person delegated by the Eligible Body to receive and submit all documents and correspondence from, or to, the IHEC and sign all documents needed for the accreditation process. The contact person shall also have the responsibility of receiving all correspondence directed to, and duly submit it to, international observers representing the Body during and after the accreditation process.
- **Code of Conduct:** The Code of Conduct for local and international observers as issued by IHEC.

## **The Right to Observe the Electoral Process – Who can apply?**

The right to observe the electoral process is safeguarded by law, and laid out in IHEC Regulation No. 3 of 2008 on Electoral and Referendum Observers. This right may be exercised through registration and accreditation for observation granted by the IHEC Authorized Committee.

The IHEC will register eligible bodies as Observation Bodies (observer groups). Only observers who are part of an Observation Body registered by IHEC will be accredited as observers and permitted to observe the electoral process.

Accredited international observers shall adhere to the Code of Conduct for Observers annexed to this document (Annex A), and shall enjoy the rights provided therein.

The following bodies shall have the right to apply to observe the electoral process:-

- A- International and regional (Middle East) organizations
- B- Representatives of states and foreign missions
- C- International NGOs permitted to exercise their activities in accordance with the laws effective in their home countries
- D- Any other bodies deemed to be qualified by the Authorized Committee.

## **Procedural Rules:**

### **When to apply?**

- 1- The period of applications for international observation is between 20<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and 24<sup>th</sup> January 2009. The application deadline is one week prior to Election Day (24<sup>th</sup> January 2009).
- 2- The Authorized Committee shall adjudicate all applications for international observation as soon as possible, within a period of seven days, starting from the date the application is received.

### **How to apply?**

- 1- Application forms are available at the IHEC website [www.ihec.iq](http://www.ihec.iq) and at the UNAMI website [www.uniraq.org](http://www.uniraq.org).
- 2- Electoral observation applications shall be submitted using the relevant forms to the dedicated email address [internationalobservers@un.org](mailto:internationalobservers@un.org). Eligible bodies and their representatives can also apply in person at the UNAMI office of electoral support in Amman, Jordan.
- 3- Eligible bodies applying for observation shall be responsible for making sure that application forms and relevant attachments are completed and sent to the correct address.
- 4- The eligible bodies shall be given a dated notification stating that the respective application has been received.
- 5- When an application is successful, the eligible body will be registered by the IHEC as an Observation Body. The Observation Body may then submit names of proposed observers for accreditation by the IHEC.

### **The Application for Registration for Observation (Form XX) shall contain the following information:-**

- 1- Name, address and contact details of the eligible body
- 2- Name of the head of the eligible body
- 3- The type of activity covered by the body
- 4- Name and contact details of the contact person delegated by the body
- 5- Anticipated date for the arrival in Iraq of the members of the observation group delegated by the body and the number of the respective members.

**The following documents shall be annexed to the application form:-**

- 1- A completed Authorization Form for the Contact Person (Form XX), identifying a representative of the eligible body as contact person authorized to perform his/her specified tasks related to receiving and submitting all documents and applications required and signing all necessary documentation.
- 2- A completed Pledge of International Observers (Form XX) for each proposed observer for the Observer Body, including the proposed observer's name, nationality, date of birth and passport information. Each pledge will be signed by the proposed observer to confirm that s/he has received sufficient training from the Observation Body and that s/he pledges to abide by the IHEC Code of Conduct for Observers. The pledges for all proposed observers may also be submitted immediately after the eligible body's application has been approved by the Authorized Committee and prior to expiry of the deadline for submitting the lists of observers as determined by IHEC.
- 3- Two recent passport size photographs for each proposed observer, and a copy of the proposed observer's passport or formal ID card issued by the Observation Body. The back of each photo should contain the observer's name and the name of the eligible body to which he/she belongs. This will be attached to the respective pledge for the observer mentioned above.

**The Authorized Committee**

- a- The Authorized Committee shall be established by IHEC to manage and administer applications for international electoral observation following decisions issued by the CEO.
- b- The Authorized Committee is to convene with the majority of its members and hold majority voting towards adopting any of its recommendations.
- c- The Authorized Committee shall examine the submitted applications for international observation.
- d- The Authorized Committee may request the completion of any data or attachments it deems necessary within the period of time it assigns.
- e- The Authorized Committee shall submit its recommendations regarding the approval of registration of eligible bodies as Observation Bodies and the accreditation their observers, or rejection of the applications stating the reasons in a clear manner.
- f- IHEC shall approve or reject the recommendations submitted by the Authorized Committee, stating the reasons for the rejection.
- g- Applications shall be adjudicated on as soon as possible within a period that is not to exceed seven days starting from the date the applications along with all relevant documents are received.
- h- The Authorized Committee shall notify the general representative of the body of the decision by email, fax or registered mail.
- i- Pursuant to the Authorized Committee's decision, the necessary accreditation cards shall be issued. The Authorized Committee shall maintain a database that shall include the accredited observers' names. Accreditation serial card numbers, nationalities and the bodies they represent.

## **Accreditation Cards**

IHEC observer accreditation cards shall include the following details:-

- 1- IHEC Logo
  - 2- The name of the observer
  - 3- The name of the body he/she represents
  - 4- A recent photo of the observer
  - 5- IHEC official stamp
  - 6- The validity of the card
  - 7- Serial number of the card
- a- The Authorized Committee shall deliver the observers' accreditation cards to the contact person, or to the person delegated by the accredited body. An observer's accreditation card shall not be delivered in the event the Authorized Committee does not receive the concerned observer's statement.
- b- The Contact Person receiving the accreditation cards shall sign a document confirming receipt of accreditation cards on behalf of the Observation Body, and will deliver the cards to all accredited observers.

## **Why Reject an Application?**

Applications shall be rejected when the period of time assigned for the submission of application forms has elapsed, or when applications submitted are incomplete, inaccurate or submitted by an ineligible body. Applications shall also be rejected when the eligible body does not meet the conditions provided for in relevant IHEC regulations, procedures or the Code of Conduct.

The accreditation of an observer shall be revoked in the event that his/her name is repeated in any of the accreditation lists of agents or observers of any international or local observation body, partisan entity or independent candidate. Also, an observer shall not be accredited in the event he/she does not fulfill the conditions provided for in this document or in the Code of Conduct or if he/she is less than 18 years old.

## **Revocation of Registration/Accreditation**

- The Authorized Committee may revoke the accreditation of any observer In the event he/she violates the provisions of the effective laws, regulations, procedures or the Code of Conduct for Observers.
- Based on the recommendations of the Authorized Committee, the IHEC may revoke the registration of any eligible body and accreditation of its respective observers in the event the body or its respective observers violate the effective laws, regulations, procedures or the Code of Conduct for Observers.
- Such a decision shall state the reason/s that lead to its issuance.
- The Authorized Committee shall notify the relevant contact person of the decision to revoke the registration of the observation body or the accreditation of any of its observers.
- The observation body shall immediately turn over the accreditation cards of the observer/s whose accreditation has been revoked.
- An IHEC decision to withdraw the registration of an observer body or accreditation of its observer can be appealed within three days from the date of publication of the decision, according to IHEC Regulation No 3 of 2008 on Electoral and Referendum Observers.

## **Rights of Observers**

- a. Each Observation Body is entitled to get a copy of the Code of Conduct and a package of basic information issued by IHEC. The contact person shall receive both the information package and the Code of Conduct and shall submit them to the eligible body which he/she represents.
- b. Accredited observers have the right to observe all phases of the electoral process with access to all registration/polling and counting centres and the data entry centre.
- c. Accredited observers have the right to obtain information from electoral authorities at all levels.
- d. Accredited observers have the right to issue public observation reports and statements concerning the progress of the electoral process. These must be institutional reports and statements relayed by the spokespersons authorized by the observation body.
- e. Accredited observers have the right to meet with any person or organization including political entities, candidates, civil society organizations, and other officials.
- f. Accredited observers enjoy the freedom of movement throughout the country of Iraq without restrictions.
- g. Accredited observers may talk to voters or registrants inside the registration or polling centres, but they may not communicate with voters or registrants inside polling stations or registration rooms. Observers may observe registration and polling and counting procedures at a reasonable distance inside the registration room or polling station.
- h. Accredited observers may make their own record of registrant/voter turnout, seal numbers and form information according to the relevant IHEC procedures.

## **Duties of Observers**

- a- Wear the accreditation badge in a visible manner and present formal identification to the competent authorities upon request.
- b- Behave neutrally at all times and refrain from engaging in partisan activities or activities beneficial to any of the political entities or candidates.
- c- Do not display, wear, or carry any logos, colors, or symbols identical or similar to those of any political entity or candidate.
- d- Refrain from exerting influence on registrants or voters.
- e- Undertake duties in an unobtrusive manner without interfering in or disrupting the election process.
- f- Refrain from making personal or premature comments about electoral observation to the media or other interested bodies.
- g- Abide by the instructions of IHEC officials at the registration/polling and counting centres and data entry centre.
- h- Do not infringe on the privacy of registrants and voters: do not observe any voter marking the ballot, and do not record any personal details relating to registrants or voters, such as their names or the names of the candidates or parties that they vote for.

### **Facilitation of Observation**

- All IHEC staff members, each one within his/her respective limits of responsibilities, shall facilitate the mission of the international observers and enable them to exercise their powers as provided for in the effective laws and regulations.
- The Observation Body will provide all security and logistics support to the deployment of its accredited observers to Iraq to observe the electoral process.

\*\*\*\*\*