



المفوضية العليا المستقلة للانتخابات في العراق
كۆميسونى بالآى سه ربه خوى هه لىژارد نه كان له عىراق

The Independent High Electoral Commission

Fact Sheet Election Observers

Elections Observers play the most important role in ensuring credibility of the electoral processes. They provide accountability and transparency in the electoral processes by observing and reporting on election integrity and adherence to international standards.

Elections Observers

The elections observers are representatives of domestic and international organizations with missions registered and accredited by the IHEC to observe the voter registration processes as well as all types of federal, regional, local elections, and referenda.

The role of election observers is to observe the electoral processes and report whether they were conducted in accordance with the law and adherence to international standards. Only the election observers accredited in accordance with the rules and procedures set forth by the IHEC will be allowed to have access and observe the electoral processes.

Eligibility of Elections Observers

The IHEC will register only organizations or networks of organizations, and not individual observers. Domestic and international organizations will nominate individuals to enable the organization to perform the role effectively.

Domestic organizations registered with the Assistance Office for NGOs or the NGO Register of the Ministry of Civil Society Affairs or the Ministry of Planning and issued with a certificate of registration can apply to accredit to observe the electoral processes by the IHEC. For domestic organizations application forms can be obtained from the national or the local office in the GEOs where they intend to conduct their observation activities. For international organizations, applications will only be received at the IHEC national office and the Kurdistan Regional Election Office. The IHEC will require a letter describing the establishment of the international observation mission. And an application

indicating the name and address of each observer, duly signed by the authorized representative of the organization.

For domestic organizations the IHEC requires the individuals to:

- be at least 18 years of age;
- possess documents that confirm his/her Iraqi nationality and residency;
- not be a candidate in the present election or registered political entity agent; and
- not be an active duty member of any security force.

The IHEC may, at its discretion, decline to accredit or withdraw the accreditation of domestic and international organizations that fail to comply with the rules and procedures for elections observation. Aggrieved organizations may appeal against such decision within three days from the date of decision to the Electoral Judicial Panel according to Section 8 of the IHEC Regulation No. 11 of 2007.

Domestic and International Observers who are accredited will be issued with badges for their individual members. The observers must wear the badges at all times along with appropriate identification documents.

Accreditation of Elections Observers Period

Accreditation of domestic and international organizations will be conducted in two phases. The first phase will cover the period before the voter registration update while the second phase will happen between the voter registration update and the election or referenda event. The dates of accreditation will be announced through a public notice by the Board of Commissioners.

Responsibilities of Elections Observation Organizations

Domestic and international observation organizations will be:

- Required to ensure that their members agree to and abide by the Code of Conduct for observers;
- Responsible for the adherence to the Code of Conduct for Observers by their individual accredited observers at all times. Contravention to this Code of Conduct may cause the organization's accreditation or for those individual members withdrawn by the IHEC;
- Responsible for security, communications, transport, safety or other support arrangements and costs pertaining to the observation exercise for their individual members. The IHEC shall not be responsible for any such support and no accredited observer organizations will be allowed to utilize any IHEC resources;

- Responsible for briefing their accredited individual observers on the laws, electoral processes in Iraq, and the provisions of the Code of Conduct prior to the beginning of any of their observation activities;
- Responsible to ensure that each individual observer signs for his/her badge upon receipt and that they carry it along with identification documents at all times while on observation activities.

Individual members of accredited observation organizations have the responsibility to:

- Display his/her accreditation badges at all times while observing the electoral processes;
- Conduct him/herself appropriately at all times and adhere strictly to the Code of Conduct for observers;
- Be neutral and non-partisan and avoid uniforms or displaying items symbolizing support for or against any political entity or candidate.

Rights of Elections Observers

All accredited observers have:

- Equal rights and responsibilities;
- The right to access all electoral venues to observe the electoral processes in accordance with the IHEC instructions and as long as they do not disrupt or interfere in any manner with the process;
- The right to discretely approach the manager of the electoral venue and seek information about the process;
- Access to relevant documents and meetings.

Limitations of Election Observation Organizations

Elections observation organizations and their members cannot:

- In any way, interfere with the electoral processes;
- Record any information which may infringe on the privacy of a voter or secrecy of the ballot;
- Handle any electoral material or equipment.