

Election Monitoring Handbook

For National Election
Monitoring Groups in Myanmar

Revised July 2019

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Foreword

ANFREL's Election Monitoring Handbook was first introduced in 2014. It was created for Myanmar's national election monitor groups (NEMGs) to provide them with a tool which they can utilize as they embark for election observation ahead of the country's first democratic elections in two decades. At that time, Myanmar's civil society was very eager to take part in various aspects of the electoral process. They engaged in activities such as voter education and election observation trainings. The media also actively played an important role as they partnered with CSOs to meaningfully contribute on the historic democratic exercise.

ANFREL's advocacy engagement in Myanmar goes way back to 2012, before electoral democracy was reinstated. Since then, the organization has been working closely with civil society organizations and the media to enhance and sustain their capacities. A capacity building program was officially launched in 2013, with the support of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Myanmar, which was sustained in the years after with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC). Ultimately, through the publication of this Handbook, ANFREL envisions that the NEMGs in Myanmar will be strong enough to continue pursuing election monitoring initiatives on their own. This can be achieved when all democracy advocates work together to empower these groups. As such, ANFREL has taken into its hands the important task of sharing its expertise gained through 21 years of election monitoring engagements all over Asia.

To revise this book, ANFREL held several consultation meetings with various NEMGs on which areas need revision. Most of them shared the need for further guidance on reporting and processing data gathered in the field, updates on election monitoring methods, and focus on specific elements of the election cycle such as campaign finance and out-of-constituency voting.

ANFREL adopted these comments and incorporated them in this revised Handbook in the hopes that it will continue to contribute to sustainability of the ongoing democratic developments of Myanmar, as well as catalyze a more active participation of the civil society in Myanmar.

I would like to thank the contributors who were responsible in revising the Handbook and incorporating concepts to help civil society capacitate themselves. Mr. Karel Galang and Mr. Tharindu Abeyrathna, Program Officers of ANFREL, led the discussions and the edits of the texts. My special thanks go to the previous contributors, Mr. Bidhayak Das who initiated the Handbook. To the ANFREL Chairman, Mr. Koul Panha, ANFREL Spokesperson, Mr. Damaso G. Magbual, and Board Member of NAMFREL, Ms. Corazon Ignacio, Dr. Sanjay Kumar and Ms. Kristina Gadaingan, with your contribution this product became achievable.

We also appreciate representatives from Myanmar NEMGs who shared their valuable thoughts for revision for the Handbook. Our utmost thanks go to the Ms. Mya Nandar Thin and in her team from New Myanmar Foundation (NMF) for sharing their expertise as this endeavor's consultants.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to thanking Royal Norwegian Embassy in Myanmar. Their generous and continued support for strengthening democracy in Myanmar is invaluable.

In conclusion, through this contribution, ANFREL hopes for more vibrant elections in 2020 through the active participation from all democratic actors in Myanmar.



Chandanie Watawala
ANFREL Executive Director

Abbreviations and Myanmar Specific Terms

AGENDA	General Election Network for Disability Access
Amyotha Hluttaw	House of Nationalities (Upper House of the National Legislature)
ANFREL	Asian Network for Free Elections
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CERD	International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CMEV	Centre for Monitoring Election Violence
CoC	Code of Conduct
COMFREL	Committee for Free and Fair Elections
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DOGP	Declaration of Global Principles for Non-Partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations
DOPIEO	Declaration of Principles of International Election Observation
ECT	Election Commission of Thailand
EDR	Electoral Dispute Resolution
EMB	Election Management Body
FPTP	First Past The Post
GNDEM	Global Network for Domestic Election Monitoring
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICPRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers
IPER	Institute for Political and Electoral Reforms
KIPP	Komite Independen Pemantau Pemilu

LTs	Long-term monitors
NAMFREL	National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections
NEMGs	National Election Monitoring Groups
NEMOs	Non-governmental Election Monitoring Organization
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAFFREL	People's Action for Free and Fair Elections
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw	Assembly of the Union
Pyithu Hluttaw	House of Representatives (Lower House of the National Legislature)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
STs	Short-term monitors
Tatmadaw	The Armed Forces of Myanmar
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UEC	Union Election Commission
UN	United Nations
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
USA	United States of America



Election monitoring is an important instrument to promote transparency, accountability, and inclusion during the electoral process. Election monitoring by civil society is non-partisan in nature and is an initiative that seeks to ensure not only the integrity of every step of the polls but also the primacy of fundamental human rights throughout the election cycle. The conduct of election monitoring itself is an expression of the people's right to participate in public affairs, as defined in the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) General Comment 25, paragraph 5; as well as the fundamental rights to associate and express, both of which are protected under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights.

Election monitors are considered as specialized human rights defenders of civil and political rights. As election monitors, it is our duty to safeguard the sanctity of the people's will, enhance public trust, promote accountability and transparency, and assist in mitigating conflict arising from electoral disagreements. This can be done by exposing fraudulent practices or irregularities, deterring potential election related violence and intimidations, as well as offering recommendations to improve electoral processes. Assessments made by election monitoring groups have the power to affect perception of an election's legitimacy, as well as pave the path for reforms. History tells us that when done right, election monitoring can indeed catalyze positive democratic development.

In 1986, the 20-year dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines ended after a movement called the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL, formed in 1983) exposed massive efforts to manipulate election results, paving the path for a peaceful People Power Revolution the same year. Following the success of NAMFREL, groups like the Peoples' Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL, formed in 1987) in Sri Lanka, Pollwatch Foundation in Thailand (formed in 1992), ODHIKAR in Bangladesh (formed in 1994), the Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL, formed 1995), and Komite Independen Pemantau Pemilu

in Indonesia (KIPP, formed in 1996) started conducting credible election observation initiatives. These groups are among the oldest and strongest civilian-led election monitoring organizations in the world. More recently, election monitoring efforts of Bersih 2.0 in Malaysia (2018) helped pave the way towards a governance that is reflective of the people's will despite massive political pressures from their respective government. The success, credibility, and sustainability of these groups are attributed to their principled and fact-based election monitoring methodology, as well as their staunchly independent and impartial conduct.

Election monitoring requires high ethical standards and truthfulness regarding the professional conduct and the methodology utilized by organizations. With the potency of election monitoring as a tool for democratization, it is important for election monitors themselves to embody the very principles of transparency and integrity which they promote in their every engagement. There are some principles which govern the conduct and aims of domestic election monitoring efforts, of which the most comprehensive is the Declaration of Global Principles for Non-Partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations (DOGP). The principles contained in this document lay out a set of considerations for the conduct of a credible election observation. The document codifies the foundational definition of genuine elections, the principles of non-partisan, independent scrutiny of electoral processes, the conditions required to monitor the various stages of the electoral process, and the code of conduct and commitments required from monitors.

This second edition of ANFREL's Election Monitoring Handbook for Myanmar's civil society aims to guide domestic election monitoring organizations in implementing the principles contained in DOGP. This handbook contains knowledge gained through the organization's and its members' experience in conducting election monitoring missions. In consultation with various partners in Myanmar, this handbook is tailor fitted to address their emerging needs, as well as to suggest practices which can help them develop as election monitoring organizations.



This election monitoring handbook was prepared to provide domestic election monitors with basic knowledge and standard election monitoring methodologies and tools, as well as current information on technology like software, social media, among others. The idea is to equip election monitors, particularly domestic election monitors, with information and tools to help them prepare and implement a focused and well-conceived election monitoring plan, which covers every step of the election cycle. It is essential for national election monitoring organizations cover the initial phases of the electoral preparations and do a systematic follow-up of all important activities, including electoral reform processes, changes to the legal framework, the setting of boundary delimitation procedures, voter education activities, preparation of codes of conduct and accreditation procedures for political parties, candidates, observers, media and other stakeholders.

This election monitoring handbook also provides a comprehensive and contextualized toolkit based on ANFREL's experiences with election observation in Asia in order for monitoring groups to observe the regulation of campaign finance and the use or misuse of state resources by candidates and political parties, breaches including the media, to election campaigns and to the complaint registration and redress process.

Over the last two decades, election monitoring has seen the development of situation-based reporting forms and checklists which have successfully been used by national election monitoring organizations. This handbook highlights some of these widely accepted guidelines which make it more efficient for domestic election monitors to record their findings on election day in a proper and accurate manner. The use of reporting forms and checklists and associated tools to monitor the polling and counting processes can serve well the purpose of election monitoring: the assessment of the integrity of a country's electoral processes.

The various chapters in the handbook have been specifically designed in recognition of the social, political and cultural background of Asia while highlighting the importance

of adhering to universal values and international standards. Thus, the handbook stresses the need for strategizing election monitoring activities in Asia. However, it also reiterates the importance of upholding the principles of universal suffrage and the need for regular and periodic elections and equal opportunities for all contesting political parties and candidates, as well as the necessity of fair access to the media and an independent electoral process.

Despite progress in many places over the last 30 years, there are still many countries which do not yet have free and fair elections. If a country has made a commitment to move toward democracy, this handbook can help. However, it will, unfortunately, be of little use in countries like China and North Korea whose leaders reject the very notion of democracy.

This election monitoring handbook, therefore, is an attempt to sustain the efforts of citizens engaged in monitoring elections and to provide them with the information and tools necessary for them to determine whether an election is clean, free, fair and credible. It can also serve as a useful information guide for various other electoral stakeholders who are keen on not just playing their role in the process as a contestant or as a voter but who want to gain an understanding of the structure of an election or an election monitoring effort and how monitoring efforts can help ensure that the process is credible and thereby promote genuine and democratic elections.

This handbook provides the basic information required for election monitors to function competently, in accordance with the principles set under the DOGP. Included are discussions of the most common election monitoring methodologies employed by citizen monitoring groups in almost any election. This handbook may also be of interest to a broad range of other electoral stakeholders, including governments, political parties, candidates, voters and civil society in general for gaining an understanding of the structure of an election observation effort and what such an effort can do to help make the electoral process free, fair, and transparent.

This handbook is designed to make the most important election monitoring concepts easily accessible to persons interested in assessing the process. The Handbook will start with a discussion on the bases for election monitoring and democratic electoral

practice, by scrutinizing the legal regime governing Myanmar's elections, as well as international principles it adheres to. A good part of the discussion will also be allocated to examine international standards that are used to assess how free and fair any election is. Following is the discussion on election monitoring, its importance, and its principles and methodologies. Other initiatives which can promote active participation by all stakeholders both prior to, during, and after elections will also be tackled. The Handbook will then offer some key principles which, if followed, will enhance the credibility of election monitoring groups. Most importantly, the Handbook will then explain how to prepare for, and successfully execute, an election observation project, including organizational structure and covering the pre-election, election day and post-election phases. As culmination, the Handbook will also offer some key considerations in reporting findings, and crafting initiatives to better monitor thematic issues such as gender, electoral reforms, and violence.

Universal Principles and Electoral Democracy Norms

Chapter
3



Universal Principles and Electoral Democracy Norms

3

Democracy is defined as a form of governance where all governmental authority is derived from the people's consent to be governed. An election is an instrument of democracy, by which the people as sovereign entities, lend authority to their elected leaders, to ensure a working government, and decide on matters concerning the state and its interests. Citizens can also exercise their sovereign powers by voting directly on legislations, i.e. plebiscites and referendum, which is sometimes called "direct democracy." A truly democratic electoral process is one that reflects the will of the people -- held at regular intervals under a free and fair environment, conducted in accordance to the rule of law, and devoid of any undue influence such as violence, fraud and intimidation.

Participation in election is an important and basic human right. In front of a ballot box, every person is equal and has one vote. An election is a process in which the fundamental rights to express, associate, and assemble are all exercised. To ensure that the way we conduct elections respect these fundamental rights, we have international covenants, norms and principles which lay out the basic tenets of democratic processes. All electoral processes must not unduly limit participation by discriminating against any race, religion, political views, and socioeconomic status. This is much more important in diverse communities, such as Myanmar.

A state that signed a treaty guaranteeing political rights is bound to follow it. Although, as a practical matter, it may be difficult to enforce even the most blatant breaches of such international obligations, which often turn out to be more aspirational than binding. They, however, serve as a benchmark when judging the outcome of an electoral exercise. Moreover, they provide legitimacy when negotiating with election officials over a request to deploy election monitors to the polls.

Below are the universal principles that guarantee for every individual's political and civil rights: (up to July, 2019)

Universal Principles Respecting Elections and Human Rights	Myanmar's Position
<p>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) prescribes the necessary conditions for meaningful political participation of a citizen as a voter or candidate. It emphasizes basic rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and other rights deemed basic for all human beings. While not legally binding, such universal rights contained in the document have become the basis of other international treaties and conventions. The pertinent provisions regarding elections are contained in the Article 21 of the document: <i>“(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives... (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot or by equivalent free voting procedures.”</i></p>	Ratified
<p>International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966). Together with the UDHR, the ICCPR is among the two most important documents which form the backbone of free elections and genuine election monitoring. The provisions of the two documents complement and reinforce each other. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is a treaty. A state that has signed and ratified the treaty is bound by it and is required to implement it. As discussed above, however, enforcement of specific obligations under this treaty can be problematic. The most salient provisions are contained in Article 25:</p> <p><i>“Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in Article 2 [race, colour, sex,</i></p>	In the process of ratifying

Universal Principles Respecting Elections and Human Rights	Myanmar's Position
<p><i>language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status] and without unreasonable restrictions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;</i> <i>(b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;</i> <i>(c) To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country."</i> 	<p>In the process of ratifying</p>
<p>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979). Myanmar accessed the CEDAW on July 1997. Article 7 of the CEDAW contains the following provisions protecting the equal rights of women to participate in electoral affairs:</p> <p><i>"States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;</i> <i>(b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;</i> <i>(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country."</i> 	<p>Ratified</p>

Universal Principles Respecting Elections and Human Rights	Myanmar's Position
<p>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, 2007). Myanmar accessed the CRPD on 2011, which ensures fundamental rights of persons with disabilities (expression, association and assembly) are guaranteed, and that they are afforded of their rights to participate in public affairs without discrimination, most especially through elections, or participating in organizations.</p>	Ratified
<p>International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD, 1965). This document calls for the removal of all instruments which make racial discrimination possible, as well as the promotion of understanding among all races. The Convention also require members to criminalize hate speech. The most salient portion of the CERD for the purpose of election monitoring is Article 5, which states:</p> <p><i>“In compliance with the fundamental obligations laid down in article 2 of this Convention, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights: xxx</i></p> <p><i>(c) Political rights, in particular the right to participate in elections-to vote and to stand for election-on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, to take part in the Government as well as in the conduct of public affairs at any level and to have equal access to public service...”</i></p>	Not ratified

Universal Principles Respecting Elections and Human Rights	Myanmar's Position
<p>The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICPRMW, 1990). This covenant emphasizes the connection between migration and human rights. It does not seek to create new rights for migrants but rather ensure their fundamental rights wherever they are situated. The most salient parts of the ICPRMW for election monitors is Article 41, which states:</p> <p><i>“1. Migrant workers and members of their families shall have the right to participate in public affairs of their State of origin and to vote and to be elected at elections of that State, in accordance with its legislation.</i></p> <p><i>2. The States concerned shall, as appropriate and in accordance with their legislation, facilitate the exercise of these rights.”</i></p>	Not ratified

Table 01: Status of Myanmar: Ratifying International Conventions Related to Human Rights Norms and Principals

The principles enumerated above are reflected in a wide variety of documents in addition to those previously cited. There is not, however, a “one size fits all” approach to elections and election monitoring. The UN General Assembly, and many UN members, repeatedly emphasize that “there is no single model of democracy” and acknowledge a “necessity of due respect for sovereignty and the right to self-determination”. For our guidance as election monitors however, it is important for us to refer to existing international documents which emphasize the need for free, fair and inclusive elections.

Among them are:

- ✓ **Inter-Parliamentary Union Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections (1994).** As a member of the International Parliamentary Union, members of both houses of Myanmar's parliament acknowledges and endorses the fundamental principles of democratic elections, which includes regular conduct, recognition of the rights to vote and contest without any discrimination.
- ✓ **Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and its Code of Conduct (DOP-IEO, 2005).** This document was promulgated in the United Nations General Assembly, which establishes the basis for credible international election observation by both international non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations. As of now, it is endorsed by 55 organizations which conduct international election observation missions.
- ✓ **Declaration of Global Principles for Non-Partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations (DOGP, 2012).** The DOGP, on the other hand, is a document which serves as a basis for credible election monitoring initiatives by domestic election monitoring groups. Likewise, this document was promulgated in the UN General Assembly in 2012.
- ✓ **ANFREL Election Monitoring Principles.** ANFREL, as the only regional election observation organization in Asia, has created several documents which aims to create an endemic process of promoting democracy and electoral integrity. These documents were a product of the Asian Electoral Stakeholders' Forums, which gathers election management bodies and election monitoring bodies from all over Asia to address contemporary issues on democracy. These documents are:

1. The Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections (2012) – a document which standardizes the norms and principles identified by Asian electoral stakeholders on what makes elections democratic;
2. Dili Indicators of Democratic Elections (2015) – iterates specific determinants of democratic elections, which election monitors can use as a guide to assess the quality of elections;
3. Bali Commitments: 8 Keys to Electoral Transparency and Integrity (2016) – describes a set of 8 criteria which can be used to assess the level of transparency and integrity of an election;
4. Colombo Pledge on Promoting and Defending Democracy in Asia (2018) – an action plan designed to be a guide among election stakeholders in addressing contemporary challenges to democratization.

Chapter
4

Understanding Myanmar's Government, Electoral System, Laws, and Regulations



4

Understanding Myanmar's Government, Electoral System, Laws, and Regulations

4.1

Myanmar's Government Structure

It is important to understand that Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a unitary, independent and sovereign nation. The President is the Head of the Union and the Head of the Executive, and is elected by the Presidential Electoral College which is formed by representatives from the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives. These groups are comprised of a group formed with elected Hluttaw representatives in the Hluttaw with an equal number of representatives elected from Regions and States.

The Executive Branch is comprised of Ministers, the Vice-President, and the Attorney General of the Union. The ministers of the union are appointed by the President. Each group that forms the Presidential Electoral College shall elect a Vice-president and President.

The Legislative Branch

The National Legislature of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is the bi-cameral legislature of the Union. It is comprised of two houses or hluttaws: the People's Assembly (Pyithu Hluttaw) and the National Assembly (Amyotha Hluttaw).

The Pyithu Hluttaw or the lower house of the legislature is formed of a maximum of 440 representatives. 330 are directly elected through first-past-the post system in each township, while the remaining 110 are appointed by the Myanmar Armed Forces.

The Amyotha Hluttaw or the upper house of the parliament is formed with a maximum of 224 Hluttaw representatives. 168 are directly appointed while the remaining 56 are appointed by Myanmar's Armed Forces.

The Judiciary

Myanmar has a judiciary composed of the Supreme Court of the Union, High Courts of the Region, and High Courts of the State, Courts of self-administered division, courts of self-administered zone, district courts, township courts, and other courts set out by law.

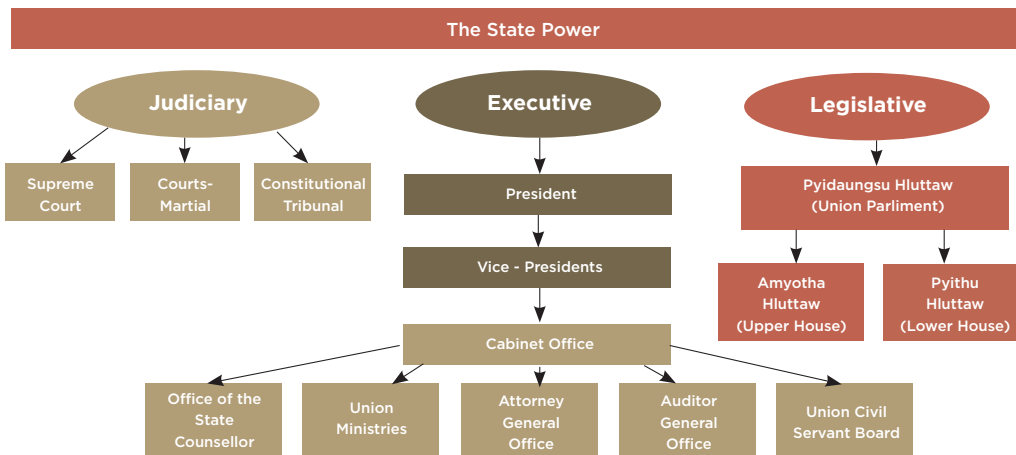


Figure 01: Myanmar’s Governing Structure

How Presidents and Vice Presidents are Selected

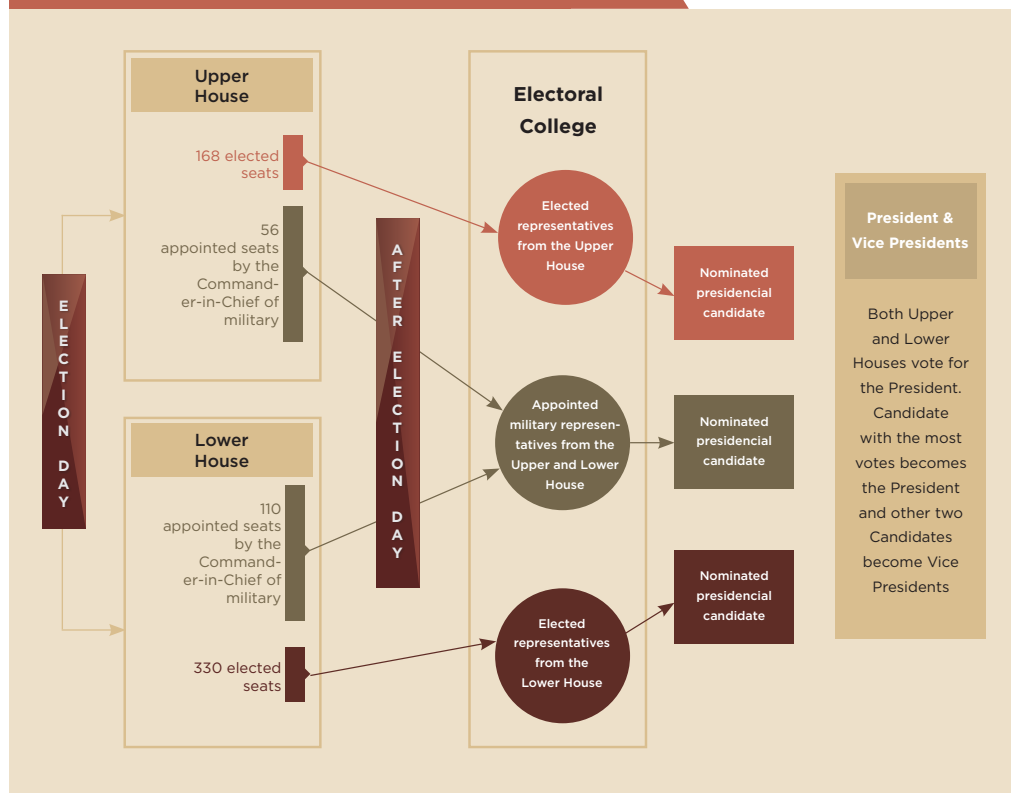


Figure 02: Process of Electing President and Vice Presidents in the National Legislative

Local Administrative Unit

The local administrative unit in Myanmar is subdivided by Region, State, and the Union Territories. There are seven regions and seven states, and they are subdivided into self-administered divisions, townships, districts, wards, and villages.

State and Region Hluttaws

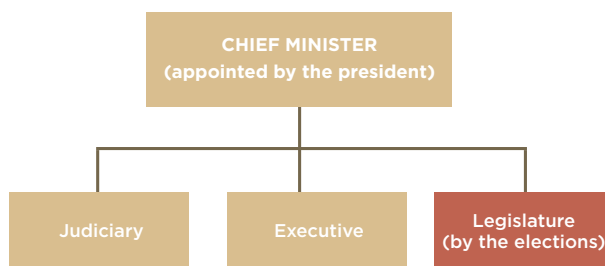


Figure 03: Governing Structure in States and Regions

4.2

Myanmar's Electoral System

Myanmar applies the first past the post (FPTP) system to elect representatives from single-member constituencies to a total of 3 types of Elected Bodies:

The Amyotha Hluttaw, Myanmar's upper house of Parliament (the House of Nationalities);

The Pyithu Hluttaw, the Parliament's lower house (the House of Representatives);

The State and Region Hluttaws, State and Region Assemblies.

In total, there are 1,171 representatives to be elected in the Union-Level Upper House, the Union Level Lower House, and the local parliaments across the country. Because the candidate with the highest number of votes from their constituency wins the seat, the FPTP system here, like all 100% FPTP systems, creates the potential for the number of seats won by a party to be significantly more or less than their percentage of the vote. In all of Myanmar's legislatures, there are 25% of seats reserved for persons appointed directly by the Military Commander-in-Chief.

The number of representatives that will be elected to each of the 14 State and Region Assemblies will be based on the number of townships in a given state/region, with each township divided into two constituencies. A representative will be elected from each constituency that is formed. In addition, the Commander-in-Chief of the Defense Services will appoint military Members of Parliament to each State/Region Assembly so that they make up one-fourth of the total seats.

In the big picture, all seats from the Upper and Lower Houses will form the government system and can become the candidates for presidency. The most votes will become the president and the other two candidates will become the vice president.

4.3

National Law and Internal Regulations

While each country is different, some countries now include provisions in their statutes or even in their constitutions addressing election monitoring and the role that individuals and civil society organizations may play in the electoral process. Truly democratic states should guarantee the right of every citizen to participate in public affairs at all levels of social, political, and economic decision making. This can be expressed through public consultation, observation of governmental exercises of power, and most especially through elections.

An increasing number of countries accept the participation of domestic monitors during elections. In fact, even some countries in transition (e.g. Tunisia) that do not have a

history of democratic elections have provided in their election laws for the participation of monitors.

The constitutions of many Asian countries have provisions aimed at safeguarding the integrity of elections, the independence and neutrality of election bodies, and the transparency and timely resolution of disputes arising in the electoral process. One reason for enshrining such provisions in a country's constitution is that they become more difficult to amend or change (as opposed to an ordinary law) so long as the constitution remains in effect.

The role that civil society organizations play in the electoral process is sometimes addressed by statute. In most Asian countries, local NGOs (and specifically election monitoring groups) are subject to the country's election law. The main rights and duties of election monitors may be specified by the electoral law or by regulations adopted by the election management body or other relevant institution. Domestic election monitors may also be subject to a Code of Conduct (CoC) prescribed by the election management body, in addition to the monitoring group's own code for its members. Such codes help to enhance the credibility and impartiality of the monitors. Strict compliance with such codes is essential, since the perceived legitimacy of an election can be affected by the criticism offered by monitors, if they are themselves seen as unbiased.

The following are the domestic laws and regulations which govern elections in Myanmar:

a. The Myanmar Constitution

The country's constitutional framework regarding elections is covered in Chapter 9 of the 2008 Constitution. Section 391 stipulates how citizens are enfranchised (Section 391), the structure and powers of the Union Election Commission (UEC, Sections 398 to 402), and the regulations regarding the political parties (Chapter X).

b. Enacted Electoral Governance Laws

To further define the principles within the Constitution, Myanmar's legislative bodies are tasked to enact laws to properly guide institutions on how elections should be conducted. At this moment, these are the laws governing elections in Myanmar:

- i. the Pyithu Hluttaw (House of Representatives or the Lower House) Election Law;
- ii. the Amyotha Hluttaw (House of Nationalities or the Upper House) Election Law,
- iii. State and Regional Hluttaw Election Law;
- iv. Union Election Commission Law and the Political Party Law which govern the behavior of these two stakeholders.
- v. There is also a separate law, called the Presidential Election Law, which governs the selection of the president by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, or the combined Upper and Lower Houses.

c. There Are Also Other Non-Legislative Regulations Important for Ensuring Peace and Order Throughout the Election Period

The Handbook for Polling Officers, for instance, contains the regulations and procedures used by the polling officer in administering polling stations – from the setting up of stations to the counting and delivery of ballots. On the other hand, mechanisms such as the Code of Conduct for Political Parties and other stakeholders assist in ensuring a peaceful and amicable election period.

4.4

The Union Election Commission (UEC)

The Union Election Commission of Myanmar was established in 2008 and formally constituted in 2010. UEC's constitutional mandate is to hold and supervise elections for the elected seats in the national and regional parliaments. It is responsible for establishing sub-commissions at the regional, district, township, and village levels.

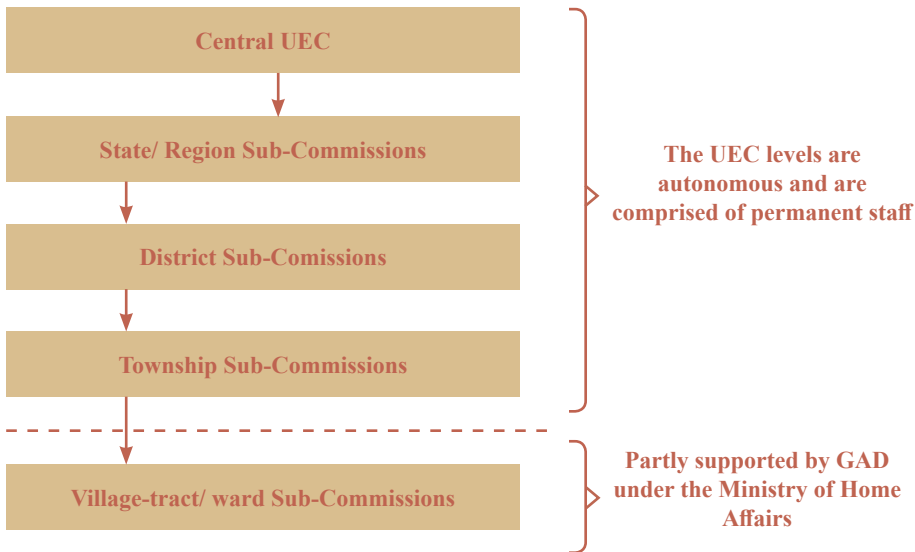


Figure 04: UEC Structure

The UEC is also responsible for designating constituencies, compiling and amending voter lists, conducting voter education, delimitation of voting precincts, vote tabulation, and final pronouncement of election results. They also determine whether elections should be postponed or cancelled, promulgate regulations for political parties and electoral procedures, implement relevant laws, and constitute electoral justice tribunals.¹

The Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections emphasizes that election management bodies such as the UEC should at all times maintain its independence and impartiality. The Asian Electoral Stakeholders Forum (AESF) which endorsed the document has time and again emphasized the need for civil society and election monitoring organizations to work hand in hand with EMBs.

¹ <http://aerc-anfrel.org/country/myanmar/election-management/>



5

Principles of Election Monitoring

Transparency is a hallmark of truly democratic elections. Domestic and international election observers can enhance the credibility and legitimacy of an election. Well-trained, dedicated and non-partisan election observers are a key tool for promoting the quality and integrity of the entire electoral process, and accreditation allows them to function more effectively. EMBs, subject to their prevailing laws, should ensure that all well-trained and non-partisan observer groups are permitted to observe all stages of election processes including observing the entire polling and counting processes at any polling station.

(Article 18, Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections)

5.1

Key Principles of Election Monitoring

Some EMOs come and go, some others go on to establish a good name for themselves. Others are dismissed lightly; some others are highly respected. Some have their opinions ignored, some others offer opinions which are highly sought. What makes the difference? EMOs which make their mark are the ones which adhere to certain key principles in election monitoring, among which are:

- ✓ **Impartiality** –A respected EMO is not beholden or sympathetic to any political party or candidate. Whenever an EMO acts in, or is perceived to act in, a partial manner, it may lose its credibility and effectiveness in commenting on the electoral process. For monitors, maintaining both the reality and the public perception of impartiality is vital. It is natural that, in some instances, EMOs and their leaders hold personal beliefs that converge with those of a political party or candidate. This poses a continuing challenge to the EMO's objectivity and makes it crucial to keep personal views private and never let them affect the quality of the EMO's work. An EMO also needs to police its ranks against members who misrepresent their political leanings (e.g., someone who proclaims neutrality but, in fact, shows bias for or against a candidate or party). An effective EMO is one which provides thorough training about non-partisan professionalism and requires that its monitors sign codes of conduct pledging impartiality, among other things. It must also monitor the behavior of its monitors and remove anyone revealing partisan positions.
- ✓ **Having a standard, tested, and uncomplicated methodology for observation** – Findings and conclusions must be based on verifiable and quantifiable data. Having a standard, tested and easily replicated methodology (survey forms, report forms, questionnaire forms, synchronized schedules, incident report

formats, etc. which are completed at the same time by monitors throughout the country) saves the EMO from making hasty, ad-hoc, or subjective decisions or statements.

- ✓ **Expertise about elections and election observation** – Elections have their own jargon, context, and logic (e.g., canvassing, returning officer, voter list, run-off, party list, single non-transferable vote, etc.). Even above average intelligence professionals may be hard pressed to understand, much less form an opinion about, an election issue unless he/she is steeped in election affairs. Developing core competencies surrounding elections and election observation is vital. Leaders and members of an EMO cannot be confident and credible unless they have adequate knowledge about elections.
- ✓ **National presence** - As much as possible, an EMO should have its monitors present in all parts of the country hosting the election; otherwise, it must qualify in its reports that it covered only certain areas of the country. For example, there is a big difference between the statement, "EMO X found massive vote buying throughout the country from reports of monitors in all 54 provinces..." and the statement that "EMO X found massive vote buying throughout the country from reports of monitors from 7 provinces...".
- ✓ **Relationship between the country's election authority and the EMO** - There is no single formula for establishing good relations between the election authority of the host country and an EMO. If it is too close and friendly, people will perceive that the EMO has lost its independence and charge that the EMO will see only the good in the election. If it is too adversarial, the EMO will likely have a difficult time getting accreditation to observe the election. Moreover, in the latter case, people may conclude that the EMO is totally biased against the election authority. Therefore, the ideal balance is a professional relationship where there is appropriate collaboration and exchanges of information while maintaining enough independence to criticize the EMB where necessary.
- ✓ **Adhering to a code of conduct** – A set of rules about decorum, pronouncements, and behavior in public for members of the EMO is a necessity. The idea is to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and objectivity among the members. Provisions in a code of conduct typically require that a monitor keep one's personal choices/favorite candidates to one's self, not accept a gift or any token from any candidate or political party, not be seen in the house or campaign headquarters of any candidate or political party unless it is on official EMO business, etc. Much more in-depth information about principles to which domestic monitors should adhere can be found in the Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations and Code of Conduct for Nonpartisan Citizen Election Observers and Monitors (DOGP).

5.2

The Electoral Cycle

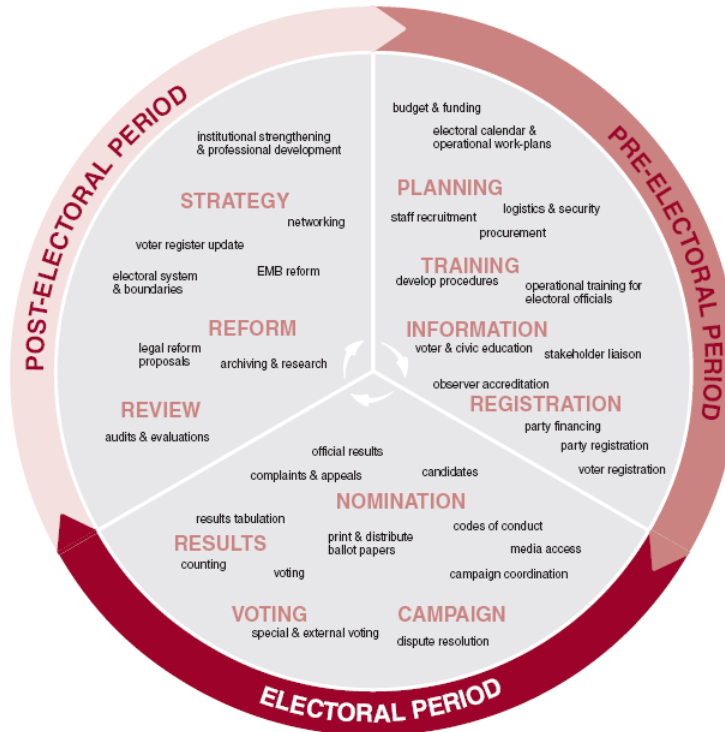


Figure 05: Electoral Cycle

Source: ACE Project

An election is a continuous process and is not a one-day affair which starts when the first voters cast their ballot and ends when the winning candidates are announced. Elections are a cycle – it has no definite start, no definite end, and oftentimes the elements within the cycle overlap. Within it are three (3) periods which serve as a guide for stakeholders to identify which components of the elections must be strengthened. These are the pre-election period, the election period and the post-election period.

Components, on the other hand, are individual activities such as registration of voters, campaign, and reforms which happen in each period. However, there are some components such as voter and civic education that are cross-cutting, and therefore held

throughout the election cycle. The diagram above, designed by the ACE Project, best illustrates the components contained within each election cycle period.

The degree of preparation and quality of implementation for each individual component of the electoral cycle impacts the overall quality of the elections. As election monitors, we should all be aware that these components are building blocks which complement and are interdependent to each other. For instance, the quality of voter registration can directly impact the integrity of the election results. Thus, it is important that election monitors are present in witnessing all stages of the electoral cycle unfold.

5.3

Why Monitor Elections?

Countries hold regular elections to enable eligible citizens to select representatives in their government. Ideal elections are characterized by the following:

- ✓ guided by clear laws and guidelines,
- ✓ implemented by competent and non-partisan election authorities,
- ✓ contested by political parties and candidates who enjoy equal opportunities at being elected and are covered by an objective and independent media,
- ✓ free from intervention by the military or the police, and other interest groups, and
- ✓ decided by voters who go to the polling stations and cast their votes freely, thereby resulting in the candidates who receive the highest number of votes being declared the winners.

If all elections fully fulfill all these elements of a free, fair, and transparent election, and the public has confidence in the electoral system, there is no need for election monitors. However, the reality we experience is often quite different from this ideal environment. Political, economic, social, cultural, and administrative factors often impede the conduct of free, fair, and transparent elections. The following have been known to be present in one form or another in many Asian countries, thereby distorting

the election process and casting doubt on official results of elections:

- ✓ inadequate or opaque election laws and guidelines that tend more to confuse than to guide;
- ✓ unscrupulous politicians, party agents, and interest groups who will go to any length to win elections;
- ✓ customs, rules, and topography that result in the exclusion or marginalization of certain sectors of the voting population;
- ✓ Inadequately trained, inexperienced, underfunded, weak, or partisan election administrators;
- ✓ partisan, corrupt, and unprofessional media;
- ✓ insufficient voter education, resulting in low turnout, voter confusion and high rates of invalid votes;
- ✓ use of government resources to favor certain political parties or candidates
- ✓ disorganized, hastily put-together, and/or intentionally confusing lists of voters the military and/or police favoring one party or candidate over another, either subtly or by overt partisanship and/or intimidation;
- ✓ powerless campaign finance regulations, and use of money to intimidate, buy, or influence voters;
- ✓ disorganized polling stations and vote counting centers which, intentionally or not, result in disenfranchising voters and impeding efforts to monitor vote tabulation;
- ✓ planned and wide-spread harassment, fraud, manipulation, and use of violence;
- ✓ mismanagement or fraud during the vote counting process which results in a loss of public confidence in the election's integrity or, worse, an official vote count that does not reflect the candidates preferred by the voters;
- ✓ questionable constituency delimitation.

The above problems, entirely or in part, are usually present in countries (1) still transitioning to electoral democracy; (2) undergoing political upheavals; (3) that have been ruled by one party or leader for an excessive length of time; (4) where the election management body is biased or is controlled by political or other interest groups; and (5) where elections are not held regularly or are few and far between. Therefore, in these situations, election monitors perform very important functions to ensure that elections are held in a manner that respects the fundamental aspects of democratic elections.

By their mere presence, domestic election monitors can sometimes act as a strong deterrent to the commission of electoral fraud. They cannot directly stop fraud but the fact that they are present to record, and report instances of fraud may discourage persons from committing improprieties.

Election monitors can also, in some cases, be useful even when the electoral system itself is sound but there is a lack of public trust in the system. If they conclude and publicly announce that an election has been freely and fairly conducted, monitors may boost public confidence in the system and add to the perceived legitimacy of an election.

In all too many cases, however, there are weaknesses in the electoral system. Because of these problems, monitors are needed to try to prevent fraud as well as assess and report on the quality of the election. Problematic electoral systems call for the presence of election monitors whenever an election is held.

Election monitors also function as a nexus for advocacy to promote democratic principles and accommodate these principles in their domestic election processes. By communicating their findings to other election stakeholders, such as diplomats, intergovernmental bodies, the media, and other civil society, pressure to catalyze reforms can be made.

In addition to the spread of country-specific election monitoring organizations, regional and international election monitoring groups have also been formed to support democratization efforts throughout a region (or even globally) and to promote the sharing of best practices. In Asia, for example, the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) was formed in 1997 to assist election monitoring efforts in East, Southeast and South Asia.

5.4

Who Monitors Elections?

Election Monitoring is the conduct of assessing elections that is carried out by either *international observation groups or domestic monitoring groups*.

In both cases, international and domestic monitors form an organized effort to assess the conduct of an election process to determine whether it complies with applicable national legislation and international standards. EMOs bring with them the organization, experience, methodology, and resources to organize and implement observation efforts.

Domestic Monitors usually come from non-governmental organizations established for the primary purpose of observing elections. **International observers** hail from organizations from outside the country holding the elections.

Domestic monitors and international observers complement each other. Domestic monitors have greater stake at the electoral process as they are citizens of the country. Thus, they also can make a more comprehensive observation throughout the electoral cycle. Meanwhile, international observers can observe from a more detached point of view being indirect stakeholders to the process.

International EMOs now have as much as three decades of experience, while some domestic monitors have been active even longer. The function of these two stakeholders complement each other. For instance, in severely restrictive areas, international observers can serve as the medium in reporting issues which domestic monitors deem too sensitive. Furthermore, they can also assist each other in mainstreaming and widening advocacy efforts on reforms.

Indeed, over the past several decades, election monitoring organizations have proliferated around the globe and election monitoring has become a special discipline with its own methodology, reporting relationships, electronic and communication support, and ways to measure compliance with electoral norms. On the one hand, the increased professionalism is good because the outcome of the monitoring process is more objective, reliable and representative of the situation in the entire country. On the other hand, the discipline of election monitoring has become an elaborate operation requiring massive logistics, organization, and funding, thereby overshadowing the original concept of a citizen-driven election monitoring movement.

The best election monitors are ordinary citizens of the country hosting the election, whether they are voters or not, and whether they are affiliated with an organized EMO or not. They are effective because they are present in all parts of the country, have a sense of whether there is general compliance with election law, know the electoral situation where they live, and most importantly, they keenly observe because they have a stake in the outcome of the election. Ordinary citizens may or may not be involved in partisan activities; their importance arises from their ability to witness a host of activities, some of which even long-term observers affiliated with a foreign EMO may not learn about. Indeed, with the spread of social media, “crowd sourcing” (where ordinary citizens can provide input on an issue such as an election) has become increasingly important to EMOs, since the aggregation of data from large numbers of people can provide a more comprehensive view of an election than can be obtained by even the largest EMOs.

Typically, election monitors participating in an organized effort hail either from an organization not based in the country holding the election (International Election Monitoring Organizations), or they are members of a local non-governmental organization (NEMOs) established for the primary purpose of observing elections. In either case, the purpose is to assess the conduct of an election process to determine whether it complies with applicable national legislation and international standards. EMOs bring with them the organization, experience, methodology, and resources to organize and implement observation efforts.

Other Stakeholders

Below are other electoral stakeholders that also act as monitors. However, they differ from NEMOs given the nature of their role :

The local and regional media. The members of the national and local media, which report before, during and after balloting. They cover the candidates and the parties, the election authorities, the voters, some human-interest stories in which voting is featured, and, of course, the actual polling, counting, and announcement of results. It is therefore pertinent that the country ensures freedom of the press, to provide them with access in covering electoral events in order to help educate the voters and public and general.

However, the media should be fair and objective, since most voters form their decisions

on whom to vote for on the basis of what they learn from the media. Unfortunately, however, many media organizations are linked to parties, candidates or even the government and, therefore, subtly or overtly slant news coverage to aid their preferred candidates or parties.

Government Officials and officers. These may include the police, local government officials, people who work at any level for an EMB, and sometimes the military. Government officials are mandated to be non-partisan since they are agents which can affect the course of the elections.

Furthermore, they oftentimes have access to government resources which should not be used during campaigns. Some or all of these groups may be charged with assisting election authorities in ensuring the orderly and fair conduct of elections. In India, for example, large numbers of government officials with impeccable credibility and huge trust by the citizenry are charged with monitoring Indian elections. And the Election Commission of Thailand (ECT) engages the services of field monitors in every village beginning two months before a scheduled election to report on election-related events, electoral violations by candidates or parties, and other information that may potentially hinder the voting. In addition, some informal EMOs provide information to the provincial offices of the ECT, thereby aiding such offices in planning their logistics, rollout, peace and order programs, voter education schedules, manpower deployment and similar support functions. Another example is the national human rights commissions, such as those in Nepal and the Philippines, which deploy their officers during elections to monitor violations on fundamental human rights.

Political Parties. Another group of effective monitors is made up of political party agents who gather information about the activities of their opponents. So long as they maintain accuracy in reporting alleged violations and other improprieties, such agents can help improve the quality of elections. However, if they manipulate stories, spread false allegations, or otherwise mislead the voters, they can do more harm than good, even provoking violence by aroused citizens.

Other CSOs. In addition to groups focused primarily on election monitoring, there are other election monitoring movements and groups that are not dedicated solely

to promoting clean and honest elections. For example, some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in other causes like human rights, good governance, democracy, freedom of information, etc. become part-time election monitors during election periods.

Fake Monitors. Finally, real election monitors need to be aware of other ostensible EMOs which may feature a prominent leader, but which are mere shells with no capacity for real election monitoring and simply create “noise” during election periods. Even more disconcerting are spurious EMOs fronted by political parties or candidates to protect their votes or to neutralize political opponents. Such organizations violate the basic principles of election monitoring expressed in documents such as the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections, which calls on monitoring groups to be professional and non-partisan.

A real EMO effort should be a civilian activity, one which is designed to provide an unbiased view of the entire process. In order to achieve that end, it must be independent and politically impartial. Only truly non-partisan citizen monitoring groups have the credibility to fairly assess whether an electoral process is genuinely democratic and whether the conduct of the electoral process meets the minimum standards mentioned above. Any member who becomes politically active in the country hosting the election should be required to resign so that the organization can avoid charges of bias.

Finally, it is a cardinal rule that election monitors do not assist in the conduct of the election. As election monitors, we report events and assess how it affects the overall quality of the elections.

Global Network for Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM)

GNDEM seeks to advance the methodologies for systematic, fact-based election monitoring and to advance the capacities of regional networks and nonpartisan election monitoring organizations through sharing of knowledge and interactive communications among members. GNDEM’s approach reinforces the role of regional networks where they exist and helps them develop elsewhere, while it encourages individual member organizations to engage with others and to draw upon the global wealth of experiences and best practices.



The Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections

The objective of the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections is to identify the most significant and widespread barriers to free and fair elections in Asia and strengthen the resolve of Asian people to address them by involving all relevant national, regional and international stakeholders. The Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections recognizes and reaffirms the rights and principles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Universal Declaration on Democracy.

5.5

Key Considerations for Launching Monitoring Initiatives

Election monitoring is a major undertaking that requires deploying people who come from different backgrounds and specializations, creating a multi-disciplinary core team, applying program management skills, connecting with local and international contacts, planning a logistics roll-out, securing accreditation from the election authority of the host country, and, most importantly, securing funding. In addition to raising funds, the organization must be able to manage its funds in a transparent and accountable manner consistent with accounting best practices, the law of its own country, and the terms of

any financial agreement signed with a donor. After an election, the EMO must prepare a final report and reconcile all funds with its funding sources. All of this must be done in a timely manner.

The scope of monitoring varies, depending on many factors:

- ✓ interest in the election, i.e. if the election is critical and is a seminal event in the country's history;
- ✓ cooperation of the election authority in granting accreditation to domestic monitors and international observers and to the media; and, most importantly,
- ✓ the capability and resources of the EMO (management, recruitment, mobilization time, funding support, etc.).

In 2003, some 2,000 international observers from the United Nations, USA, Europe, ANFREL, and international media descended on Cambodia to monitor its election. Such strong interest in the election was due to the belief that the 2003 election was expected to be the freest election in Cambodia since the ouster of the Khmer Rouge regime. Similarly, international interest was quite pronounced in the 1986 snap presidential election in the Philippines and in the 1999 presidential election in Indonesia to replace former President Suharto. These elections were turning points in those countries' histories, transitioning from totalitarian regimes to emerging democracies.

Generally, election authorities should welcome domestic monitors and international observers, unless the government or EMB is insecure, is planning to subvert the election or the results, is suspicious of the objectivity of the domestic monitors, or, in the case of international observers, is sensitive to the influence of outsiders. Where monitors are mistrusted or unwanted, the EMB can often find ways to sabotage the election monitoring efforts by delaying the grant of accreditation until there is no time to mount one, or the EMB may insist on compliance with difficult administrative requirements and impose other conditions to discourage EMOs.

EMOs that are active and experienced (whether domestic or international) tend to have a greater capacity to organize election monitoring efforts. Ideally, a monitoring effort should assess the entire election cycle, paying close attention to each component of each stage of the election cycle.

5.6

Code of Conduct for Election Monitors

A code of conduct may be developed by EMOs to be used by its entire team. This is important in order not to jeopardize the work of the organization, especially in terms of maintaining an independent and non-partisan stance. Below are some key points that can be used when developing the code of conduct, it is important that it conforms to the principles of election observation outlined in Chapter 5:

- Respect the core principles of elections and international human rights
- Respect the laws of the country, the authority of electoral bodies and national sovereignty
- Always maintain strict political impartiality
- Do Not Obstruct election processes
- Provide Appropriate Identification
- Maintain accuracy and professionalism of observation in Drawing Conclusions
- Refrain from making comment to the public or the media before the mission speaks.
- Maintain proper personal behavior.

Declaration of Global Principles for Non-Partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations

5.7

What is Monitored?

A comprehensive election monitoring effort covers all aspects of the electoral process, from pre-elections, election day, and post elections. The illustrations below lay out the main components assessed at various stages of the election cycle. How to monitor each stage of the Electoral Cycle will be expounded in the succeeding portions of the Handbook.

From conducting interviews, taking surveys of voters (both random and targeted), visiting relevant stakeholders' offices, undertaking analysis of media reports, perusing official documents on electoral law and rules, going on field visits, and actually observing voting in the polling stations, the EMO is able to prepare periodic reports covering the above topics before, during and after the election. While an EMO should monitor and report on the entirety of the electoral cycle, the most sought-after report from the EMO is usually that of its election day observation, i.e., its initial conclusion regarding whether the election was free, fair, orderly, clean, and honest. All parts of the electoral cycle are important and need to be monitored but the initial post-election report takes on outsized significance because public and media attention is greatest immediately after election day.

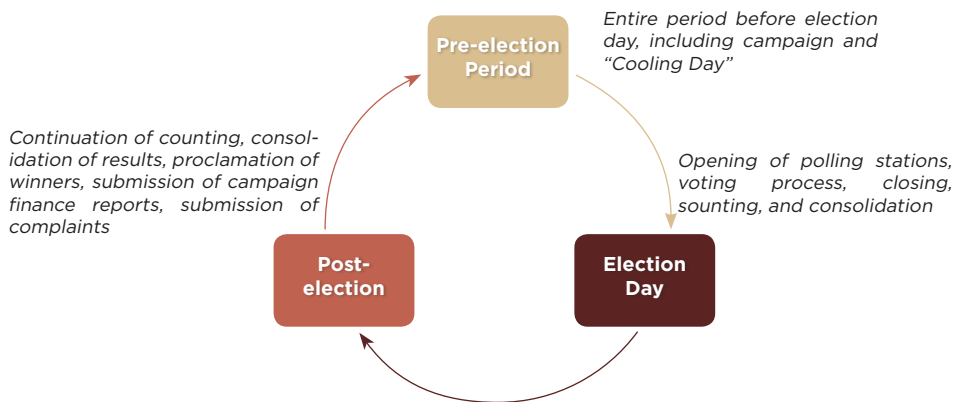


Figure 06: Stages of the Electoral Cycle

Pre-election	Election-Day	Post-election
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Legal Framework ✓ Campaign Environment ✓ (Right to freedoms of speech, expression, and assembly, including media freedom) ✓ Election Administration ✓ Voter Registration, Party Registration, ✓ Voters education / Voter Awareness ✓ Boundary delimitation ✓ Election Violence ✓ Political and Campaign finance ✓ Behavior of government and public servants ✓ Security ✓ Monitoring groups, including the media ✓ Participation of Women, Indigenous people, PWDs, marginalized groups ✓ Media coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Election Day environment ✓ Cases of intimidation, harassment ✓ Election Administration ✓ Participation of Indigenous people, PWDs, marginalized groups ✓ Voting Process ✓ Closing Process ✓ Counting process ✓ Announcement of Results (if applicable) ✓ Media coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Transparency in counting tabulation ✓ Political environment (incidents of violence, victory rallies etc.) ✓ Timely and impartial resolution of complaints ✓ Media coverage

5.8

Who is monitored?

- ✓ EMB staff and commissioners – Local officials as well as national level EMB administrators/commissioners, etc. Deployed long-term monitors (LTs) usually are more focused on regional/local officials in their areas of responsibility.
- ✓ Political candidates and party officials and their degree of adherence to the letter and spirit of election law as well as voluntary codes of conduct
- ✓ Compliance with the country's electoral laws and rules
- ✓ Local leaders (provincial level down to the village level) – Local leaders include government officials as well as other influential local leaders, whether they hold religious, community/village, tribal, academic or any other type of leadership position that provides the person with an opportunity to influence others in the election process
- ✓ Role of police and other security forces (such as the military)
- ✓ Degree of peace and order throughout the country and extent to which the environment is conducive to holding an election
- ✓ Role of the media, particularly those covering the election
- ✓ Possibility for abuses of government resources to advantage certain candidates or parties or to disadvantage certain candidates or parties
- ✓ Local civil society organizations and leaders, especially those involved in elections or human rights
- ✓ Voters of all kinds – Interviews often take place with people encountered on the street, met in the market, etc. to ensure a random sampling
- ✓ Supporters, candidates and political parties – they are most often met and interviewed while observing political rallies
- ✓ Other stakeholders that play roles in the elections



The formation of domestic groups that can monitor elections with minimal external assistance is an essential part of democratic development. Domestic observation is vital for the transparency and ownership of the electoral process, and thus it is essential that citizens themselves performs this important practice.

Domestic monitoring groups are also often better equipped than international observers in carrying out specialized observation efficiently. Examples include verifying the voter roll, monitoring the complaint process, documenting instances of intimidation and human rights abuses, and media monitoring. In addition, national civic organizations have an important role to play in educating voters and promoting the rule of law.

Domestic monitors should be strictly neutral and report objective findings, which can either highlight shortcomings in the elections or alleviate potential for conflict. This can be hard sometimes as domestic monitors can be subject to local pressure as they may live in the area and may also be perceived to lack credibility for being associated with civil society organizations (CSOs) and/or political and social activist groups.

The methodology employed, the accuracy of the findings set out in the reports, the presentation of reports, and the holding of press conferences will all influence the credibility of any domestic observation. If handled unprofessionally, the credibility of the organization may be weakened, and its importance reduced.

Monitors require training on their tasks and the purpose and objective of election observation. More highly specialized methodology and training is required for certain activities, such as campaign expenditure monitoring and monitoring the adjudication of election disputes. A code of conduct should also set out the main rights and duties of monitors, based on neutrality and objectivity.

Courtesy: ACE, the Electoral Knowledge Network Global Network for Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM)

6.1

**Basics of Election Monitoring Reporting:
Establishing the Focus, Framework, and Output**

An organization which aims to mount a credible election monitoring activity must understand the various needs to ensure order and efficacy. There are three critical elements needed for the conduct of a mission: 1. to identify the focus and objectives of the mission, 2. establish the data gathering methodology, analytical framework, and target output, 3. create a deployment structure and plan to accommodate the needs for the focus and methodology. The following sections will discuss how organizations can supply such needs:

Focus and objectives of the election observation mission

A credible election monitoring initiative must be clear and transparent on what it seeks to achieve. Different organizations have varying aims and objectives and focus on different aspects of the elections when monitoring. Most election monitoring organizations conduct comprehensive election monitoring, such as those conducted by NAMFREL in the Philippines. This kind of initiative is done throughout the election cycle, which seeks to assess and dissect the conduct of the polls and how various election stakeholders behaved under the prevailing human rights and democratic conditions. The outcome of comprehensive election monitoring initiatives is cross-cutting, and thus can give a good overall picture of the degree of freedom and fairness of an election. The methodologies which will be discussed in the succeeding portions of this handbook focuses on this kind of election monitoring.

On the other hand, there are organizations which focus and specialize on assessing specific elements which enable democratic elections. For instance, organizations like the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) in Sri Lanka and Odhikar in Bangladesh focus on monitoring instances of violence, intimidation, and coercion during elections. There are others which focus on the inclusion of vulnerable sectors, such as women, persons with disabilities, migrants, and indigenous peoples. Groups such as AGENDA, has been assisting PWD groups in assessing the readiness of election

management bodies to accommodate PWDs in polling stations. Furthermore, groups such as iLaw in Thailand, conducts comprehensive analysis of election laws and human rights policies, and how these affect the quality of public participation. There are also organizations which specialize on monitoring media and social media behavior and how these affect the level and quality of awareness by stakeholders during elections. Among these groups are Mafindo in Indonesia, which monitors the spread of fake news, and Transparency Maldives which conducts a comprehensive media monitoring initiative during elections. Meanwhile there also those focusing on campaign finance or the use of money in elections such as Nepal’s Election Observation Committee and Institute for Political and Electoral Reforms’ (IPER) Pera at Pulitika (Money and Politics) which focused on candidate spending, the results of which were instrumental in amending and improving campaign finance regulation and enforcement.

Here are specific elements which monitoring organizations who aim to conduct comprehensive election monitoring should look for, a detailed explanation on how to assess these will be made in the succeeding chapters:

Components assessed throughout the Electoral Cycle

- a. EMB staff and commissioners – the behavior and quality of management by local officials as well as national level EMB administrators/commissioners, etc.;
- b. Political candidates and party officials and their degree of adherence to the letter and spirit of election law as well as voluntary codes of conduct;
- c. Compliance of stakeholders with the country’s electoral laws and rules;
- d. Local leaders (provincial level down to the village level) – Local leaders include government officials as well as other influential local leaders, whether they hold religious, community/village, tribal, academic or any other type of leadership position that provides the person with an opportunity to influence others in the election process;
- e. Role of police and other security forces (such as the military);
- f. Degree of peace and order throughout the country and extent to which the environment is conducive to holding an election;
- g. Role of the media, particularly those covering the election;
- h. Possibility for abuses of government resources to advantage certain candidates or parties or to disadvantage certain candidates or parties;

- i. Local civil society organizations and leaders, especially those involved in elections or human rights;
- j. Voters of all kinds – Interviews often take place with people encountered on the street, met in the market, etc. to ensure a random sampling;
- k. Supporters, candidates and political parties – they are most often met and interviewed while observing political rallies;
- l. Participation of vulnerable groups such as women, youth, ethnic groups, persons with disability, among others.

Components assessed during Pre-election Observation

- a. Quality of the voter list and the voter registration process
- b. Whether government officials are neutral
- c. Challenges faced by vulnerable persons, including women, minorities and disabled persons
- d. Whether there is freedom of movement of candidates and party agents
- e. How campaigning is conducted
- f. Voter education efforts, including the rolling out of election logistics and paraphernalia

Components assessed during Election day Observation

- a. Opportunities for fraud, coercion, intimidation, violence
- b. Whether voters have freedom of movement
- c. Whether any voters who arrive at the polling station are unable to cast ballots (number and why they are unable to vote)
- d. Management of the election at the polling stations
- e. What, if any, role is played by the military and/or the police
- f. Whether there are adequate provisions for voting by persons with disabilities, indigenous people, women, citizens living in other countries, the elderly, people living in religious orders, etc.
- g. The role of local government or village heads
- h. Prior to the commencement of voting, whether the empty ballot boxes are shown, voting materials have all arrived, the station opens on time, whether there is a queue, whether party agents are present, whether the polling station setup will assure secrecy of voting, etc.

- i. During the voting hours, whether there is orderly ballot distribution, reasonable management of the crowd, whether campaign materials are in or around the polling station at locations prohibited by law, whether monitors and party agents/witnesses are allowed to observe all aspects of the polling, whether the ballots are properly stamped and signed before issuance, whether the ballot envelopes are issued together with the ballot paper, whether names of voters are called out clearly, whether voters who are not on the list are allowed to vote or whether eligible voters are turned away based on the electoral law, whether voters can mark their ballots in secret without being observed by anyone, whether any voters are challenged, and whether all polling station officials act in a professional and neutral manner, have they been adequately trained, and have the reputation in the community for being neutral, etc.
- j. In assessing the closing of the polls, whether the polls close on time, whether voters already in line are allowed to vote, whether unused ballots are counted and disposed of properly, whether the reconciliation of used, unused, and spoiled ballots is properly and transparently performed, and whether the counting and announcing of local results are performed transparently
- k. Tabulation and consolidation of ballots, e.g., delivery of ballots to next level of counting and administration, in order to gauge the transparency of ballot transportation and consolidation/tabulation at every step, and determine whether the EMB has provided regulations/procedures that are followed throughout the closing process

Components assessed during Post-Election day Observation

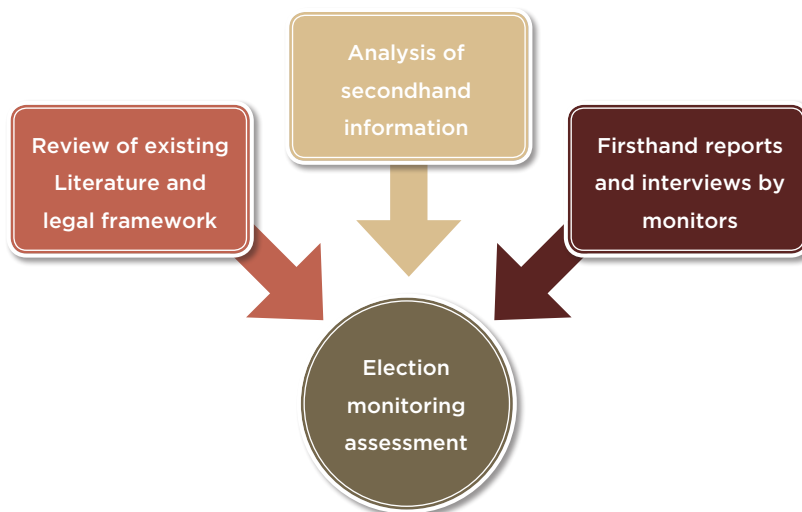
- a. Procedures for nationwide posting of results at the polling stations or at the election commission
- b. Completion of the counting, tabulation and consolidation of results from slower reporting areas (where possible)
- c. Whether any participants have grievances arising from the election and whether any protests are filed
- d. What actions are taken in response to the filing of complaints and protests filed throughout the electoral cycle
- e. After the declaration and certification of winners, verifying the announced results with the local posted results where they are known, whether losing candidates challenge the results, etc.
- f. Whether any efforts to reform electoral law follow the election

Data Gathering Methodology, Analytical Framework and Output

To produce a quality election monitoring assessment output, organizations should learn how to build their data gathering methodology and analytical framework which fit their aims. To ensure that monitors will not miss important data as they observe any part of the electoral process, they should be equipped with comprehensive checklists and data gathering tools to guide them. Later parts of this handbook will lay out some considerations on how to build such data gathering tools, which specifies the kinds of data which will be of use to create a meaningful report.

There are several sources of data for election monitors which can help provide dimensions to assessments. These sources of data complement each other, and all are necessary components in the process called “triangulation”. This is a method of analyzing data by noting similarities and differences in the information produced through the review of existing literatures, the analysis of secondhand information released by media and social media, and the information gathered by monitors deployed on the ground. By combining, an election assessment is formed. All stages and all elements of the elections being assessed by the monitoring mission should be subjected to the same methodology. It is important to make sure that all elements mentioned below are present in every assessment. This ensures that the information is not one-sided and is verified through various means, thus ensuring the integrity and veracity of the information. These methodologies are:

- Review of existing literatures, principles, and legal framework – these include existing laws governing elections and other documents which govern elections, literature on the country’s election and political history, international norms and principles on democracy, and other related literature which can help contextualize the country’s electoral and political state;
- Analysis of secondhand information – it is important to understand how the electoral developments are portrayed by the media, as well as how people appreciate them. These are reflected with news articles and broadcasts that happen during election period. It is important for every election monitor to be abreast with developments day-by-day, and thus should be reflected as part of the assessment;
- Firsthand reports and interviews by field monitors – to ensure the veracity of the data we gather from the two previous sources, personal interactions and field observations can be utilized. The maxim for election monitors is “we report what we observe”, thus it is important for us to verify all data personally and religiously.



All findings must be presented through a report which can be easily shared. The mission report should contain all elements of the election assessed by the mission. The report should carefully disclose the methodology, the guidelines, sources of information, and recommendations of the monitoring mission. In a full election monitoring mission, the most common way of presenting the assessment is done in a chronological order from the pre-election, election, post-election assessments, and concludes with the presentation of recommendation.

Mission Structure and Roles

To ensure that the election monitoring activity will proceed smoothly, the structure of the mission must be created. The mission must identify how manpower and resources should be distributed, as well as the role each person will perform. Each organization should create their deployment structure and plan based on the mission's objectives and the available resources. Thus, this part will present basic considerations.

It is therefore important to undertake a pre-election assessment of the overall electoral situation ahead of the elections, this includes a thorough analysis of the political situation. If there are constraints on the resources, the EMO can focus its work on key

areas or what are considered as hot spots. It is important that there is good representation of information from across the country in order to develop an inclusive and sound monitoring report.

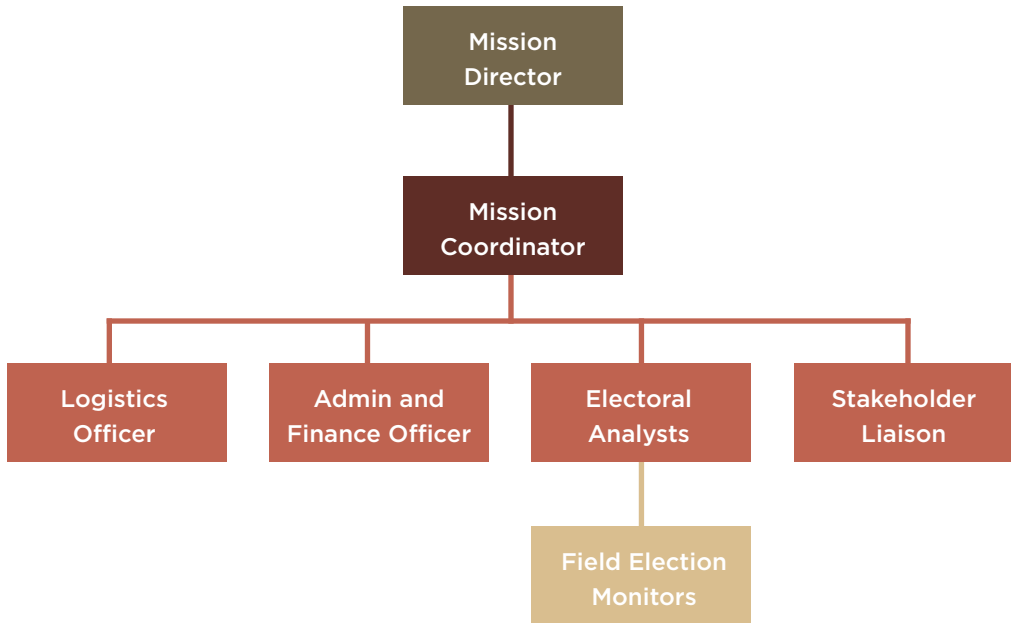


Figure 07: Model Election Monitoring Mission Structure

In any organization, it is imperative for the role of everyone to be clarified to ensure the efficiency of the operation. Same goes true in conducting election monitoring missions. The structure must be rigid from the leadership, to the core team, to the field monitors. Monitoring missions illustrate structure this through a mission structure diagram, sampled above, which defines the hierarchy within the mission.

- **Mission Director** is the most senior member of the mission who is responsible for the day-to-day work of the mission. The Mission director ensures that the mission behaves in accordance to domestic laws and principles of impartial election monitoring. The mission director is responsible with establishing relations and coordination with the management bodies, partner civil society organizations, and other stakeholders.



- **Mission Coordinator** serves as the chief of staff, ensuring the effective implementation of the election observation mission. The Mission Coordinator assists in managing the administrative staff and the long-term and short-term monitors, as well as overseeing their operation. Oftentimes, the mission coordinator coordinates the reporting and briefing of monitors.



- **Logistics Officer** is the staff primarily responsible on providing all the necessary logistical preparations for the mission. She/he ensures that the equipment, premises, communication and transportation are all in place to accommodate the needs of the mission and its monitors. She/he also ensures that a proper security guideline is in place to mitigate any possible threats. Domestic election monitors can opt to eliminate this position, and have the mission coordinator oversee the logistical arrangements, with the help of local coordinators.



- **Administration and Finance Officer** is the staff responsible for the development and management of all financial and administrative needs of the mission. S/he administers all payments, contract obligations, and budgeting to support the mission operation. Part of the officer's task is to ensure that all documents pertaining to the mission, its members, and operation are kept properly.



- **Electoral Analysts** are members of the mission who are primarily tasked with the assessment of the conduct of all stages of the elections and its environment. They consider several factors such as the degree of transparency, inclusiveness, efficiency, freedom of stakeholders. They conduct legal, political, media, and statistical analysis to provide an overall assessment of the mission. They also lead the writing of the reports, statements, and other communications, and manage the operations of the monitors in the field, as well as directing them on how to gather data.



- **Stakeholder liaison** connects the mission and its monitors with relevant stakeholders, whether they be government officers, election management bodies, other stakeholders, and the media. Therefore, this officer is the one which handles all contacts of relevant people and organizations, distributes communication to the public, and organizes initiatives to promote the mission and its objectives such as conducting press conferences.



- **Field Election Monitors** are members of the mission who are deployed on the ground to gather data from the field by interviewing local stakeholders and conducting field visits to verify data. These monitors must be capable enough to navigate local political dynamics, and contribute to the independent analysis of the pre-election, election day, and post-election processes. To ensure that they are well acquainted with the mission's methodology, they should be briefed on how the mission will operate. Debriefing process also must be done after their deployment to ensure that the mission was able to process the data they gathered. All monitors must report to the analyst team and the mission coordinator regarding their activities on the field. The monitors should relay their findings to these officers, on a frequency identified by the mission. Most missions also assign *state/division and district coordinators* to directly supervise the activities of the monitors in their respective areas of deployment. There are two categories of monitors, depending on the length of their deployment, long-term and short-term.



Long-term monitors (LTs) usually are deployed in the localities a week after the mission was established and are asked to return a week after the election day. Some organizations deploy LTs in pairs and are asked to cover a big geographical scope. These monitors can also assist the logistics officer in preparing arrangements for short-term monitors (STs) who will arrive on a later date. They are also responsible in coordinating all short-term activities in the area assigned to them. On the other hand, *short-term monitors (STs)* are deployed on the field in a period of one to two weeks. They observe all activities at the end of the pre-election period, until the start of the post-election period. They are also often deployed in pairs, who will work under the guidance of the LTs. They will also cover a smaller geographical scope.

DEPENDING ON THE SIZE AND CAPACITY OF THE EMO, THE STRUCTURE CAN VARY, HOWEVER, BELOW IS A SUGGESTED STRUCTURE TO BE ABLE TO MAKE A COMPREHENSIVE OBSERVATION:

Position	Role	Station	Duration	Needs
Mission Director	-as explained above-	Headquarters/ Capital	Full-time	one
Mission Coordinator / National Coordinator	-as explained above-	Headquarters/ capital	Full-time	one
Logistics, Finance and Administrative staff	-as explained above-	Headquarters/ capital	Full-time	One or two
Electoral Analysts	-as explained above-	Headquarters/ capital	Full-time	One or two
Media and Stakeholders Liaison	-as explained above-	Headquarters/ Capital		One
State/ Division/ Regional Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They recruit district or township coordinators (depends on them if they want district or township level) • They supervise the work of the district or township coordinators • They coordinate information from headquarters to district/ township coordinators • They coordinate with state level officials, as needed by HQ • They provide trainings to district coordinators and monitors 	In respective states/ regions	It can be full-time, depending on needs and available resources they can start 6 months or earlier before elections and few months after elections	<p>One in each state or it depends how many states will be covered as determined during the pre-assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can be gathered at one sitting by national coordinator to receive uniform instructions; some sort of training

Position	Role	Station	Duration	Needs
District or Township Coordinators (to be determined by EMO, depending on their network or needs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To take charge of recruiting and training volunteers/ monitors To make observations in his/her area of responsibility during pre-election and post-election period He/she directly reports to the state/regional coordinator He/she is responsible in collecting reports from field monitors during election day He/she do mobile monitoring during election day They determine polling stations where monitors will observe 	In respective districts or townships	Can be same duration with state coordinators or a little after	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers depend on how many townships are intended to be covered by the EMO; One in each township; Training to be provided by state coordinators or national coordinator
Field Election Monitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are monitors stationed in their assigned polling stations They observe the process from opening to counting following a checklist provided by the HQ They submit report to township coordinators, or if there is an online mechanism, they can directly submit to HQ 	They are in polling stations	Election Day	<p>HQ determines how many it can support or how many are needed;</p> <p>Coordinators are responsible in recruiting monitors</p> <p>They will need training</p>

Volunteer Recruitment and Training

Briefings and debriefings are important to ensure that the uniformity of information received and relayed by field monitors. This sets an opportunity for the monitors to get vital information regarding the environment in which they will be working in. To do this, it is crucial that points of view from other stakeholders are gathered. Thus, during briefings and debriefings, missions can invite security officers, other CSOs, human rights workers, and even the election commission to provide some input. National election monitoring organizations usually have a network across the country. They can also partner with other organizations with different mandate to utilize their network in order to have credible monitors on the ground. They may come from youth, women, farmers, or, workers organizations.

State and township coordinators should be trained by the NEMOs national office and be provided with orientation on what are expected from them. They should also be given instructions on how they can recruit monitors to monitor during election day.

Meanwhile, NEMOs sometimes also carry out voter education. This is an effective platform when recruiting monitors to be deployed on election day. Usually, the youth are eager to participate in the process if given the proper tools. Voters education campaigns in schools or universities can be used as platform to encourage the youth to sign up as monitors in their respective townships.

Handling Challenges and Risks

Monitors may encounter risky situations in the course of their work. These may come in the form of legal challenges or risks to their persons or properties. The general policy is to avoid, if possible, any risky situation, and get the needed data by safer means. National election monitoring organizations must be prepared in handling any risks or challenges which can confront any member of the monitoring effort. In this case, it is important that a risk assessment is done, which identifies possible risks, and give instructions on how the mission should respond.

If the legality of the monitor and his/her action is questioned, the basic right of every citizen to the exercise of suffrage should be invoked. This is an internationally recognized right cited in all international agreements including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and enshrined in the 2008 constitution of Myanmar. The right of suffrage includes the right to vote and be voted upon in any election, and the right to observe the election process.

When monitors are placed in any situation that may endanger their lives and properties, they must immediately disengage and proceed to a safer location.

Final Election Observation Mission Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2018 By-Elections

November 5, 2018

Norwegian Embassy



Assessing Elections: A Comprehensive Guide

7

An election is considered successful when most stakeholders accept its outcome as legitimate. In Asia, it is a rare occurrence that our elections are considered successful – candidates often perceive an election to be a success only if they win, otherwise, if the election is a failure. This is the reason why election monitors, especially domestic election monitors, are important. As impartial agents, election monitors have the duty to relay an assessment of the election which considers the prevailing norms and principles of democratic elections, thus shielding the process against any misinformation and undue influence.

As we have discussed in the previous chapters, elections are not a one-day affair. It is a cycle made up of many stages, all of which are important to observe in order to give us an idea on whether an election is legitimate, free, and fair.

An election can be compared to a game, which has rules. There must be an independent referee who will look at all angles to ensure that all players follow the rules. All rules should be applied evenly, regardless of the date, time, and who are the players. In an election, rules refer to the Constitution, electoral laws of a country and instructions, directives and guidelines released by election management bodies. This part deals on how we, as election monitors, can ensure that the rules are followed and implemented evenly.

Deployment area considerations. In gathering data, it is also important to ensure that the data gathered is not tilted to reflect only a segment of the population. For instance, it is not a good practice to focus only on observing procedures in urban settings. Rural voters, with certainty, have views and experience the processes differently in comparison with their urban counterparts. Balancing the deployment to cover areas of different social and political settings will ensure that different points of view are considered into the assessment. Therefore, in gathering data from the field, missions ought to consider the following when distributing monitors:

- Urban vs rural settings
- Peaceful areas vs areas with history of conflict
- Non-competitive areas vs competitive areas
- Political centers of power vs periphery
- Other considerations such as vote-rich areas, military outposts, industrial zones, ethnic dominant areas, and political dynasty bailiwicks

From here, organizations should identify where each monitor should be deployed.

7.1

Pre-election Period

Assessing the political system under which an election is held and reviewing whether all political parties, including those representing minorities, enjoy equal access to the entire electoral process is fundamental to gauging whether an election is free. Close examination of campaign hindrances by state-sponsored agents (police/military, vigilantes) and the effectiveness of reasonable restrictions on the use of money, muscle and manipulation also helps determine the degree of electoral freedom. Finally, determining the extent to which breaches of codes of conduct and human rights violations go unpunished is a key in determining how free an election is.

Conducting a Pre-election Assessment

Most organizations conduct a process called pre-election assessment to gain an understanding the factors which can affect the conduct of the polls. This is primarily done at most a month before the launch of the monitoring mission. A pre-election assessment begins with a review and analysis of the applicable election laws in order to determine whether such laws meet basic international commitments and practices. Besides the election law, a range of legislation on related matters including the law on political parties, citizenship laws, voter registration laws, campaign finance laws, media laws, and possibly even elements of the criminal code and administrative code, decrees and regulations need thorough assessment. A sound pre-election assessment contains the following:

- a. Existing legal provisions governing the elections;
- b. Which are the civil society, media, and other entities have the most impact in the process;
- c. What are the activities of the various stakeholders;
- d. Appointment procedure for selection of members and officials of election management body (EMB)
- e. Extent of the EMB's independence, autonomy and public interaction
- f. Degree of impartiality shown by the EMB
- g. Perceived degree of legitimacy/acceptance of the EMB by parties and voters
- h. Perceived quality of the EMB's delivery of services in elections
- i. Perceived degree of the EMB's transparency
- j. Degree of freedom of political parties, alliances and candidates to organize, travel about, assemble and express their views publicly
- k. Fairness of access to state resources made available for the election
- l. Fairness of access by political parties, alliances and candidates to the media, the state media
- m. Registration of voters without discrimination based on gender and racial or ethnic origin
- n. Conduct of polling and counting of votes in prior elections and extent to which there was compliance with the electoral law.
- o. Provisions of the law should ensure that an objective, unbiased, independent, and effective organization to administer elections is in place with careful attention to provisions for appointment, remuneration, duties, powers, qualifications, and reporting structure of electoral staff.

Assessing the Election System and Laws

It is important for election monitoring organizations to be well acquainted with the legal framework and system used to hold elections. These are the rules of the game, and thus monitors should be able to express if there are provisions which favor or disadvantage some players. This is the primary consideration in gauging how level and how democratic the playing field is. Furthermore, it also sets the how the government,

media, the civil society, and political parties ought to behave. Thus, in assessing laws, it is also important to contextualize how they are formed, and how it affects the overall quality of the elections.

Possible guide questions for assessment:

- a. Does the legal framework ensure an inclusive and competitive process?
- b. Is the legal framework readily available, complete, and understood by all stakeholders?
- c. Were there any late changes to the legal framework? Did this create concern or confusion?
- d. Does the electoral system, including boundary delimitation, provide for equal suffrage? Are there sectors that are excluded from the process?

Independence of Election Management Bodies and Administration

The independence of a central election commission is enhanced if it is composed of respected and suitably qualified individuals and nominated by a balance of interests at all levels, staff must have the necessary qualifications to perform well; staff should also be insulated from bias and political pressure. Adequate advance training is imperative for all election officials. All electoral activities, including the decision-making process, the legal process, and the organization of events, should be conducted in a wholly transparent manner. The work of the EMB should be collegial, nonpartisan, transparent, and independent of the authorities and other political influences. In addition, the administrative structure needs broad public support if it is to be viewed as credible.

Possible guide questions for assessment:

- a. Who are the members of the election commission? What is their background prior to appointment? Do they have connections with parties, controversial personalities and interest groups?
- b. Are vulnerable sectors represented? Women? Ethnic? Civil society?

- c. What are the governing rules on appointing election commissioners? Are they transparent? Fair?
- d. How does the election management body function? How is it funded? How much funding is it allocated? How well are the bureaucrats performing?
- e. Has the body been fair in implementing election rules and regulations? Do they favor a certain party?
- f. How well do they communicate with the other election stakeholders? What degree of trust do they enjoy?

Assessing Civil Society and Media Engagement

As election monitoring organizations, it is important to assess the degree of freedom the media and other civil society organizations experiences. Both institutions should be able to perform their respective roles of ensuring the voters are well acquainted with information which could make participation during elections meaningful and perform checks and balance on the wide authority exercised by the election commission and other government agencies during election period.

Possible guide questions for assessment:

- a. Who are the civil society actively involved during elections? What are their objectives? Are they non-partisan?
- b. What activities are the civil society and media doing during elections? What election related activities did they perform to promote meaningful participation during elections?
- c. Who are the leaders of these institutions? Who funds them? How many people did they deploy?
- d. Did they face any restrictions on their activities? In the accreditation? In what form?
- e. How fair are they in covering the election management body and the political parties? Do they enjoy the trust of the voters?
- f. For civil society organizations, did they deploy monitors on the ground? How many?

How do they operate? Do they work with other organizations or perform their tasks individually?

- g. What is their opinion in the electoral process and the campaign? What key issues are they trying to cover?
- h. Are they confident about the elections? The EMB? The government bureaucracy? The media? Other interest groups?
- i. Do the people have trust in the elections?

Constituency Delimitation

Fair constituency delimitation procedures will consider a range of information, including available demographic information, territorial integrity, geographical distribution, topography, etc. If delimitation is based on census data, then there should be an assessment of whether the census was reasonably accurate. Further, polling stations should be distributed to guarantee equal access within each constituency.

- a. Reasonability and level of acceptance of the constituency structure (through public consultation)
- b. Availability of information about constituencies and lower level districts (demarcation, size, number of seats)
- c. Fairness and effectiveness of rules for constituency boundary delimitation and seat allocation and whether rules are, in fact, being followed
- d. Degree of access permitted to concerned stakeholders to review proposed form of ballot, ballot box and electronic voting machine

Voter Awareness

Even free and fair elections can be problematic if the voters are unprepared to vote when they show up at the polls. Thus, election monitors need to ascertain information about each of the following well before election day:

- a. Design and distribution of UEC (information/education/ communication) materials and the degree of their simplicity and clarity.
- b. Percentage of first-time voters exposed to voter education to facilitate their active participation
- c. Recognition of historically marginalized groups and how their distinct needs are being addressed

Literature should be widely available and should be published in the various national languages to help ensure the meaningful participation of all eligible voters. Voter education should encourage participation by all, including members of ethnic groups and women. Multimedia methods should be employed to provide effective civic education to people with various levels of literacy. Voter education campaigns should extend throughout the territory of the country, including rural and outlying areas. Similarly, funding and administration should be provided for objective, non-partisan voter education and information campaigns. The voter education campaign should be based upon the voting experience of the population. The public should be well informed as to where, when, and how to vote. The public should also be educated as to why voting is important.

Voter Registration

Even if voters have a basic understanding of voting, there may be chaos on election day if the voter registration process has been plagued with problems. Among the issues to consider are the following:

- a. Process adopted for voter registration
- b. Proportion of voting age population registered to vote
- c. In terms of voting age population, percentage of those eligible to vote for the first time in the election and extent to which they have actually registered to vote
- d. Percentage of registered voters who are women
- e. Whether voter registrars display bias based on gender, age,

- f. ethnicity or religious or regional affiliation
- g. Ability of qualified people to register with a minimum of inconvenience
- h. Presence of appropriate mechanisms for ensuring that the voter list is accurate
- i. Presence of appropriate mechanisms to allow the public to have confidence that the voter list is accurate
- j. Whether the criteria for registration are reasonable and comply with accepted international standards

A comprehensive and inclusive voter registration process is key to ensuring universal suffrage and the enjoyment of the fundamental right to vote and to be elected. The principle of equal access (justice), principle of equal opportunity (fairness), and ensuring public confidence and inclusion are the key elements for consideration to ensure a clean and transparent voter roll. If advance registration of voters is proposed, the process must be carefully constructed to ensure fairness and effectiveness of provisions concerning elector qualifications, residence requirements, election lists, registers, and the means provided for challenging those documents. Voter lists should be available to all interested parties.

Assessing Political Party Engagement

As monitors, it is essential to meet with various political parties and candidates to inquire about their views and campaign related issues. As monitors, feel free to observe campaign rallies, debates, and other public engagements between the parties and other stakeholders. These will enable monitors to be acquainted with the policies that they want to implement, as well as the rhetoric they use to attract support. Monitors should also be aware of the membership and leadership structure of these parties, and how internal decision making is made, as well as how marginalized sectors such as PWDs, LGBTs, ethnic minorities, women and youth are accommodated as members.

Possible guide questions during assessment:

- a. Do they have any comments or difficulties regarding the candidates registration process?
- b. What are the main platforms of the candidates and parties? Which policies are they prioritizing? Do these campaign promises address the interests of marginalized sectors?
- c. Which campaign methodologies do they use to attract supporters? Do all of them have access to public or private media? Do they use the social media to campaign?
- d. Are these parties portrayed in the media in a balanced and equitable way?
- e. Can all political parties campaign freely? Do any of them experience any intimidations? Threats? Other interference to their campaigns?
- f. Do they have problems with campaign financing? Misuse of public resources?
- g. How do they perceive the playing field-level or not?

Assessing Candidate Registration

Once you have determined if the voters are educated and properly registered, then monitors need to review whether candidates and parties have been properly allowed to participate in the electoral process. Among the issues to examine are the following:

- a. Ability of parties and candidates who meet registration requirements to complete registration on a non-discriminatory basis
- b. Ability of independent candidates to register if they fulfill legal requirements
- c. Any restrictions imposed on party registration
- d. Whether candidates and parties are listed on ballots in a fair and non-discriminatory manner
- e. Whether state resources are unfairly used to benefit certain political parties and candidates

The provisions regarding registration of parties and candidates must be applied equally to all candidates and parties. The registration requirements for candidates and parties should be clear and predictable and should not involve potentially discriminatory demands such as excessive deposits, mandatory regional support or party representation, or an unreasonable number of names on registration petitions. There should be no restrictions on candidates for reasons such as race, sex, religion, political affiliation, ethnic origin, or economic status.

Assessing Campaign Finance and Access to Resources

One of the key indicators in predicting how well the voting process will go is to examine what has transpired during the campaign period. The amount of resources available and how these are distributed among the candidates are also directly impact the level of fairness of the playing field. In this regard, it is imperative that limits on spending by the party and contributions by supporters are clearly defined. A set of regulations or legislations must be present, which will explicitly describe which contributions and financial transactions by the party or candidate are acceptable. Issues to consider include the following:

- a. Are there campaign finance regulations which guide political party spending? Are they being implemented well?
- b. How is campaign finance monitored? What are the procedures for declaring contributions received and expenditure? Which government entity receives these reports? What are the sanctions for non-submission?
- c. Whether there is fair and non-discriminatory access of candidates and parties to state-owned media
- d. If there is a system for allocating public funds to candidates and political parties, whether it is fairly and equitably implemented
- e. Whether there is adequate recourse if bias is displayed in the state media
- f. Whether state resources are unfairly used to benefit certain political parties and candidates

Assessing Advance Voting

Advance voting is a process by which voters who cannot vote within their constituencies on election day are given the opportunity to vote ahead of time. As election monitors, it is our duty to ensure that advance voting procedures are given the same amount of attention as the actual election day. Advance voting provisions should be designed to encourage the broadest possible participation, without compromising electoral security. Voters with special needs (such as the disabled, elderly, students, conscripts, workers, foreign service personnel, and prisoners who have retained voting rights) should be accommodated, without compromising electoral security. There are considerations which are unique to advance voting, since usually, these are held at a longer period, and require complicated logistical arrangements in order to ensure that the ballots will be delivered and counted accordingly. Therefore, election monitors should prepare and be aware of the following:

- a. What laws or guidelines govern the holding of the advance voting? Who are eligible to vote in advance?
- b. What are the requirements needed to register as an advance voter? Where and how can they register?
- c. Does the election commission create a separate voter list for advance voters? How do they ensure that the advance voters cannot vote again on election day?
- d. What is the procedure for advance voting? How long is advance voting being held? Where should advance voters go to vote? Are they secure? Who are the polling officers and how are they selected?
- e. Are there any differences on advance voting procedures and the election day voting procedures? If yes, what are those? Does it affect the integrity of election process?
- f. How do they secure the ballots and other election paraphernalia? Where are they kept? Who has custody over them?
- g. How are the ballots counted? How are they tabulated?

Assessing Election Day Voting

Election day observation can be a very individual experience, depending on the area of deployment and the set of circumstances confronted by each monitoring team at the polling stations they visit. Some monitors may encounter significant problems, others may find no problems, and still others may see a mixed picture. The methodology for election day observation is both qualitative and quantitative. The basic aim of observing elections at the polling station level is to assess whether voting and counting occur in a correct and orderly manner and in accordance with electoral regulations, international commitments, and other universal principles. As an organized NEMO, volunteers/monitors at the polling stations level are to note all important events through a checklist, for urgent matters, they should be reported immediately to the headquarters. To ensure one, unified stand, the headquarters should be the one to make public statements. If a monitor's safety is at risk, need to disengage, or immediately report to relevant authorities, and report to headquarters. In addition to filling out forms, monitors are asked to provide comments on noteworthy observations or impressions, both on their forms and in oral debriefings. They may sometimes be asked to prepare separate written reports on incidents or observations.



ANFREL Observers Observing the Opening Poll in Yangon in 2017 By-elections

Source: ANFREL

On election day, election monitors arrive at the polling station 30 to 60 minutes before the voting is scheduled to commence. Upon arrival, monitors should start to review all the following items and continue to keep many of these issues in focus throughout the voting day:

- a. Surveying the area for signs of campaign materials or campaign activity in, on, or around the polling station
- b. Keeping an eye on the orderliness of voting
- c. Viewing the crowds around the polling station to detect the possible presence of non-voters and other unauthorized persons
- d. Any evidence of intimidation or disturbance
- e. Incidents of voters being offered any inducements to vote in a particular manner (vote buying)
- f. Presence of security personnel and whether their behavior is appropriate
- g. Ability of disabled voters to access the polling station
- h. Ascertaining the process for selecting polling station officials
- i. Whether the division of labor among the officials at the polling station is efficient for processing voters and securing distribution of ballots
- j. Competence of the polling station officials
- k. Dispatch of ballots and other voting materials and their security for the period prior to election day
- l. Sufficiency of number of ballots and other polling materials initially received (and whether they are the correct ballots for the polling station)
- m. Total number of voters on the voter list for the polling station and the number of voting throughout the day to determine the turnout trends
- n. Provision for a supplementary voter list for sick and elderly voters voting at home by mobile ballot box and, if so, any unusually high number of names on the supplementary voter list
- o. Any incidents of disturbances, irregularities, or complaints occurring and the redress procedure
- p. Whether there are present at the polling station one or more representatives of parties and/or candidates, domestic or international election observers, or media representatives

- q. Whether unauthorized persons are in restricted areas
- r. Whether there is overcrowding at the polling station
- s. Whether correct and complete information is on display for voters
- t. How to assess each step in the voting procedure to make sure that it is being properly implemented
- u. Incidents of voters being turned away because their names did not appear on the voter list
- v. Addressing the problems associated with voters not possessing appropriate identification
- w. Determining whether ballot papers and other documentation are properly signed/ marked/stamped
- x. Whether there is adequate secrecy provided for marking ballots

While many of the foregoing items are straightforward and require little explanation, monitors need to understand detailed provisions regarding the form of ballots, the design of ballot boxes and voting compartments, and the manner of polling help to ensure free and fair elections. These provisions help protect the process from fraudulent practices and promote the secrecy of the vote. Ballots should be worded clearly and contain information that is identical in all native languages. To avoid fraud and to give each participant an equal chance, however, the positions of candidate and party names should be rotated on the ballot. Further, the ballot form should consider various levels of literacy in the country. Enough quantities of voting materials should be available at each polling place. Polling personnel should have clear guidance in admitting and identifying qualified voters. The questions that are put to the voters should be limited by statute. Further, election monitors should watch for evidence of voter intimidation or discriminatory treatment of voters.

It is especially important for monitors to be present at the closing of the polls and the counting of the ballots. Counting should be open to official observation by concerned parties, including national and international observers. All issued, unissued, or damaged ballot papers must be systematically accounted for. The processes for counting votes,

verification, reporting of results, and retention of official materials must be secure and fair. Recount procedures should be available in case of questionable results. Ideally, alternative, independent verification procedures such as parallel vote tabulation will be in place. Monitors should determine whether individuals who are denied voting rights have access to substantive redress. The right to challenge election results and for aggrieved parties to seek redress should be provided by law. The petition process should set out the scope of available review, procedures for its initiation, and the powers of the independent judicial body charged with such review. As an organized NEMO, volunteers/monitors at the polling stations level are to note all important events through a checklist, for urgent matters, they should be reported immediately to the headquarters. To ensure one, unified stand, the headquarters should be the one to make public statements. If a monitor's safety is at risk, need to disengage, or immediately report to relevant authorities, and report to headquarters.

Closing of Polls

After the polls have closed, it is especially important that monitors pay close attention to all of the following details, since what happens between the end of voting and the announcement of official results is usually determinative of whether the election is clean and fair or whether it is hijacked by a party or candidate:

- a. Accounting for unused ballots and determining the number of persons who voted
- b. Status of ballot box seals
- c. Determination of the fairness and impartiality of the count
- d. Appreciation and Reconciliation of valid and invalid votes
- e. Completion of protocols and attachment of complaints
- f. Technical shortcomings and serious/deliberate irregularities
- g. Integrity and accuracy of counting
- h. Transparency of tabulation
- i. Availability of results to interested members of the public
- j. Prevention of undue delay Observation by party agents and candidates

7.3

Post-Election

Announcement of Results

The announcement of results is clearly an important part of any election process and, to the extent possible, the EMO should be on hand to review the results. However, if announcement of results is not expected until well after the election, then it may not be possible for the EMO to maintain a presence in country for an extended period. If all monitors have left by the announcement of official results, the EMO will necessarily have to follow this process remotely through affiliated local organizations, if applicable, or through the media and the EMB's web site.

During the immediate post-election period, the EMO looks for possible signs of trouble, including:

- a. Unreasonable delays in the announcement of results and the reasons for such delays
- b. Unbalanced or insufficient supervision of the tabulation of results
- c. Failure to publish detailed results down to the district and polling-station levels
- d. Whether announced results are consistent with published results posted at counting stations.
- e. Discrepancies between results announced on election day and the results at any level of election administration
- f. Whether official election results differ from those calculated by key election stakeholders (main contesting political parties and election monitoring organizations). Monitoring the Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) process related to complaints regarding voting, counting and election results.

Monitoring the EDR Process

EMOs play close attention to complaints regarding voting, counting and election results to ascertain whether procedures to receive and resolve election complaints are adequate in theory and in practice. An EMO will follow complaints and appeals to determine whether they are resolved pursuant to the EDR mechanism and complaint procedures outlined in the election law. Election monitors from Myanmar can refer to the Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaw Election Laws to better ascertain whether the EDR process was conducted well.

To monitor the EDR process, organizations may have to apply with the UEC to gain accreditation to access this part of the election. Designated monitors will then be issued identification cards which will allow them access within the premises of where the hearings are conducted. To facilitate the application for accreditation, they will have to write a letter to the management body specifying that they will monitor the entire EDR process in Naypyidaw UEC, or in Public Sessions Office.

In observing the EDR process, an EMO tries to ascertain:

- a. Whether election officials and complainants are aware of the complaint procedures.
- b. Whether the EMB has an effective investigation mechanism for the collection of evidence regarding complaints lodged with it.
- c. Whether the applicable legal framework provides for the filing and the fair and timely resolution of complaints. (Indeed, the handling of election complaints may be a useful indicator of the overall rule of law in the host country and the electorate's confidence in such system may reflect the level of public confidence in the integrity of the country's judiciary.)
- d. Whether the election laws are frequently violated with impunity and whether those charged with enforcing the laws act without partisanship or in a corrupt manner.
- e. Whether election stakeholders have enough information about how to file electoral complaints.
- f. Whether election stakeholders can participate in the electoral complaint and resolution process.
- g. Whether EMBs provide voter education information to ensure that contesting political parties and candidates understand the electoral complaint process.

If possible, an EMO may observe hearings and adjudications to determine whether:

- h. Adjudication of complaints is undertaken in a transparent and impartial manner.
- i. Procedures allow for a complainant to submit evidence (either in writing or orally) and for a defendant to respond to the evidence.
- j. Decisions are based on the available evidence and are free of political consideration.
- k. An adjudicator has a conflict of interest with any party to the complaint or in the outcome of the complaint.
- l. Undue delays in deciding cases are used to manipulate the dispute resolution process and deny justice to aggrieved parties.
- m. Delays are due to insufficient capacity, or whether they are politically influenced.
- n. Challenges to the election results are adjudicated before the results are certified.

Immediate post-election environment

For countries just emerging from sustained conflict, the post-election period can be a particularly sensitive time for political parties and candidates, as well as for voters. This may be the case whether the old political regime is victorious at the polls. Further, the election may not result in putting to rest the political conflicts that preceded it.

Election monitors should attempt to observe any reported incidents of election related human rights violations, such as post-election harassment, intimidation or violence, as well as any arrests or detentions related to the election. Monitors also need to be alert to the possibility that political parties or other stakeholders may organize protests or demonstrations in the days following the announcement of results, especially if they have reason to question the official results.

Possible questions:

- a. Are there any instances of violence after the elections?
- b. How do the voters see the results? Are they acceptable to them?
- c. How is the election management body managing the counting and tabulation?
- d. How are they going to proceed with the EDR process? What complaints do they have?
- e. What initiatives do the media and the civil society have after the elections? What are the most significant issues they saw during the entire process?
- f. What reform initiatives are the stakeholders going to prioritize?

7.4**Reporting Your Findings**

At some point (usually within 48 hours of the end of voting), each EMO is likely to issue its initial assessment of the election. In preparing for the issuance of such a statement, it is extremely important to consider each of the following:

Preparation for issuance of the initial statement

- Prepare an independent post-election statement based on the findings of the overall mission
- Seek maximum media coverage
- Deliver the statement in a timely manner while the media are still interested
- Refrain from going public with a preliminary post-election statement until confident that there is enough information to support it
- Note the continuing nature of the mission and be sure to cover all significant pre-election and election day issues, including a list of all significant findings and concerns

Considerations that apply to issuing joint post-election statements with other EMOs

- The potential advantage of the international community speaking with one voice
- Making the statement more accurate and objective by calling on a larger number of field monitor reports
- Candid discussions to arrive at an agreed joint statement
- Reduction of the ability of other parties to engage in “forum shopping” to support their own agendas
- Partnering only with organizations that are intent on an objective assessment of the process
- Confirming that meaningful assessment of the election process must be based on the process in its entirety
- Understanding that any organization that is intent on commenting on a process based on a limited observation, or pushing their own organizational agenda, will not be an effective partner

Counteracting the appeasement phenomenon

- Refrain from the tendency to offer “something for all” in post-election reporting. In reporting, it is inevitable that actors who did wrong will react negatively. “What we see is what we report.”
- Refrain from making inconsistencies between the post-election statement and the final report. For example, avoid issuing a very negative post-election statement but then offering a more conciliatory, positive final report and avoid the reverse (i.e., publishing an initial positive post-election statement and a very negative final report)
- Unless there are significant, substantive developments after the initial post-election statement, or additional information or documentation on election violations indicating serious problems in the final stages of the vote tabulation is discovered, the post-election statement and the final report should be similar in their tone and overall assessment.

Reconciling the individual experience with the organization's overall experience

- Recognize that individual views on the conduct of elections often depend on Individual assessment and impressions
- Understand that individual comments to persons outside one's own organization, prior to the group statement, are out of place and are a serious breach of the code of conduct; the reason for this is not to restrict a diversity of opinion on the election but to prevent publication of premature individual opinions
- The conclusion can only be a group conclusion based on group experience

For the host government, there is, obviously, a lot at stake when it comes to the assessment of their election process. The consequences of an election assessment should not be underestimated. The international community has come to recognize the expression of the will of the population through a genuine election as the basis of legitimacy of government, and it is often found among the conditions for establishing diplomatic relations, admission to an inter-governmental organization, and for the extension of bilateral and multilateral financial assistance and cooperation agreements. Therefore, an observation mission has a responsibility to undertake an objective observation in line with a consistent methodology. No pressure from any quarter should substantively alter the final assessment. It is the responsibility of any observation mission to make sure that the final assessment is accurately transmitted to the public without being unduly influenced by third parties. It is up to the observation mission to assure that the correct assessment is made and that it reflects the observation group's findings on the ground. Such assessments cannot be negotiated or re-written after they have been drafted in a manner that accurately reflects the mission findings.

As noted above, most monitoring groups will issue a preliminary statement a day or two after the polls close. The statement is issued before the final official results of the election are known or, in some instances, even before the preliminary results are known.

Of course, it is not the function of an election observation effort to certify the results of an election. Instead, during the period immediately following the voting, an EMO, based on its assessment, can comment on (1) whether it appears that the results are being reported accurately, honestly and in a timely manner; (2) how election disputes are being handled by the EMB; and (3) the post-election environment, in particular whether it is professional and tranquil or whether it is marked by confusion, violence, and intimidation.

Chapter
8

Conclusion



Conducting election monitoring is not an easy feat – each member of the monitoring group should be able to navigate the complexities of logistical preparations, deployment, reporting, and engaging with other election stakeholders. However, as citizens and advocates for public participation, it is our duty to ensure that our electoral processes remain to be “for the people and by the people.” Only through functioning elections and political processes can we truly address the needs of citizens and fulfill their aspirations – both of which are carried in every ballot of every voter. Thus, every ballot is sacred and should be protected, should be counted, especially in a country whose history is as complex as Myanmar.

Monitoring elections does not stop with ensuring a good electoral process. Another important factor we should consider as we assess our elections is whether fundamental rights such as those of free expression, assembly and association are embedded in these processes. An electoral process which do not respect these fundamental rights is hollow and is not a genuine democratic exercise.

There is not one correct way to conduct election monitoring. This Handbook does not wish to impose a certain mold of how election monitoring should be conducted, but rather provide an information on the common and good practices other election monitors perform. Furthermore, this Handbook contains the basic concepts which we hope domestic monitors will build upon a process of election monitoring which reflects their rich history and culture of democracy building.

ANFREL is glad that it became a part of Myanmar’s transition towards a more democratic rule. While space for public participation in governmental affairs has been established in the country since the historic 2015 elections, much still needs to be addressed to fully realize a true democracy. However, ANFREL is also a witness to the unflinching dedication of the civil society of Myanmar to enact reforms and improve public institutions. We, as partners in this journey, are glad to be of assistance through this Handbook, and through the other efforts we are performing in partnership with like-minded institutions, both from the domestic and international spheres.

9.1

Pre-Election Report

N.B. Do not forget that you must do two things: you must write 'Yes' or 'No' for each column but you must also write some text in the left hand column to explain your answer to the question.

State/Region	
District	
Name of observers	
Period of observation	

1. Summary

This section should be a very short overview of your observations during this period of reporting, highlighting the most important issues. It is best written after you have completed all other sections of this report. Please write your greatest concern about the election.

2. Political context

No	Descriptions
2.1	Who are the main parties competing in the area and what level of support do these parties enjoy?
2.2	What, generally, is party support based on (ideology, specific policies, good reputation or leadership, ethnicity etc.,)

3. Campaign environment

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
3.1	Are political parties and candidates able to campaign freely without fear and intimidation?	
3.2	Are parties / candidates using threats or violence to influence voters' choices?	
3.3	Are parties and candidates abiding by the code of conduct and election law on campaigning?	
3.4	Have the parties recruited and trained party agents district-wide?	
3.5	Are there any constraints on the participation of women as candidates or in voting?	
3.6	Are any 'smear' or 'black' campaigns being run to discredit other parties or candidates?	

4. Security

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
4.1	Is the overall security situation conducive to holding a free and fair election?	
4.2	Are security agencies (Myanmar Police Force) trusted by the population to secure a safe election environment?	
4.3	Are new police recruits perceived to be competent and politically neutral?	

5. Voter Views

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
5.1	Are people enthusiastic about the elections? Are they hopeful?	
5.2	Do voters understand what a Constituent Assembly is?	
5.3	Do voters understand the electoral system?	
5.4	Do voters feel they know enough about rules for voting to be able to cast their ballots on election day without making a mistake?	
5.5	Do voter know where to vote?	
5.6	Do voters feel able to reach the polling station without a vehicle?	
5.7	Do ordinary citizens have freedom of association, speech, and movement?	
5.8	Have voters received any voter education?	
5.9	Are there eligible voters who are not on the voter roll?	

6. Election Administration

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
6.1	Are election officials able to work without fear and intimidation?	
6.2	Have the election officials in your area received most or all of the equipment and materials they will need for the election?	
6.3	Are election officials at all levels well-trained and well organized to conduct the election?	

6.4	Is the EC perceived as neutral and unbiased by voters, political parties and candidates?	
6.5	Have complaints been filed with the EC?	
6.6	Has the EC investigated and resolved any complaints?	
6.7	Are the EC monitoring teams successful in monitoring whether the code of conduct and election law is being followed?	
6.8	Have any special preparations been made for vulnerable groups on election day (elderly, pregnant women, etc)?	
6.9	Are polling stations located in a neutral place?	

7. Government Officials/Civil Servants

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
7.1	Are government officials perceived as politically neutral?	
7.2	Is the government following the code of conduct (i.e. is any government property used for campaigning? Have any local projects or grants been announced? Have any civil servants been transferred?)?	

8. Other Observation/Monitoring Groups

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
8.1	Are domestic observers active in monitoring the pre-election environment?	
8.2	Are domestic observers perceived as politically neutral?	
8.3	Are local NGOs active in voter education?	

9. Other Issues

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9.2

Cooling Period & Election Day Report - Narrative

Cooling Period Report

Name of observers	1. 2.
Team Code	
Region(s)/ State(s)	
District(s)	

1. Summary

After completing the rest of the report, please summarize your report in this section in 1-2 paragraphs. You should highlight the most important issues using bullet points.

2. Environment

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
COOLING PERIOD		
2.1	Cooling Period-leading up to the Polling Day Please describe the cooling day/s environment in your Area of Responsibility (AoR)	

ELECTION-DAY		
Topics		
2.2	1. Are there roadblocks that prevent people from reaching the Polling Centre? Details:	
	2. Are there any incidents/threats/intimidation detected before & during the polls? Details:	
	3. Are there any armed or civilian groups or individuals preventing people from going to polling centers? Details:	
	4. Is the Poling Center positioned in a convenient and neutral location? Details:	
	5. Are the material storages equipped with adequate security standards? Details:	

	<p>6. Are there any campaign materials posted within 100 meters of the station? Details:</p>	
	<p>7. Are unauthorized people inside the polling place? Details:</p>	

Election Day Report

1. Opening Process

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
1.1	Did all essential materials arrive and were placed in correct positions?	
	a. Ballot booth	
	b. Ballot box	
	c. Ballot paper	
	d. Indelible Ink	
	e. Recapitulation Sheet	
	f. Other necessary equipment and documents	

	g. What is/are not available or not in function?	
1.2	Were all the staff present and placed in the position accordingly? If not please explain?	
	a. Polling Manager	
	b. Security (How many? From?)	
	c. Official checking voter's documents and fingers	
	d. Official distributing ballot paper	
	e. Official at the polling booth	
	f. Official for voters needing assistance	
	g. Official supervising indelible ink	
	h. Are the polling staff independent and neutral?	
	i. Do the staff know their roles and look confident?	
1.3	Did the Polling Officer show the empty ballot boxes before sealing them? Details:	

1.4	Were any party agents, domestic/international observers or media present? Identify where they were from:	
1.5	Did the polling station open on time? Details:	
1.6	Are there any problems/protests during the opening process? Explain what:	

2. Voting Process

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
2.1	Were observers and party agents allowed to observe all aspects of the polls? Details:	

2.2	<p>Have the voters been identified properly before they cast the vote?</p> <p>Details:</p>	
2.3	<p>Are the voter's fingers and voter cards checked carefully?</p> <p>Details:</p>	
2.4	<p>Are voters who already have ink on their fingers allowed to vote?</p> <p>Details:</p>	
2.5	<p>Can the voters mark their ballots in secret, without being observed by anyone?</p> <p>Details:</p>	
2.6	<p>Is there any ballot paper that has been marked in advance before the voters cast the ballot?</p> <p>Details:</p>	

2.7	Is there anyone assisting disabled persons more than one time? Details:	
2.8	Do the ballot papers have the proper stamp according to the rule? Details:	
2.9	Is there anyone taking out ballot paper/s from the Polling Station? Details:	
2.10	Are there any complaints/challenges from the party agents and voters Details:	
2.11	Are there any unauthorized persons present inside the polling station? Details:	

3. Closing Process

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
3.1	Did the Polling Station close at the appropriate time? Details:	
3.2	Were voters in the queue at closing time allowed to vote? Details:	
3.3	Were there any voters turned away from polling? Why? Details:	
3.4	Did the Polling Centre queue controller stand at the back and not permit additional voters to join the queue? Details:	
3.5	Were the ballot boxes sealed correctly? Details:	
3.6	Were unused ballots counted and stored correctly in sealed envelopes? Details:	

3.7	Were the used, unused, and spoiled ballots properly reconciled? Details:	
3.8	Were observers and party agents allowed to accompany the ballot boxes? Details:	

4. Transporting of Ballots and Counting

No	Descriptions	Yes/ No
4.1	Is the delivery of the boxes conducted with adequate security? a. Are the procedures and route of transporting the ballot boxes informed to observers, party agents, media, etc? b. Are ballot box storage informed to observers, party agents, media, etc? c. Are observers, party agents, media, etc. allowed to accompany the transport of the ballot boxes? Details:	
4.2	Is the counting process conducted without the presence of any authorized person (observers, party agents, media, etc) Details:	

4.3	Are the reconciliation of the ballot conducted following appropriate procedures? Details:	
4.4	Is the sorting process conducted by the appropriate procedure? If no please explain.	
4.5	Are the results displayed in a public place? Details:	
4.6	Are the result forms distributed at least to 2 party agents using lottery? Details:	

Please write your comments on other issues such as (provide details):

5. Minority

6. Women Participation

7. Incidents and major irregularities

Annex:

List of Polling Station visited:

District

Village track/ Ward	Polling Center	Polling Station	Notes

9.3

Election Day Observation Checklist

Election Day Observation Checklist													
Observer's Name:		State/Region:		District:									
Observer's Code:				Township:									
		Villages/Neighborhoods visited:		Date:									
Instructions													
Read the questions carefully. Put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box. If you cannot answer the question, or it is not relevant, leave it blank. If violations or irregularities occurred, please briefly explain them in the comment section on the back of the form.													
Environment		PS No.		PS No.		PS No.		PS No.		PS No.		Total	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Are there roadblocks or groups of men on the roads or near villages blocking access to the center?													
Are there individuals inside or near the polling center trying to influence the way people vote?													
Is anyone near the center recording the names of voters?													
Is the polling center in a neutral location?													
Have any vote-buying activities been reported or observed?													
Before Opening		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Is the polling station located at the place determined by EC?													
Does the polling station provide proper access for female and male voters?													
Was the polling station set up to ensure the secrecy of the ballot marking process?													
Are all essential materials/documents (ballots, ink, forms, etc.) available?													
Is the polling station organized in accordance with the procedure spelled out by the EC?													
Did the polling station open on time?													
Polling Process		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Are any agents of the candidates present at the polling station?													

Overall Assessment of the Polling Process

Instructions for this Section: Put a tick (✓) next to the statement that best describes your assessment of the election environment and polling process for the area you observed. If your response is “poor” or “very poor”, please provide further explanation in the comment section.

Very Good – no incidents or irregularities were observed.

Good – a few incidents or irregularities were observed that had no significant effect on the integrity of the process.

Average – many incidents or irregularities were observed that had no significant effect on the integrity of the process.

Poor - incidents or irregularities were observed that could have significantly affected the integrity of the process.

Very Poor - incidents or irregularities occurred which so affected the integrity of the process as to render the results from one or more polling stations meaningless.

Comments

Instruction for this Section: In the box below, give details of any violations, unusual occurrences, or irregularities that occurred at your polling center. If more space is required attach additional sheets of paper to the report form.

9.4

Observation Checklist for the Centralized Counting Process

Observation Checklist for the Centralized Counting Process		
Observer's Name:	State/Region:	Township:
Signature:	District(s):	Date:
<p>Instructions: Read the questions carefully. Put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box. If you cannot answer the question, or it is not relevant, leave it blank. If violations or irregularities occurred, please briefly explain them in the comment section on the back of the form.</p>		

1. Security and Transparency of the Process		Yes/No
1.1	Were observers and candidate agents allowed to accompany the ballots to the Provincial Counting Center?	
1.2	Were the ballots stored securely prior to the counting and each night during the count?	
1.3	Were both domestic observers and candidate agents present during the count?	
1.4	Were observers and candidate agents able to observe the entire counting process?	
1.5	Was there anybody without proper authority allowed in the sub-district Counting Center?	
2. Counting Process		Yes/No
2.1	Were any ballot boxes or other materials were missing?	
2.2	Were the seals on the ballot boxes unbroken before the counting began?	
2.3	Were the ballots properly mixed before counting?	
2.4	Did the total number of ballots equal the sum of voters who cast ballots according to the voter lists?	
2.5	Were invalid ballots and valid ballots assessed accurately and to a consistent standard?	
2.6	Were all pages of the ballot booklets viewed to ensure that no other mark was present?	
2.7	Were the votes for candidates accurately recorded?	

2.8	Were agents and observers allowed to independently record the election results?	
2.9	Were any objections or complaints lodged during the process (if yes, please provide details)?	
3. Overall Assessment of the Counting Process		
<p><u>Instructions for this Section:</u> Put a tick (✓) next to the statement that best describes your assessment of the election environment and polling process for the area you observed. If your response is “poor” or “very poor”, please provide further explanation in the comment section.</p>		
	Very Good – no incidents or irregularities were observed.	
	Good – a few incidents or irregularities were observed that had no significant effect on the integrity of the process.	
	Average – many incidents or irregularities were observed that had no significant effect on the integrity of the process.	
	Poor - incidents or irregularities were observed that could have significantly affected the integrity of the process.	
	Very Poor - incidents or irregularities occurred which so affected the integrity of the process as to render the results from one or more polling stations meaningless.	
Comments		
<p><u>Instruction for this Section:</u> In the box below, give details of any violations, unusual occurrences, or irregularities that occurred at your polling center. If more space is required attach additional sheets of paper to the report form.</p>		



ASIAN ELECTORAL STAKEHOLDER FORUM

Endorsing the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections

Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections

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Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections

Preamble

1. The holding of periodic, genuine, free, and fair elections based on secret ballots and universal suffrage is the true expression of the sovereignty of the people. Free and fair elections are a precondition of democracy and they promote social, political and economic development.
2. Asia is a big continent, with vast geography, a wide variety of political systems, and great human diversity. This Declaration has been drafted with the participation of election stakeholders from across East Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia.
3. The Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections recognizes and reaffirms the rights and principles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Universal Declaration on Democracy.
4. These rights and freedoms are universal and they apply fully and equally in Asia.
5. The principles for ensuring free and fair elections are also universal. The Declaration herein acknowledges and endorses the International Parliamentary Union's Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections, and reaffirms its pertinence in Asia.
6. While each country in Asia has its own unique set of challenges with regard to elections, the articles of the Declaration are meant to highlight the most pressing and the most common electoral concerns in Asian countries. Despite what are at times vast differences, there are also elements of shared history, cultural heritage, religious tradition and social and political development that bind the continent, or at least parts of it, together. With its elements of commonality, it is possible to identify a distinct set of challenges with regard to the holding of free and fair elections in Asia.
7. The objective of the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections is to identify the most significant and widespread barriers to free and fair elections in Asia and strengthen the resolve of the Asian people to address them by involving all relevant national, regional and international stakeholders.
8. The issues and challenges discussed in this Declaration do not attempt to be comprehensive. The Bangkok Declaration is not a catalogue of principles for the conduct of free and fair elections, nor is it a declaration of democratic rights and freedoms. It is a statement of resolution by the Asian electoral community and other stakeholders to work collectively in their respective spheres to overcome some of their shared challenges, and it is intended to be an organic document.
9. While this document is non-binding, the signatories to this Declaration nevertheless recognize and resolve to address, where they exist in their respective countries, the electoral challenges discussed.

Section I: Pre-Election Period

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Article 1 – EMB Independence

1. The fearless independence of election management bodies (EMB) must be guaranteed by a state's Constitution and other legal frameworks.
2. The appointment of EMB members should be fully transparent and depoliticized. EMB members should be removable only for a cause defined clearly in law.
3. Secretariat staff must be able to perform their functions free of outside interference.
4. Fiscal autonomy is a prerequisite for the independence of an EMB. Relevant budget making bodies should ensure that EMBs are provided with a stable, adequate and timely source of funding that allows them to fulfill their mandates effectively and independently over the course of the election cycle.

Article 2 – Universal Franchise

1. Prohibiting certain groups of people from voting erodes the legitimacy of elections as the true expression of the people. Electoral laws must consider that universal franchise is upheld in accordance with each country's context.
2. Citizens of voting age must be guaranteed the right to vote, regardless of their religious, ethnic or social status.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Article 3 – Access to Voter Information

1. Voter education is necessary to allow voters to make informed choices and participate fully in elections. Lack of access to voter education can lead to disenchantment with the electoral system and limits the ability of citizens to exercise their rights to free expression, peaceful assembly and free association. EMBs and other stakeholders must ensure that voter education is widespread, inclusive and accessible.
2. EMBs and other stakeholders must ensure that appropriate voter education is accessible to all election stakeholders, including those persons who cannot read, those who speak minority languages and those who are underprivileged or often underrepresented in the political process.
3. EMBs and other state entities must share the responsibility for conducting voter and civic education that lasts throughout the electoral cycle. Similarly, civil society, political parties and candidates, and other stakeholders should contribute to this effort.

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Article 4 – Training of Election Officials

1. A lack of adequate training for election officials and polling station workers can create problems at every stage of the electoral cycle, from poorly prepared voter lists to mistakes in the vote counting process. EMBs must ensure that election staff are provided with appropriate, updated training that is thorough and of high quality.
2. The training provided to election officials and polling station workers should cultivate a culture of integrity, transparency and accountability and equip them with a thorough understanding of election rules and procedures, inform them of their roles and responsibilities, and nurture an attitude of professionalism and civic responsibility.
3. Although election technology can be highly beneficial, it can also lead to unintentional errors or vote manipulation when not properly understood and used by election staff. Especially when new election technology is introduced, EMBs must ensure that staff are fully trained and knowledgeable about how to operate it properly.

PREPARATION OF THE VOTER LIST

Article 5 – Facilitating Voter Registration

1. In countries with active voter registration systems, barriers to voter registration, including the type and availability of documents required for registration, the number and location of registration centers, confusing and lengthy multi-step processes, and restrictive voter registration calendars, can all prevent eligible citizens from being added to the voter list. EMBs should promote the highest possible rate of registration by conducting voter registration in a way that is inclusive, convenient, and accessible to all.
2. Where active registration is required, if the window for registration is set too early in the electoral cycle, when interest and understanding is low, there is the risk that people will miss the deadline. EMBs should ensure that voters understand the deadline for registration and that there is sufficient time to register all potential voters.

Article 6 – Accuracy of the Voter List

1. Inaccuracies in the voter list, including errors of both inclusion and exclusion, seriously undermine the legitimacy of elections and public confidence in the electoral process. The EMB or other body responsible for the list should strive to maintain a voter list that is complete, current and accurate.
2. Problems with the voter list such as multiple registrants, dead people, children and underage voters, fictitious names, non-residents and missing names are all too common. The accuracy of the voter list should be maintained using a rigorous and transparent auditing system which includes pre-election checking and updating, updates based on proper objections of voters, and a post-election evaluation.

Section II: Election Period

ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

Article 7 – Oversight for Campaign Finance

1. Fair elections demand that there be adequate oversight of campaign finance. Governments and lawmakers must ensure that there exists a rigorous legal framework that fairly regulates political donations and campaign expenditures and allows for transparency of donations and expenditures.
2. Even where strong laws exist to oversee campaign finance, implementation can be lax, partial or ineffective. EMBs and governments must ensure that the laws are fully and fairly implemented, monitored and enforced. It is essential that violators be punished for their actions in accordance with the law.

Article 8 – Vote Buying

1. Vote buying is the most blatant, and in some countries among the most common, form of election fraud. It is a crime in most countries in Asia, and countries must devote the necessary resources to prevent, monitor, investigate and punish it.
2. Increasingly sophisticated and discreet methods of vote buying make it difficult for anti-vote buying initiatives to succeed. Political determination and strong public support is essential for success.
3. Initiatives to combat vote buying must include rigorous voter education campaigns, strict oversight of campaign finance, thorough investigations of alleged vote buying, and prosecution of offenders conducted without exception.

Article 9 – Impartial Coverage by the Media

1. Using state-run media to provide favorable coverage to the ruling party can seriously tilt the election playing field and destroy confidence in the legitimacy of the electoral process. State media should provide equitable space and time to all political parties and candidates and be fair in their coverage of opposition parties.
2. In a democracy, it is the media's civic and moral duty to act as a fair observer of public life. Private media should strive to provide fair-minded coverage and analysis throughout the electoral cycle.

Article 10 – Election Violence

1. A peaceful election environment is a necessary pre-requisite for legitimate elections. Used at any point throughout the election cycle, physical force, threats and intimidation seriously undermine the quality and legitimacy of elections. Election-related threats or violence must be urgently dealt with using all necessary social, political and legal actions.
2. Violence can only be prevented if the causes are first determined and the warning signs are recognized as they appear. Efforts to pre-empt election-related violence should begin early and tackle both the causes and the symptoms of violence.

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Article 11 – Use of Government Resources

1. When government resources are used to promote political interests during an election, the campaign process cannot be fair and the legitimacy of the result is called into question. Electoral laws must prohibit the unfair use of government resources for partisan political purposes at any time.
2. By themselves, laws against the misuse of government resources during an election are not enough. Governments must ensure that compliance is monitored, the law is enforced, and offenders are prosecuted.

Article 12 – Codes of Conduct

1. Codes of conduct are valuable tools in promoting fair and transparent electoral campaigns. They can take the form of broad guidelines for all electoral stakeholders to follow, or they can be focused on the activities of a particular group such as the media, political parties, or election observers. Codes of conduct should be used to demonstrate the appropriate roles and responsibilities of the various election stakeholders in a free and fair election.
2. Without proper awareness and adherence, codes of conduct are of no use. Thorough measures should be employed to educate election stakeholders about codes of conduct and persuade them of the need to follow them.
3. Compliance with codes of conduct should be monitored and unethical behavior should be exposed. Where a violation of a code of conduct constitutes a breach of electoral law, it must be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Article 13 – Military and Police Interference

1. With their power, organization and resources, security forces that act in a partisan manner are likely to do irreversible damage to the quality of an election and to the perceived legitimacy of the winning candidates. Strong measures are required to ensure that security forces remain strictly impartial and non-partisan.
2. Interference can be direct, as in the case of intimidation, or less direct, as in the case of personnel being used to support campaigns or senior officers endorsing candidates. Military and police forces should remain entirely neutral at all times, and even subtle forms of interference should be investigated and prosecuted.

VOTING OPERATIONS AND ELECTION DAY

Article 14 – Polling Station Management

1. Even when it is entirely unintentional, mismanagement at the polling station has the potential to deny people their democratic rights and skew the results of an election. The most common problem is a lack of training, so EMBs should ensure that polling station staff are thoroughly trained on the layout, the rules, and the procedures that must be followed in order to ensure a fair election. Multi-sectoral efforts and support should be encouraged for the improvement of polling station management.
2. Even when polling station staff are well prepared for the task, if they do not receive the proper logistical support, they are unable to do their jobs properly. EMBs should ensure that polling station staff receive voting materials and other resources that are complete, authentic, and on time.

Article 15 – Enfranchising Minorities, Marginalized People and Persons with Disabilities

1. Certain groups of people face a heightened risk of being disenfranchised. In different ways, minorities, marginalized people and others facing particular challenges, including internally displaced persons (IDP), internal migrants, stateless people, homeless people and persons with disabilities, are at risk of being dispossessed of their right to vote by a number of systemic barriers. EMBs and other stakeholders should take affirmative measures to encourage the full participation of minorities, marginalized people and persons with disabilities.
2. For minority groups that live in remote locations, such as in mountains, forests or islands, the nearest registration center or polling station can be very far away, and the costs of travelling long distances and forgoing work can be enough to prevent potential voters from engaging in the election process. Minority groups can also suffer from lack of access to voter education, either because of their remoteness, a lack of access to media, or because campaigns are often not conducted in their native language. Efforts must be made to guarantee that minority groups can participate fully in the election process by ensuring that they have access to registration centers, polling stations, and voter education.
3. Since IDPs have often lost their identification cards and registration documents along with their registered addresses, they can have particular difficulty in exercising their right to vote. Internal migrants can face similar barriers when they are not readily able to register in their new place of residence. In both cases, governments must ensure that people are empowered to vote in their new locations by issuing new identification documents, updating the voter lists, and then conducting thorough voter education campaigns to inform people of their right to vote.
4. Persons with physical, sensory or intellectual disabilities can face a distinct set of barriers including lack of access to voter education, inaccessible registration centers and polling stations, and voting materials and procedures in inaccessible formats. Persons with disabilities encounter unique barriers as voter education must be in accessible formats such as sign language, Braille and large print. Persons with disabilities also encounter barriers to securing identification cards due to discrimination and lack of accessible information. Every citizen has the right to vote, and accommodations must be made for all persons with disabilities, including ensuring that the election law does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. Planning and budget should be allocated

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by EMBs for voter education, voter registration, casting a ballot at the polling station in secret, and, where it is authorized, advance voting and mobile ballot boxes.

Article 16 – Voters Living Abroad

1. Many Asian countries have large numbers of citizens living outside of the country that nevertheless play an important role in the politics and the economy of their home country. Despite this, citizens living abroad often do not have the chance to vote due to the cost or complexity of overseas voting systems.
2. Where the financial and technical resources exist, countries should strive to allow citizens to vote from abroad with as little difficulty and inconvenience as possible. Opportunities to vote from abroad should be expanded wherever feasible.

Article 17 – Participation of Women

1. In many countries, women are still disadvantaged in the electoral process. Cultural practices, an unfair playing field or running for office in a male dominated area all tend to disadvantage women. EMBs and other stakeholders must ensure that election laws do not disadvantage women. Rather, they should take positive action to encourage women to participate fully in the electoral process.
2. According to local custom in some places, women are expected to vote the way that their husbands or male elders tell them to. In some cases, male heads of household are even permitted to cast votes on behalf of their wives and family. Using voter education, training for polling station staff and any other means available to them, EMBs must ensure that all women are able to exercise their democratic right to vote according to their own choices.

Article 18 – Accreditation of Observers

1. Transparency is a hallmark of truly democratic elections. Domestic and international election observers can enhance the credibility and legitimacy of an election. Well-trained, dedicated and non-partisan election observers are a key tool for promoting the quality and integrity of the entire electoral process, and accreditation allows them to function more effectively. EMBs, subject to their prevailing laws, should ensure that all well-trained and non-partisan observer groups are permitted to observe all stages of election processes including observing the entire polling and counting processes at any polling station.
2. When accreditation is given inconsistently or only at the last minute, it is difficult for election observation groups to properly conduct the complex planning required for a mission to observe the pre-election process as well as the election day and post-election activities. EMBs should set out clear rules for timely accreditation of domestic and international observers and apply them fairly and consistently.

Article 19 – Effective and Professional Observers

1. If election observation organizations lack the objectivity, professionalism, or adequate resources necessary to operate independently and effectively, their contribution to the transparency and

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legitimacy of the election will suffer. Election observation organizations should therefore work to ensure that all observers deployed are well-trained, independent, and objective and that they have adequate capacity to perform their duties in conformity with internationally accepted standards.

2. Observers that have adequate training, capacity, independence and objectivity encourage the conduct of free and fair elections. However, unfit observers may fail to perform their responsibilities satisfactorily, and, moreover, may even distort the public's perception of elections. While being welcoming of legitimate election observers, EMBs should insist on high standards such as those declared by the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM) in the *Declaration of Global Principles For Non-Partisan Election Observation And Monitoring By Citizen Organizations* for the domestic and international election observation organizations they accredit.

Article 20 – Printing, Counting, Consolidating, Transporting and Storing Ballots

1. Management of the vote counting process is one of the most critical functions during an election, and a fair and open process is an absolute prerequisite for a legitimate election. The process of printing, counting, consolidating, transporting and storing ballots, both before and after voting, must be fully transparent to the public, political party agents and election observers.
2. The transparency of vote counting and consolidation is particularly essential, and without it, the final vote count can be manipulated. Observation groups and political parties should ensure that observers are trained and deployed to observe these processes, and EMBs must ensure that they are given the access to do so.

Section III: Complaints and Electoral Dispute Resolution

Article 21 – Electoral Complaint System

1. An effective electoral complaint system is an essential tool for fighting fraud and mismanagement at each stage of the electoral cycle. EMBs must ensure that the process for filing a complaint is clearly spelled out in advance of elections as well as readily accessible to, and known by, the public. The system must be managed fairly, transparently, and in a way that encourages those with complaints to come forward.
2. When election stakeholders have insufficient information about how to file electoral complaints, they are effectively excluded from the electoral complaint and oversight process. EMBs should use voter education to ensure that every election stakeholder understands the electoral complaint process.

Article 22 – Timely and Impartial Dispute Investigation and Resolution

1. A fair and neutral system of dispute resolution is critical for the integrity of an election. When mechanisms for handling disputes are deficient, citizens and candidates feel that their voices are not being heard and lose confidence in the election process and its results. Where dispute resolution bodies are subject to political influence or corruption, the dispute resolution process can be manipulated. Governments must ensure that the bodies with the responsibility to investigate and

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make decisions on electoral disputes are independent, impartial, professional and sufficiently financed.

2. Undue delays in the resolution of cases can be used to manipulate the dispute resolution process and deny the application of justice. Whether delays are due to insufficient capacity, or whether they are politically influenced, they undermine the legitimacy of the entire dispute resolution process. Within the framework of the electoral cycle, reasonable time limits should be set for the resolution of cases to avoid unnecessary delays. These time limits must be rigorously but fairly enforced.

Call to Action

1. We therefore call upon the people of Asia, as well as their governments, election management bodies, political parties, candidates, civil society organizations, observer groups, the media and all other election stakeholders to strengthen their commitment to addressing these common challenges. As members of the Asian electoral community, we call upon all election stakeholders in Asia to work together to build and ensure free and fair elections across the region.
2. The issues and challenges included in this Declaration are neither comprehensive nor ubiquitous, as each country in Asia has its own unique set of challenges with regard to elections. We nevertheless urge the electoral community in each country to work towards improvement by focusing attention on those articles that are relevant in their own contexts.
3. Furthermore, with such great diversity in Asia, not all issues can be resolved in the same way. We call upon the electoral community in each country to use as a foundation the universal principles referenced in this Declaration and documented in other instruments such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections. We urge them to utilize and benefit from the rich electoral experience found across Asia.
4. But we are ever cognizant of the fact that each country's electoral challenges exist within its own unique and complex context. Countries can benefit most from this Declaration by recognizing that as we resolve to address our common challenges as members of the Asian electoral community, the solutions must still fit the unique nature of country-specific problems.

We believe that free, fair, transparent, peaceful and democratic elections are possible in all countries across Asia. As members of the Asian electoral community, we hereby resolve to work towards making this a reality.

Endorsing Groups/Individuals

- 1) KIPP Indonesia - Independent Election Monitoring Committee of Indonesia
- 2) JPPR Indonesia - The People's Voter Education Network
- 3) Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia (Bawaslu Indonesia)
- 4) Women Caucus for Politic (Timor-Leste)
- 5) National Election Monitoring Alliance (NEMA) Nepal
- 6) Open Forum for Democracy Foundation (PollWatch) Thailand
- 7) Center for Korean Women and Politic (CKWP)
- 8) The National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL)
- 9) Women Social Progress (Mongolia)
- 10) Institute for Political and Electoral Reform (IPER)
- 11) CNE (Commission National on Elections), Timor-Leste
- 12) General Election Commission of Mongolia (GEC)
- 13) Human Security Alliance (Thailand)
- 14) Perludem (Perhimpunan untuk Pemilu dan demokrasi), Indonesia
- 15) Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) Bangladesh
- 16) National Election Observation Committee (NEOC) Nepal
- 17) Neutral and Impartial Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (NICFEC)
- 18) The Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL)
- 19) Odhikar, Bangladesh
- 20) Free and Fair Election Network [FAFEN], Pakistan
- 21) People's Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL), Sri Lanka
- 22) Indonesian National Election Commission, Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU)
- 23) Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan, FEFA, Afghanistan
- 24) Pusat KOMAS, Popular Communications For Human Rights in Malaysia
- 25) Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV, Philippines)
- 26) The Commission on Elections (COMELEC, Philippines)
- 27) AGENDA General Election Network for Disability Access
- 28) Citizen Congress Watch (CCW, Taiwan)
- 29) LOKNITI Programme for Comparative Democracy
- 30) InterBand (Japan)
- 31) Technical Secretariat for Election Administration (STAE), Timor-Leste

Observing Organizations

- 32) IFE (Instituto Federal Electoral) Mexico
- 33) High National Election Commission - Libya

Indicators of Democratic Elections

Asian Electoral Stakeholder Forum II

Dili, Timor-Leste

18 & 19 March 2015

Preamble

Recognizing that the holding of periodic, free, and fair elections based on secret ballots and universal suffrage is the true expression of the sovereignty of the people;

Adhering to the principles enshrined in the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections and to the rights and principles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Universal Declaration on Democracy;

Recognizing that the adoption of common indicators respecting democratic elections can help measure democratic progress and show the strengths and areas of needed improvement of each nation's electoral processes;

Now, therefore, we, Asian electoral stakeholders from both government and civil society gathered together at the 2nd Asian Electoral Stakeholders Forum on 18 & 19 March 2015 in Dili, Timor-Leste, commit and agree to utilize the following Indicators of Democratic Elections:

Indicators of Democratic Elections

I. Legal Framework

- a. The overall legal framework provides for universal suffrage and guarantees basic freedoms.
- b. The legal framework is consistent with international human rights instruments such as the UDHR and the ICCPR.
- c. The legal framework provides for the regularity of elections, with intervals clearly defined and set out in law.
- d. The legal framework provides for an inclusive process that is fair to all people of the nation without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
- e. The laws governing the conduct of elections are applied impartially and without discrimination.
- f. There is respect for the rule of law by all election stakeholders.

II. Level Playing Field

a. Fair Constituency Delimitation

1. Electoral constituency boundaries are drawn on the basis of the size of the population and geographic area.

b. Participation of Political Parties and Candidates

1. Requirements for political party and candidate registration are reasonable and clear.
2. Regulations for political party and candidate registration are non-discriminatory.
3. There are no legal candidate registration requirements which discriminate against persons as candidates on the basis of gender, sex, race, religion, or political views.
4. Independent candidates are allowed to compete in elections.

c. Free and Fair Campaigning

1. All political parties and candidates can campaign freely without fear of intimidation or threats of violence.
2. A code of conduct is signed by political parties and other stakeholders to commit to the prevention of election conflict and violence.
3. There is no abuse of government resources in order to advantage or disadvantage any political party or candidate.
4. Political parties and candidates are required to make detailed, timely disclosures of their campaign contributions and expenditures.
5. Appropriate sanctions are in place for violations by political parties and candidates.

d. Fair Coverage of Media

1. The media are able to freely cover campaigns and other election activities.
2. The media, both public and private, are impartial in their programming, reporting on and covering all phases of the electoral process.

III. **Professional Electoral Management Body (EMB)**

a. EMB as a Democratic Institution that is Independent and Impartial

1. Appointment of EMB officials is based on a just, impartial and transparent process.
2. All EMB officials and staff are professional, independent and impartial.
3. The EMB maintains transparency in the entire electoral process.
4. EMB staff is equipped with sufficient training and adequate resources to discharge their duties effectively and impartially without favoring or disfavoring any particular political party or candidate.

b. Efficient, Transparent Pre-election Preparations

1. The voter registration list is prepared in a manner free from fraud.
2. The voter registration list is available for inspection by interested groups.
3. Mechanisms to correct errors on the voter registration list are available in advance of election day.
4. Polling places are conveniently located for voters.
5. Representatives of political parties, candidates, and the public are permitted to reasonably observe the various aspects of election preparation and conduct of polls.

c. Well-organized Election Day, Free from Fraud

1. All voters are allowed to cast their votes without undue difficulty.
2. The process of balloting is implemented efficiently, transparently, without discrimination and in accordance with applicable laws.
3. The secrecy of each voter's choices is assured.

d. There is Timely Reporting of Election Results

1. Election results are reported promptly without undue delay.

IV. **Inclusive and Meaningful Participation of Citizens**

- a. The legal framework clearly spells out the criteria of citizens eligible to vote.
- b. Any disqualifications (e.g., felony conviction, severely impaired mental faculties) for registering should be reasonable, fair and implemented without discrimination.
- c. The actual process of voter registration is accessible to all eligible persons without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion, wealth, etc.
- d. Voter education is sufficient to enable voters to make informed decisions about candidates and political parties.
- e. Women are encouraged to participate in elections as voters and as candidates.
- f. All vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other minorities are encouraged to participate in the electoral process.
- g. Local absentee voting mechanisms are provided for voters who cannot cast ballots in their assigned polling station on election day.

V. **Effective, Efficient, and Impartial Electoral Justice & Electoral Dispute Resolution**

- a. The applicable laws provide a process for resolving disputes respecting all aspects of the electoral process.
- b. The process of resolving disputes is done in an impartial, transparent, independent and timely manner consistent with respect for the rule of law.

Electoral Transparency: Eight Keys to Integrity

Asian Electoral Stakeholder Forum III

Kuta, Bali, Indonesia

August 23 – 24, 2016

Preamble

Reaffirming that the holding of periodic, free, and fair elections based on secret ballots and universal suffrage is the true expression of the sovereignty of the people;

Adhering to the principles enshrined in the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections and to the rights and principles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Universal Declaration on Democracy;

Committed to strengthening utilization of the Indicators of Democratic Elections adopted at the 2nd Asian Electoral Stakeholders Forum held in Dili, Timor-Lest on March 18-19, 2015;

Recognizing that confidence in electoral integrity depends on the transparency of all aspects of the electoral process and that both election management bodies and civil society have important roles to play in assuring electoral integrity. While also considering the diversity and uniqueness of the situations and contexts of every country and geographical realm;

Now, therefore, we, Asian electoral stakeholders representing both election management bodies (EMBs) and civil society organizations (CSOs), resolve to enhance electoral integrity by working together in a spirit of cooperation between EMBs and CSOs to implement each of the Eight Keys to Integrity:

Transparent EMB's: The laws and procedures for appointment of EMB members and the operation of EMBs must be clearly written. The public must be able to observe all aspects of EMB operations.

Transparent campaign fundraising: Laws and regulations must require full and timely disclosure of the sources of all monies raised by candidates, political parties and independent groups seeking to influence the outcomes of referenda and/or electoral campaigns for office.

Transparent campaign spending: Laws and regulations must require full and timely disclosure of the use of all monies raised by candidates, political parties and independent groups seeking to influence the outcomes of campaigns for political office and/or referenda.

Transparent public access to campaign finances: The public must have full internet access to EMB files containing campaign finance data, with all files maintained in a form which can be readily analyzed by any member of the public with basic computer skills.

Transparent voter registration: The process by which the voter list is compiled, checked, updated and maintained must be open to observation by the public. Full internet access to the voter registration list, including corrections on a real-time basis, must be guaranteed to the public.

Transparent observation: National and international election observers must be free to observe all parts of the election process, including but not limited to, advance voting, polling on election day, vote tabulation, and all other functions discussed in the “Eight Keys to Integrity”.

Transparent election results: An announcement at each polling station of the results of the voting at that polling station must be made on the same day that voting is held, followed by prompt posting of all results on the EMB's web site.

Transparent election complaint process: There must be widespread dissemination of the procedures for filing complaints of election violations, followed by the ability of the public to access complaints shortly after they are filed and to be apprised promptly of the disposition of each complaint.

Adopted at the 3rd Asian Electoral Stakeholder Forum on August 23-24, 2016 held at Kuta in Bali, Indonesia.

Colombo Pledge to Promote and Defend Electoral Democracy in Asia



August 28, 2018

The Colombo Pledge to Promote and Defend Electoral Democracy in Asia

We, the election stakeholders convening today at the fourth Asian Electoral Stakeholders Forum (AESF IV), reaffirm our resolute commitment and dedication to secure democratic elections for everyone in Asia. We believe it is our duty to act assertively on electoral issues and do everything in our power to achieve universal suffrage and peaceful political processes in our respective countries. Democratic elections, held periodically through a secret ballot, and accompanied by vibrant political competition, are the foundation of popular sovereignty, and a genuine necessity for equitable social, political and economic development.

Despite the progress achieved in some countries since the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration for Free and Fair Elections (2012), the Dili Indicators of Democratic Elections (2015) and the Bali Commitment to Electoral Transparency and Integrity (2016), we recognize that we confront deteriorating democratic conditions across Asia. We feel the need to address the state of implementation of these and other global instruments, in a civic space less favorable to the development of democratic elections than at any time since the first Asian Electoral Stakeholders Forum was held.

Through this document, we emphasize the importance of democracies that are inclusively developed. As electoral stakeholders, we recognize everyone's responsibility in the creation of credible electoral systems, and wish to emphasize examples of good practices that should be nurtured and replicated broadly to achieve more democratic standards of governance in the region. In accordance with the discussions that have taken place at this forum, we hereby identify particular current issues that, given recent developments, we feel need to be highlighted and are making recommendations to be implemented by electoral stakeholders in order to address them.

Electoral Integrity, Credibility and Individual Freedoms

We commit to uphold the norms and principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections, and other international human rights instruments in formulating and implementing election policies and conducting electoral assessments. We believe that genuine democracy is not measured solely on the orderliness of the election process, but most importantly on the freedom which every voter enjoys. We will pursue to the best of our abilities means to address and ultimately eradicate vote buying, violence, threats, intimidation, and all forms of undue influence that undermine the will of the voter. We will support independent and accountable election management bodies and other stakeholders in their efforts to protect and serve the interest of the voters.

We express our belief in the importance of dissent and criticism in building democracies, and thus pledge to create space for constructive dialogue among all stakeholders. Civil society and media should be afforded autonomy as they perform their duties to the society. Finally, we commit to catalyzing and nurturing a culture of civic engagement to create and promote sustainable democracies in Asia and beyond. We will strive to protect the interests and rights of future generations.

Open, Balanced and Accurate Information

Information is the backbone of transparency. Transparency is the core of a healthy election. A healthy election is the heart of democracy. We call on all election stakeholders to promote, embody and implement, the right to information, with a particular focus on proactive disclosure of election information and data on a timely basis. Such information must be accessible for all citizens.

We, election stakeholders, resolve to collaborate in enhancing and strengthening existing avenues for impartial and inclusive civic and voter education, especially during election periods. Furthermore, we urge governments to empower institutions and we resolve to support mechanisms to counter the spread of misinformation, disinformation, hate speech, intolerance and violation of codes of conduct. Voters have the right to be presented with facts and figures, and parties and candidates have the right to present their programs, enabling voters to make informed decisions. While doing so, governments must also refrain from resorting to the use of censorship, or policies which ultimately have the effect of self-censorship. Freedom of the media must be ensured in order for a variety of opinions to be expressed and so that healthy political debates can take place.

We recognize the important role of election observation as a tool to enhance accountability and propagate democratic values, when done properly. Thus, we will collectively pursue means to promote genuine election monitoring and discourage the spread of fake election observation that do not adhere to international and regional standards for election observation.

Efficient Electoral Justice and Legal Framework

As election stakeholders, we consider transparency as the hallmark of an electoral process with integrity, and thus call for a framework of checks and balances among stakeholders concerned with election management to promote, instill, and allocate accountability. All legal systems should ensure fair competition, and reconsider laws which have the effect of unreasonably limiting or restricting electoral participation. We also wish to draw attention to the lack of effective political finance regulations and enforcement, which are common weaknesses of most Asian elections.

We advocate for effective electoral justice and timely conflict resolution throughout the electoral cycle. We urge governments to ensure the proportionality of sanctions for candidate and party infractions, where banning from participation and dissolution of entities should only be administered as a final resort. We encourage all states to utilize codes of conduct and accountability standards to foster trust in the electoral process.

Democratic Inclusion of Vulnerable Populations

We, as election stakeholders, resolve to develop joint mechanisms to encourage inclusive and active participation of all vulnerable groups in planning, education, policy making, legal reform, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and data disaggregation of all aspects of the electoral process. Emphasizing that suffrage and political rights are the distilled essence of our fundamental human rights, we call on all states to eradicate disenfranchisement of any segment of society, remove legal, informational and physical barriers, and enforce accessibility and affirmative measures on the right to vote and political participation.

We also acknowledge that the present sociopolitical structures and norms have the tendency to negatively impact political empowerment of women, preventing them from reaching their full potential as candidates, voters, election officials, or members of civil society and the media. Likewise, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, religious and caste minorities, youth, prisoners, internally displaced persons, refugees, and other vulnerable groups are subject to discrimination and exclusion. We resolve to

take these injustices head on, and pledge to involve individuals, vulnerable groups, and the organizations that represent them, in all our activities and advocacy to ensure they can equally and meaningfully participate and contribute to electoral processes.

Facing what can only be described as a rollback of democracy in Asia, we choose not to be pessimistic and resigned, but instead be future-oriented and hopeful. In the spirit of the Bangkok Declaration and subsequent documents adopted previously by the AESF, we renew today our call to all electoral stakeholders to join us, as we sign the present pledge and commit ourselves to addressing any and all challenges to democracy. We agree to take action, promote good electoral practices, and report our progress at the succeeding Asian Electoral Stakeholder Fora, which will pursue collaboration between stakeholders until all citizens of Asia enjoy unencumbered access to democratic elections.

Declaration of Global Principles for Non-Partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations

EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

**DECLARATION OF GLOBAL PRINCIPLES FOR NON-PARTISAN
ELECTION OBSERVATION AND MONITORING
BY CITIZEN ORGANIZATIONS**

AND

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR NON-PARTISAN CITIZEN ELECTION
OBSERVERS AND MONITORS**

**Commemorated 3 April 2012,
at the United Nations, New York**

**Initiated by
the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM)**

This document will not be distributed at the meeting. Please bring this copy.
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1. DECLARATION OF GLOBAL PRINCIPLES FOR NON-PARTISAN ELECTION OBSERVATION AND MONITORING BY CITIZEN ORGANIZATIONS

Preamble

Genuine democratic elections are the peoples' collective expression of sovereignty and an inalienable right of citizens. These precepts are recognized in national constitutions the world over and in international human rights instruments of the United Nations, regional intergovernmental organizations and other bodies.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 21 states that: "The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot or by equivalent free voting procedures." Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, a treaty among 165 countries at this date) states that: "Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 [that is, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status] and without unreasonable restrictions: ... To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;" The election related rights set forth and opportunities called for in those two articles are based on their explicit recognition that every citizen has the right to take part in government and public affairs, either directly or through freely chosen representatives.

Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations has emerged as one of the most tangible and significant dimensions of democratic development around the globe. In more than 90 countries on five continents over the last two decades, millions of citizens have joined non-partisan election observation and monitoring efforts to ensure electoral integrity and promote accountability in government and among political contestants. This has contributed to safeguarding genuine elections, mitigating potentials for conflict, and promoting accountability and democratic development.

Non-partisan observation and monitoring of elections by citizen organizations is part of participating in public affairs, which "relates to legislative, executive and administrative powers" and "covers all aspects of public administration, and the formulation and implementation of policy..." (UNHRC General Comment 25, paragraph 5.) Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations exercises the right of association that is central to the functioning of nongovernmental organizations, as well as the right to seek, receive and impart information that is vital to transparency and is included in the freedom of expression protected by articles 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ICCPR. Establishing an election process that is open to citizen examination is essential because citizens not only have the right to genuine elections, they have the right to know whether the election process provided an opportunity for free expression of the will of the electors and accurately recorded and honored the electors' will.

Non-partisan citizen election observers and monitors can be considered as specialized human rights defenders focused on civil and political rights, which are central to achieving genuine elections. Genuine elections require respect for the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including association, peaceful assembly, expression, media freedom, movement, security of person, equal protection of the law for prospective voters and those seeking to be elected, as well as providing effective remedies when electoral related rights are violated.

These electoral related rights and freedoms, and related rule of law issues, are affected by a range of institutions and processes over a lengthy period of time that makes up an election cycle and are woven into the fabric of each country's political process and historical context. At the same time, elections allow citizens to aggregate their interests to demand that those seeking office address issues related to economic, social and cultural well being, as well as peace and security. Genuine elections therefore are not only a condition to establishing democratic governance; they are inseparable from broader democratic development.

With the exercise of rights comes responsibilities, and non-partisan domestic election observers and monitors have an ethical obligation to conduct their activities in a responsible manner. Various international publications and the charters of individual domestic non-partisan election observation and monitoring organizations and their cross-border networks emphasize that nonpartisanship requires impartiality, accuracy and professionalism.

Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations requires the highest ethical standards for impartiality and accuracy based on credible methodologies that incorporate best practices that are suitable to national conditions. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring seeks to enhance electoral integrity by deterring and exposing irregularities and fraud, deterring and mitigating potentials for election-related violence and by offering recommendations for improving electoral and political processes. It seeks to promote public confidence as the election process warrants and to promote citizen participation in government and public affairs through electoral processes that are free of proscribed discrimination and unreasonable restrictions.

Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations seeks to cooperate with election management bodies and other governmental authorities related to election processes and makes observations, assessments and findings based on the national legal framework and obligations concerning democratic elections that are set forth in international human rights instruments, as well as standards, principles and commitments presented in international and regional charters, conventions, declarations and other such documents.

The quality of an election process typically reflects the democratic character of governance leading to an election and can be an important indicator of the nature of government that results from an election. The skills and networks developed in non-partisan election observation and monitoring have allowed citizens across the globe not only to sustain their on-going electoral integrity activities, but also to strengthen and expand their monitoring, advocacy and accountability efforts to promote representative, transparent and accountable democratic governance.

Therefore:

Recognizing that non-partisan election observation and monitoring is a growing trend around the world, reaching thus far over 90 countries on five continents and mobilizing millions of citizens to participate in public affairs,

Acknowledging that non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations can be considered as a specialized form of human rights defending that focuses on civil and political rights, which are central to achieving genuine elections, the rule of law and democratic governance,

Noting that non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations can contribute significantly to deterring and mitigating potentials for election related violence, and

that activities by non-partisan election observation and monitoring organizations can contribute significantly to improving the democratic quality of legal frameworks for elections, the conduct of election processes and broader democratic development,

Appreciating that election management bodies and other government authorities have the crucial responsibility to organize genuine democratic elections, that political parties and candidates have a right to seek to be elected, that citizens have the right to vote and to participate fully in election and political processes and that non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations has a distinct role to play in the independent scrutiny of electoral processes,

Affirming that the conduct of non-partisan election observation and monitoring creates responsibilities to other citizens, including prospective voters, those seeking to be elected and those responsible for administering election processes and those charged with adjudicating electoral disputes,

Emphasizing that genuine democratic elections provide the means to resolve peacefully the competition for political power and provide the basis for citizens to express their will as to who shall have the authority to govern, as recognized in article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 25 of the ICCPR,

Appreciating that the United Nations Human Rights Committee (UNHRC) in General Comment 25, paragraphs 5, 8, and 20, has declared to the 165 state parties to the ICCPR that the right to participate in public affairs is a broad concept whereby citizens take part through public debate, dialogue and their capacity to organize themselves, and the Committee has affirmed that: “There should be independent scrutiny of the voting and counting processes ... so that electors have confidence....” that their elections are genuine,

Affirming that independent scrutiny of election administration, and the other processes surrounding elections, encompasses non-partisan observation and monitoring of elections by citizen organizations, which is distinct from judicial review and scrutiny by political parties, candidates or their agents,

Acknowledging that the charters, conventions, declarations and other instruments of regional intergovernmental organizations, as well as documents of nongovernmental organizations, also recognize the right to genuine democratic elections and that a number of instruments explicitly support non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations, including, for example, paragraph 8 of the OCSE's 1990 Copenhagen Document and paragraph 22 of the 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, and

Recognizing that many of the principles of non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations are common to those of international election observation set forth in the 2005 *Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation*, which has been endorsed as of this date by 35 intergovernmental and international nongovernmental organizations and which was recognized with appreciation by the United Nations General Assembly (A/Res/64/155; 8 March 2010), and therefore adopting paragraphs 1 through 3 of that declaration as paragraphs 1 through 3 of this declaration and otherwise noting harmony between the two declarations,

The organizations endorsing this Declaration of Global Principles for Non-partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations and the accompanying Code of Conduct for Non-partisan Citizen Election Observers and Monitors hereby join to declare:

Genuine Democratic Elections

1. Genuine democratic elections are an expression of sovereignty, which belongs to the people of a country, the free expression of whose will provides the basis for the authority and legitimacy of government. The rights of citizens to vote and to be elected at periodic, genuine democratic elections are internationally recognized human rights. Genuine democratic elections are central for maintaining peace and stability, and they provide the mandate for democratic governance.

2. In accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ICCPR and other international instruments, everyone has the right and must be provided with the opportunity to participate in the government and public affairs of his or her country, without any discrimination prohibited by international human rights principles and without any unreasonable restrictions. This right can be exercised directly, by participating in referenda, standing for elected office and by other means, or can be exercised through freely chosen representatives.

3. The will of the people of a country is the basis for the authority of government, and that will must be determined through genuine periodic elections, which guarantee the right and opportunity to vote freely and to be elected fairly through universal and equal suffrage by secret balloting or equivalent free voting procedures, the results of which are accurately counted, announced and respected. A significant number of rights and freedoms, processes, laws and institutions are therefore involved in achieving genuine democratic elections.

Non-partisan, Independent Scrutiny of Electoral Processes

4. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations is the mobilization of citizens in a politically neutral, impartial and non-discriminatory manner to exercise their right of participation in public affairs by witnessing and reporting on electoral developments through: independent, systematic and comprehensive evaluation of legal frameworks, institutions, processes and the political environment related to elections; impartial, accurate and timely analysis of findings; the characterization of the findings based on the highest ethical standards for impartiality and accuracy; the offering of appropriate recommendations for obtaining genuine democratic elections; and advocating for improvements in legal frameworks for elections, their implementation through electoral related administration and removal of impediments to full citizen participation in electoral and political processes.

5. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations is impartial towards all political parties, candidates and those in favor of or opposed to any issue or initiative presented in a referendum. It is politically neutral and concerned with electoral outcomes only in determining the degree to which they are the result of a genuinely democratic process and are reported transparently, accurately and in a timely manner.

6. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations seeks to work in cooperation with election management bodies, other governmental agencies and other electoral stakeholders and does not obstruct election processes or officials, electoral contestants or voters. Non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations should meet with electoral and other governmental authorities and other electoral stakeholders to seek, receive or provide information and to offer recommendations for improving electoral and political processes.

7. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations is independent of government, including electoral authorities, and is conducted for the benefit of the people of a country in order to promote and safeguard the right of citizens to

participate in government and public affairs directly or through freely chosen representatives elected in genuine democratic elections.

8. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring organizations should be transparent about their funding and must not accept funding from any source or upon any condition that creates a conflict of interest that would hinder the organization from conducting its monitoring activities in a nondiscriminatory, impartial, accurate and timely manner. No one should be allowed to be a non-partisan citizen election observer or monitor unless she or he is free from any political, economic or other conflicts of interest that would hinder that person from conducting her or his election observation and monitoring activities in a nondiscriminatory, impartial, accurate and timely manner.

9. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations gathers systematically when practicable and always evaluates impartially information concerning all elements of an electoral process, including factors that may affect the overall electoral environment. This may be done through comprehensive non-partisan observation and monitoring by one citizen organization, a coalition of organizations or coordinated efforts of organizations, and it may be done through the efforts of several organizations operating more or less independently of each other, including those that choose to examine a particular process or element of the election cycle through specialized nonpartisan monitoring techniques. In order to avoid confusion about observation and monitoring findings and unnecessary duplication of efforts, non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations should seek to achieve the highest degree of cooperation and potentials for coordination that are appropriate to the national circumstances.

10. The decision by citizen organizations to observe and/or monitor an election or any element of it does not indicate that the organizations either presume the election process to be credible or to lack credibility; non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations seeks to evaluate the process and its elements accurately, impartially and as systematically as practicable in order to properly characterize processes according to national legal requirements and applicable international obligations and commitments. Non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations should make every effort to ensure that their activities are not interpreted as legitimizing a clearly undemocratic electoral process, including making public statements to prevent such misinterpretations; this includes terminating observation and monitoring activities where necessary and stating publicly the basis for that action.

11. Organizations endorsing this Declaration recognize that substantial progress has been made internationally, including through regional organizations, international nongovernmental organizations and scholarly pursuits, in establishing standards, principles, obligations, commitments and best practices concerning genuine democratic elections; organizations endorsing this Declaration commit themselves to become familiar with and use such benchmarks to best inform their analysis, conclusions, characterizations and recommendations, and they pledge to be transparent concerning the benchmarks they use in their observation and monitoring activities.

12. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations includes the responsibility to issue regularly public reports, statements and releases that are accurate, impartial and timely and that present observations, analysis, findings and recommendations for improving electoral processes. When observation and monitoring is limited to one element or a limited number of elements of an election process, the related public statements should clearly state so. In addition to analyzing impartially reports of direct observations by non-partisan citizen election observers and monitors, non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations may draw upon credible evaluations of electoral processes conducted by other non-partisan citizen organizations, academics,

international organizations and similar sources; where such sources serve as a principal basis for a finding or conclusion the sources should be identified.

13. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations employs a variety of methodologies and techniques, depending on the aspect of the election process and/or electoral environment being evaluated, and strives to employ the best and most systematic methodologies and techniques, in accordance with established principles and suited to the national circumstances, in order to produce observations, findings, analysis and conclusions that are accurate, impartial and as timely as practicable.

14. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations may employ statistically based methodologies for evaluating the integrity of pre-election, post-election and election-day procedures, including verifying the accuracy of electoral results through methodologies often referred to as parallel vote tabulations (PVTs), quick counts or similar terms. Decisions about the timing of reports, statements and releases, concerning findings and conclusions based on such methodologies must carefully consider the credibility of observer reports, the sufficiency of the information received and the accuracy of analysis of the statistical data, as well as electoral rules concerning the timing of reports. Such reports should include information about statistical samples and margins of error of the findings.

15. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations can contribute significantly to deterring and mitigating potentials for election related violence and to improving legal frameworks for elections, the conduct of electoral and political processes and broader democratic development. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring organizations therefore have a responsibility, where practicable, to advocate for peaceful electoral and political processes, improvements in legal frameworks for elections and electoral administration, accountability in electoral and political processes, removal of barriers to electoral participation by women, youth, indigenous peoples and other marginalized populations, as well as to promote citizen participation in public affairs.

Processes Observed or Monitored and Conditions Required

16. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations employs in its best practice long-term observation and analysis that address all parts of the election cycle as well as the broader political context that affects the character and quality of elections. Where non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations can not examine every element of a given election process, they should consider the significance of pre-election and post-election factors and place election-day processes in the proper context of the election cycle as well as the related political environment. This is required in order not to over-emphasize election-day developments and thus potentially mischaracterize the nature of the election process.

17. The following are examples of elements of the electoral process that should be evaluated, though it may not be feasible to observe/monitor all of them in a specific election:

- a) the content and implementation of the legal framework, made up of the constitution, laws, treaty obligations and other international commitments, rules and regulations relating to elections;
- b) the impartiality, transparency and effectiveness of electoral administration and related governmental activities;
- c) the processes for appointing and retaining members of election management bodies;
- d) the delimitation of election district boundaries;
- e) the registration of political parties, candidates and referendum initiatives and their qualification for the ballot;

- f) the compliance of political parties with legal obligations and other requirements concerning matters such as selection of candidates, campaigning and upholding codes of conduct;
- g) the procedures relating to political party and candidate financing, campaign spending and oversight of both;
- h) the incidence of international interference in the electoral process, through proscribed financial contributions to electoral contestants, international media bias or other activities;
- i) the use of state resources in the electoral context, including their politically impartial applications and their improper use for the electoral advantage of particular political parties, candidates or supporters or opponents of referendum initiatives;
- j) the application of anti-corruption laws and other safeguards in the electoral context, including protections for “whistleblowers” who expose election related corruption;
- k) the conduct of security forces and civil servants in administrative matters, such as the issuance of permits and permissions for use of meeting places and locations for peaceful assemblies and campaign activities, such as rallies and marches, as well as the posting of campaign materials;
- l) the requirements and practices regarding access to the mass communications media for political parties, candidates and supporters or opponents of referendum initiatives;
- m) the requirements and practices concerning reporting by state controlled, public and private media about political parties, candidates and supporters or opponents of referendum initiatives, including monitoring the amount and quality of coverage of electoral contestants and coverage of issues that are pertinent to voter choices in elections or referendums;
- n) the ability of political parties, candidates and supporters and opponents of referendum initiatives to campaign freely for the support of prospective voters;
- o) the ability of prospective voters, including indigenous peoples and other traditionally marginalized populations, to seek and receive (including in minority languages) accurate and adequate information upon which to make electoral choices;
- p) the ability of eligible persons to register to vote and have their required information appear accurately on the voter registry and voter lists;
- q) the ability of prospective voters, those seeking to be elected and their supporters to be free of violence, intimidation, bribery and retaliation for their electoral choices, including whether effective and equal protection of the law is provided by police, other security forces, prosecutors and courts;
- r) the adequacy of voter education, particularly by state agencies, including among other things where, when, how and why to register and to vote, as well as of guarantees for secrecy of the ballot;
- s) the appropriateness of locations of polling places and adequacy of their facilities;
- t) the production and distribution to polling stations and recollection and storage of ballots and other sensitive election materials;
- u) the policy making process and each stage of implementing decisions concerning the use of electronic technologies in creation and execution of voter registries, electronic voting, tabulation of results and other sensitive electoral procedures;
- v) the sustainability, appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of electoral technologies;
- w) the conduct of voting, including in minority languages, counting, tabulation and announcement of results, including transparency of procedures and adequacy of safeguards against inaccuracies and malfeasance;
- x) the conduct of procedures and processes concerning electoral complaints and challenges by citizens, prospective voters, those seeking election and those supporting or opposing referendum initiatives, including the provision of effective remedies for violations of electoral related rights;
- y) the conduct of administrative, civil and criminal processes concerning alleged violations of laws and regulations regarding electoral related rights and responsibilities, including application of appropriate penalties; and

- z) the development of changes to electoral related laws, rules, regulations and administrative procedures preceding and following elections.

18. In order for non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations to be conducted successfully, several conditions should be present, including, among others:

- a) security conditions allow non-partisan citizen observers and monitors to evaluate processes without substantial risk to their safety, the safety of their families or their economic well being;
- b) election management bodies and other governmental authorities concerned with electoral related processes honor the right to participate in government and public affairs by providing non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations access to polling stations and all other election related facilities and processes in the pre-election, election-day and post-elections periods, including by providing accreditation, where it is required for access, in a timely manner, without proscribed discrimination or unreasonable restrictions, such as providing less access than allowed to international election observers, the media or political party and candidate observers;
- c) election management bodies and other governmental authorities provide electoral transparency through timely access to information, including election results recorded at polling stations as well as aggregated results at higher levels of electoral administration, and by allowing scrutiny of electoral related activities;
- d) political parties, candidates and groups supporting or opposing referendum initiatives provide timely information about complaints they file concerning violations of their electoral rights and the electoral challenges they lodge;
- e) non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations can exercise the freedom to associate with other organizations, both domestic and international, and cooperate with and/or receive assistance and support from them, including financial assistance, in order to pursue non-partisan election observation/monitoring activities;
- f) non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations are free to seek, receive and impart information, domestically and across borders, via verbal communications and printed or electronic media, including the Internet;
- g) national and international organizations, agencies, foundations and others that commit to provide funding and/or other assistance for non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations do so in a timely and practical manner that makes it possible in light of national conditions to employ the most systematic election observation and monitoring methodologies practicable and to integrate them into the capacities of the citizen organizations;
- h) election management bodies, other governmental authorities, funders and other supporters recognize and honor the premise that the information gathered, analysis performed and conclusions developed by non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations belong to the respective citizen nonpartisan observation and monitoring organizations, and those organizations are responsible for determining in light of legal requirements the timing and manner for presenting their findings and recommendations.

The degree to which these conditions are not present will impact the potential for successful nonpartisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations. The lack of adequate security for deployment of observers/monitors or not being provided accreditation and access to electoral facilities or other factors may prevent systematic scrutiny of election processes. Nonpartisan observation and monitoring organizations may nonetheless decide to partially deploy observers/monitors, gather information from outside polling stations and/or other facilities or otherwise compensate for restrictive conditions, while identifying the restrictions, their causes and probable impact on their activities.

Pledges and Commitments

19. In order to more effectively safeguard genuine democratic elections based on universal and equal suffrage and to respect the right to participate in public affairs, the organizations endorsing this Declaration pledge to foster the participation of all segments of the population, including indigenous peoples, national minorities, youth and the equal participation of women, as observers, monitors and leaders of their organizations.

20. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations should evaluate whether electoral related processes are free of discrimination proscribed by the national legal framework and the country's international human rights obligations, including whether equality before the law and equal protection of the law is honored in the electoral context, so that universal and equal suffrage of electors and those seeking election are safeguarded. The organizations endorsing this Declaration pledge to include findings and recommendations in their reports concerning the participation in election processes of women, youth, indigenous peoples, national minorities and other traditionally underrepresented portions of the population, such as, those with disabilities and internally displaced persons (IDPs), as well as concerning steps taken by authorities, electoral contestants and other actors to encourage full participation of such groups and/or to remove barriers to their participation, including those affecting voter registration, candidate selection and qualification, voting and receiving accurate and adequate information in minority languages in order to make informed electoral choices.

21. The non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations endorsing this Declaration commit to:

- a) ensure that all of their leaders and participants, including non-partisan citizen observers/monitors, fully understand and pledge to uphold the requirements of impartiality, accuracy and timeliness in all of their election monitoring activities;
- b) provide effective training about (i) non-partisanship (including about the substance of this Declaration), (ii) relevant national laws, obligations (including international and regional obligations concerning genuine elections), rules, regulations and procedures, as well as (iii) observation/monitoring communication protocols and procedures, and (iv) elements of the applicable observation and monitoring methodologies and techniques required for effective non-partisan election observation/monitoring;
- c) require all of their board members, other leaders, staff and volunteer participants, including non-partisan citizen observers/monitors, trainers, organizers and other members, to read, sign and pledge to abide by the Code of Conduct for Non-partisan Citizen Election Observers and Monitors that accompanies this Declaration or an equivalent code of conduct of that specific non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organization;
- d) cooperate with election management bodies and other government agencies and other electoral stakeholders, respect relevant laws, rules and orders that protect genuine democratic elections and not obstruct election processes or officials, electoral contestants or voters nor conduct any partisan activity to affect the choices that voters may make in an election or referendum;
- e) remain independent of government, including electoral authorities, be neutral toward political parties, candidates and those supporting or opposing referendum initiatives, be transparent and not accept funding from any source or upon any condition that creates a conflict of interest that would hinder conducting observation and monitoring activities in an impartial, accurate and timely manner for the benefit of the citizenry;
- f) employ the best and most systematic election observation and monitoring methodologies and techniques practicable in light of non-partisan principles and national conditions, as well as the elements of the election process being monitored;

- g) conduct impartial, fact-based analysis and develop findings and recommendations based on national legal requirements and applicable international and regional obligations, principles, commitments and best practices and be transparent concerning the benchmarks they use in their observation/monitoring activities;
- h) issue regularly to the public (including electoral stakeholders) accurate, impartial and timely reports, statements and releases that present fact-based analysis, observations and findings and recommendations to improve electoral processes, including removing inappropriate provisions in laws, unreasonable restrictions and other impediments to achieving genuinely democratic elections;
- i) cooperate and coordinate to the highest degree possible in the national circumstances with other non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations that have endorsed this Declaration and are implementing it in apparent good faith and manner;
- j) cooperate with international election observation missions, including regional election observation missions, and others concerned with genuine democratic elections;
- k) where practicable, advocate for improvements in legal frameworks for elections and in their implementation, for violence-free, accountable, open and responsive electoral and political processes, for removal of unreasonable restrictions and other barriers to full citizen participation in electoral and political processes and to contribute more broadly to advancing democratic governance; and
- l) publicize this Declaration and its accompanying Code of Conduct with other electoral stakeholders and citizens.

22. The non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations endorsing this Declaration commit to use every effort to comply with the terms and spirit of this Declaration and the accompanying Code of Conduct for Non-partisan Citizen Election Observers and Monitors. Any time that an endorsing organization deems it necessary to depart from any of the terms of this Declaration or the accompanying Code of Conduct, in order to conduct non-partisan election observation/monitoring in the spirit of this Declaration and to meet national conditions, that organization will explain why it was necessary to do so in its public statements and will be prepared to answer appropriate questions concerning that decision from other non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations that have endorsed this Declaration.

Endorsements

23. This Declaration and the accompanying Code of Conduct for Non-partisan Citizen Election Observers and Monitors remains open for endorsement by individual nonpartisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations and regional networks of non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations. All such organizations and networks shall be noted as “Endorsing Organizations”.

24. This Declaration and the accompanying Code of Conduct may also be endorsed by other organizations that are concerned with or support non-partisan election monitoring by citizen organizations, such as intergovernmental organizations, international nongovernmental organizations and other associations; such organizations shall be noted as “Supporters of the Declaration”.

25. Endorsements should be recorded with the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM), or any of the regional networks of non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations that have endorsed this Declaration and Code of Conduct. Endorsements may also be recorded with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), which facilitated the consensus building process leading to this Declaration and Code of

Conduct. When an endorsement is recorded by any of the listed entities, it shall inform the others of it in a timely manner.

Opened for endorsements July 2010.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR NON-PARTISAN CITIZEN ELECTION OBSERVERS AND MONITORS

Introduction

Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations is increasingly accepted around the world as a standard practice for supporting and safeguarding electoral integrity, promoting public confidence in democratic elections and mitigating potentials for election-related violence. Governments, including their election management bodies, those seeking to be elected and other electoral stakeholders have recognized that non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations is an integral part of exercising the right of citizens to participate in government and public affairs, which is an internationally recognized human right. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations is noted by intergovernmental organizations and various intergovernmental charters, declarations and other instruments as an important aspect of promoting genuine democratic elections.

The purpose of non-partisan election observation and monitoring is to help ensure the integrity of the election process, by witnessing and reporting accurately and impartially on each aspect of the process to evaluate whether it is conducted in an open and transparent manner and in conformance with the national constitution, laws and electoral regulations, treaty obligations and other international commitments concerning democratic elections. Non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations also seeks to ensure the integrity of the election process by calling on all electoral actors (including the candidates, political parties, those supporting or opposing referendum initiatives, election officials, other governmental authorities, mass media and voters) to respect the laws and election-related rights of all citizens and to hold accountable those who violate the law and any person's election-related rights. In addition, non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations seeks to mobilize citizens in the exercise of their right to participate in public affairs as non-partisan election observers and monitors and to promote citizen participation more broadly in elections and political processes.

Along with the recognition of rights related to non-partisan election observation and monitoring by citizen organizations comes responsibilities. These responsibilities may be outlined in a code of conduct to be adopted, along with a pledge of non-partisanship, by every observation and monitoring organization. Rights and responsibilities of observers and monitors also may be adopted as operating principles of an organization in formats other than codes of conduct.

The organizations and networks that endorse the Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations subscribe to and follow this Code of Conduct in addition to any similar code of conduct and operating principles of their individual organization or network. Each commits to require that all of its participants, including leaders, staff, trainers, consultants and all observers and monitors adhere to this Code of Conduct, or a substantially identical one of the organization or network, and sign a Non-partisan Election Observation and Monitoring Pledge substantially identical to the one presented below.

Modes of Conduct

In order to achieve these goals and purposes of non-partisan election observation and monitoring, each organization and network agrees that it will:

- 1) Maintain strict non-partisanship, by remaining politically neutral in all activities concerning the election process (including observation, monitoring, voter education, exit polling and any other activities), by refraining from expressing publicly any preference for or against any candidate, political party, group, movement or other association seeking public office, or those supporting or opposing any referendum initiative (including when reporting factually about violations of laws, regulations and electoral rights by parties, candidates or referendum groups), and by rejecting all favors offered or threats issued by any of the political contestants or their agents;
- 2) Work independently of government in support of a genuine democratic election process, without regard to who wins or loses, and to employ the best practices, methodologies and techniques, in light of non-partisan principles and suited to national conditions, in order to observe and monitor the various elements of the election process throughout the election cycle and the related political environment or to apply best practices, methodologies and techniques to specific elements of the election process;
- 3) Maintain strict adherence to the principle of nonviolence, call on all involved with the election process to do the same and take any practical steps possible to reduce the potentials for election-related violence;
- 4) Respect the country's constitution, laws, regulations and international obligations consistent with holding democratic elections, promote respect for electoral related rights, and call on others involved with the elections to do the same;
- 5) Respect the roles of impartial election authorities at all levels and at no time interfere unlawfully or inappropriately in the administration of the elections, as well as seek diligently to work in cooperation with impartial election officials, and follow lawful instructions from them or other appropriate authorities concerning protection of electoral integrity;
- 6) Help to safeguard the rights of voters and prospective voters to exercise their electoral choice freely and without improper discrimination, unreasonable restrictions, interference or intimidation, which includes promoting respect for the secrecy of the ballot, the rights of eligible persons, including women, youth, indigenous peoples, members of national minorities, persons with disabilities and other traditionally marginalized populations, to register to vote, to receive in languages they understand sufficient, accurate information in order to make an informed choice among the political contestants and to engage in other aspects of the election process;
- 7) Help to safeguard, with strict impartiality, the rights of political contestants to be elected, without improper discrimination or other unreasonable restrictions on their ability to receive legal recognition or to meet other requirements for ballot qualification, on their ability to freely campaign for support of the electorate, on their ability to communicate their political messages to the public or to exercise their rights to association, peaceful assembly and movement, on their ability to monitor all elements of the election process and to seek effective remedies, as well as to enjoy their right to security of person;

- 8) Cooperate closely with other election observers and monitors from non-partisan citizen organizations that endorse the Declaration of Global Principles for Non-partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations and cooperate with international election observation missions;
- 9) Report impartially, accurately and timely all observations and findings, both positive and negative, with sufficient documentation of all serious problems to permit verification of the events, and with sufficient documentation of positive aspects of the process to provide an impartial and accurate picture of what took place; and
- 10) Provide sufficiently high quality training for all observers and monitors to allow them to understand this Code of Conduct, sign the accompanying pledge with full appreciation of its meaning and to provide reports that meet the standards of this Code of Conduct.

These 10 points concerning conduct may be modified or supplemented to meet national conditions. Individual election observers and monitors should be required to read and discuss the code and sign a pledge of non-partisanship that embraces the provisions this Code of Conduct.

In a case of concern about the violation of this Code of Conduct, the endorsing organization shall conduct an inquiry into the matter. If a serious violation is found to have occurred, the observer/monitor concerned may have her or his observer/monitor accreditation withdrawn or be dismissed from the endorsing organization. The authority for such determinations rests solely with the leadership of the endorsing organization.

Sample Non-partisan Election Monitoring Pledge

Alternative words are offered in parentheses; the most appropriate word may vary in differing national contexts.

Election Monitor Pledge (Oath)

I, the undersigned, hereby pledge (promise or vow) that:

- 1) I will serve as a non-partisan election observer or monitor in the forthcoming election period to observe and/or monitor the voter registration, candidate qualification, political party candidate selection, campaign activities, media coverage, voting or ballot counting and tabulation processes or in any other non-partisan monitoring capacity that I may agree to perform; I will not conduct any partisan activity to affect the choices that voters may make in this election and/or referendum, and I will respect the roles of impartial election authorities at all levels and at no time interfere unlawfully or inappropriately in the administration of the election and/or referendum;
- 2) I am neither a candidate nor activist for any candidate, political party, group, movement or other association that is seeking public office in the upcoming elections, nor am I an activist in support of or in opposition to any upcoming referendum, and I do not intend to become a candidate in this election nor to use any non-partisan election observation or monitoring organization as a basis for supporting my candidacy in any future election;

- 3) I will maintain strict non-partisanship, by remaining impartial in all activities concerning the election process, refraining from expressing publicly any preference for or against any candidate, political party, group, movement or other association seeking public office or in support for or opposition to a referendum initiative, and rejecting all favors offered or threats issued by any of the electoral contestants or their agents;
- 4) I will work in support of a genuine democratic election process, without regard to who wins or loses, putting aside my personal views about those seeking public office or issues presented in a referendum, in order to promote a democratic process, except when I exercise my right to cast a ballot in the secrecy of a polling booth;
- 5) I have no conflicts of interest and will refrain from having any, be they personal, political, economic or otherwise, that would hinder me from fulfilling my non-partisan election observation or monitoring activities impartially, accurately and in a timely manner;
- 6) I will respect and protect the integrity of the non-partisan election observation/monitoring organization, including by following this Code of Conduct, any written instructions (such as observation/monitoring protocols, directives and guidelines) and any verbal instructions from the organization's leadership;
- 7) I will refrain from making any personal comments about my observations to the news media or members of the public before the election observation/monitoring organization makes a statement, unless specifically instructed otherwise by the organization's leadership;
- 8) I will attend all required domestic election observation and monitoring training sessions; I will strive to become familiar with the election law and regulations and other relevant laws as directed in the trainings, and I will fully adhere to the methodologies employed by the organization and will act in all domestic election observation and monitoring activities to the best of my abilities;
- 9) I will report impartially, accurately (including positive as well as negative factors) and as timely as possible on all events that I observe in my capacity as a non-partisan election observer or monitor; and
- 10) I hereby vow that I have carefully read and fully understand the Code of Conduct for Non-partisan Election Observers and Monitors; I agree to promote its goals and principles and to comply with its requirements. I further vow to resign from my role as an election observer or monitor if I should develop any conflicts of interest that would hinder me from fulfilling impartially, accurately and in a timely manner my non-partisan election observation or monitoring activities or if I should violate the requirements of this Code of Conduct.

..... Signature Date
 Printed Name in Block Letters

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Declaration of Global Principles for Non-partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations and Code of Conduct for Non-partisan Citizen Election Observers and Monitors is the product of process initiated through the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM) and facilitated by the National Democratic Institute (NDI).¹ The process included representatives from the existing regional networks of domestic nonpartisan domestic election monitoring organizations and initiatives to develop such networks where they did not yet exist formally. The representatives formed a Draft Development Group that reviewed a considerable body of preparatory materials, including relevant treaty and regional charters, declarations and other documents and the 2005 *Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation* and its accompanying code of conduct. The Draft Development Group then met in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 24-25 May 2010, and subsequently produced the 25 May 2010 Johannesburg Draft Declaration of Principles for Non-partisan Election Observation by Citizen Organizations and Code of Conduct for Non-partisan Citizen Election Observers and Monitors (Draft Declaration). The meeting was co-hosted by the Southern Africa Development Community Election Support Network (SADC-ESN).

The Draft Declaration was then circulated to all 125 members of GNDEM for comments and proposed changes. Each regional network of domestic election monitors distributed the Draft Declaration to its members, while GNDEM distributed it to GNDEM members that are not part of a regional network. The respective networks collected and consolidated comments and the Draft Development Group reviewed all comments, evaluated them and made appropriate changes to the Draft Declaration. The revised text was considered by the representatives of the networks and consensus was reached on the final text.

The Declaration of Principles for Non-partisan Election Observation by Citizen Organizations and Code of Conduct for Non-partisan Citizen Election Observers and Monitors was then circulated to GNDEM members for endorsements, beginning in July 2010. When a critical number of endorsements are received it is planned that a public ceremony will be held to commemorate the Declaration and Code of Conduct.

Members of the GNDEM Draft Development Group included:

African Networks and Network Initiatives

Steve Duwa and Aloisius Nthenda, from the Malawi Electoral Support Network (MESN), represented the SADC-ESN. MESN is the present rotating chair of the SADC-ESN which comprises non-partisan citizen election observation and monitoring organizations from the SADC countries.

Barbara Nyangari and Rindai Chipfunde, from the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN), which serves as the secretariat for the SADC-ESN, also represented the SADCESN.

Kojo Asante represented the Ghana Center for Democratic Development/Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), which conducts non-partisan election observation and monitoring in Ghana and is involved in developing a network of non-partisan election observation and monitoring organizations in West Africa.

¹ Should the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs agree that the UN can be associated with this document, including as a "Supporter of the Declaration", the UN Electoral Assistance Division will be acknowledged along with NDI as a facilitator of the process that developed this Declaration and Code of Conduct.

Peter Aling'o Okoth is the Executive Director of the Institute for Education in Democracy (IED), which conducts non-partisan election observation and monitoring in Kenya and is involved in encouraging the development of a network of non-partisan election observation and monitoring organizations in the Horn and East Africa.

Asia

Sanjay Gathia and Damaso G. Magbual, from Thailand and the Philippines, respectively, represented the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL), which comprises 21 non-partisan election observation and monitoring organizations across Asia.

Europe and Eurasia

Darko Aleksov, Secretary General of the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO) and Executive Director of MOST Citizen' Association of Macedonia, represented ENEMO; ENEMO comprises 22 non-partisan domestic election monitoring organizations from Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Emmy Dekker and Percy Medina, from the Peruvian non-partisan election observation organization Transparencia, represented the Acuerdo de Lima network of 18 non-partisan election observation organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean, plus NDI and the Center for Electoral Assistance and Promotion/Centro de Asesoría y Promoción Electoral (CAPEL).

The Middle East

Nabil Hassan represented the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE), which conducts non-partisan election observation in Lebanon and is involved in developing a network of non-partisan election monitoring organizations in the Middle East and North Africa.

Facilitators²

Patrick Merloe, Senior Associate and Director of Electoral Programs at NDI.

Richard Klein , Senior Advisor for Electoral Programs at NDI.

Peter Novotny, former Secretary General of ENEMO, and present Executive Director of Civic Eye, which conducts non-partisan election monitoring in Slovakia, provided written comments to the Draft Development Group's Johannesburg meeting. Comments and suggestions concerning the Draft Declaration were received from dozens of GNDEM member organizations.

² Should the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs agree that the UN can be associated with this document, including as a "Supporter of the Declaration", then Andrew Bruce, of the UNEAD, will also be acknowledged as a facilitator.

4. ANNEX - NON-EXCLUSIVE LIST OF INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO NON-PARTISAN ELECTION OBSERVATION AND MONITORING BY CITIZEN ORGANIZATIONS

GLOBAL

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)
- Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1979)
- Convention Against Corruption (2003)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
- Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (“Declaration on human rights defenders”; UN Doc: A/RES/53/144; 8 March 1999)
- General Comment 25: The right to participate in public affairs, voting rights and the right to equal access to public service (Art. 25), UN Human Rights Committee Re: Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (12 July 1996);
- UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation 23 on Political and Public Life (1997)
- Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (UN Doc.E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2)
- Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (1994)
- Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Election Observers (27 October 2005)

AFRICA – INCLUDING AU, ECOWAS AND SADC

African Union

- African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (1981)
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)
- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007, not yet entered into force)
- African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (2003)
- Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (2009 – Kampala Convention, not yet entered into force)
- Organization of African Unity [African Union] Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa (2002)
- New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (2002)

Economic Community of West African States

- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (2001)

Southern Africa Development Community

- Southern African Development Community (SADC) Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2004)
- Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region adopted by the Southern Africa Development Community Parliamentary Forum (2001)
- Principles for Election Management, Monitoring and Observation in the SADC Region (6 November 2003, Johannesburg, South Africa; Election Commissions Form and Electoral Institute of Southern Africa - EISA)

The Americas

- American Convention on Human Rights (1969)
- American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man (1948)
- Inter-American Convention on Granting of Political Rights of Women (1948)
- Inter-American Convention against Corruption (1996)
- Inter-American Democratic Charter (2001)

Asia

- Charter of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN - 2007)
- Terms of Reference of ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) (23 October 2009 – Cha-am Him Declaration on Inauguration of the AICHR)
- Vision of a Blueprint for ASEAN Democracy Free and Fair Elections by ANFREL (25-26 February 2009, Cha-am, Thailand)

EUROPE – INCLUDING THE COE, EU, OSCE AND CIS

Council of Europe

- [European] Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950, as amended by Protocol 14, entered into force 1 June 2010)
- [First] Protocol to the [European] Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1952)
- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995)
- European Charter of Local Self-Government (1985)
- European Commission on Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters (2002)

European Union

- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000)
- Cotonou Agreement between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) (2000)

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

- Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE [OSCE] (29 June 1990, Copenhagen, Denmark)
- Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Charter of Paris for a New Europe (1990)

Commonwealth of Independent States

- Convention of the Commonwealth of Independent States on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1995)
- Convention on the Standards of Democratic Elections, Equal Rights and Freedoms of the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States (2002)

The Commonwealth

- Declaration of Commonwealth Principles (1971)
- The Harare Commonwealth Declaration (1991)
- Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme on the Harare Declaration (1995)

The League of Arab States and The Islamic Conference

- Arab Charter on Human Rights, League of Arab States (2004)
- Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, Islamic Conference (1990)

Other Relevant Documents

- The Zagreb Commitments to a Common Approach to Domestic Election Observation in the OSCE Region (29 June 2003, Zagreb, Croatia)
- Conference Declaration of the European Domestic Observer Forum (23 June 2003, Zagreb, Croatia)
- Draft Declaration of Principles for Domestic Election Observation (29 January 2009, by the Free and Fair Election Network – FAFEN, Pakistan)

9.10

Vocabularies on Elections

1. Advance voting	ကြိုတင်ဆန္ဒမဲပေးခြင်း
2. Ballot box	မဲပုံး
3. Ballot paper	ဆန္ဒမဲလက်မှတ်
4. Black campaign	တပါးသူအား (မဟုတ်မမှန်)အလွန်အကျွံ ပုတ်ခတ်ပြောဆို/ရေးသားသော မဲဆွယ်စည်းရုံးမှု
5. Booth capturing	မဲပေးခန်းကို အချိန်ကြာမြင့်စွာ အသုံးပြုခြင်း
6. Boundary (electoral constituency)	ရွေးကောက်ပွဲနယ်နိမိတ် (မဲဆန္ဒနယ်)
7. Campaign finance	မဲဆွယ်စည်းရုံးရေးအသုံးစရိတ်
8. Candidate	လွှတ်တော်ကိုယ်စားလှယ်လောင်း
9. Candidate Debate	လွှတ်တော်ကိုယ်စားလှယ်လောင်းများ၏ စကားစစ်ထိုးပွဲ
10. Candidate supporter	လွှတ်တော်ကိုယ်စားလှယ်လောင်းအားထောက်ခံသူ
11. Canvasser	လွှတ်တော်ကိုယ်စားလှယ်လောင်းအတွက် မဲဆွယ်စည်းရုံးပေးသူ
12. Casting the vote	မဲဆန္ဒပေးခြင်း
13. Cheating	မဲလိမ်ခြင်း
14. Chief of Poll Officer	မဲရုံးမှူး
15. Civic education	လူထုအား နိုင်ငံသားအခွင့်အရေးတာဝန်များနှင့် ပတ်သတ်သော ပညာပေးခြင်း အစီအစဉ်
16. Closing process	မဲရုံပိတ်ခြင်း လုပ်ငန်းစဉ်
17. Code of Conduct	ကျင့်ဝတ်
18. Constituency	မဲဆန္ဒနယ်

19. Constituency List system	မဲဆန္ဒနယ်အလိုက် မဲစာရင်းစနစ်
20. Constitution	ဖွဲ့စည်းပုံအခြေခံဥပဒေ
21. Cooling Day (Quiet Day)	မဲဆွယ်စည်းရုံးမှုမလုပ်ရန် သတ်မှတ်ထားသည့်ရက်
22. Counting Centre	မဲရေတွက်ရာ ဌာန
23. Disqualify/ Unqualified	အရည်အချင်းမပြည့်မီ
24. District EC	ခရိုင်ရွေးကောက်ပွဲကော်မရှင်
25. Domestic observer (local observer)	ပြည်တွင်းလေ့လာစောင့်ကြည့်သူ (ပြည်ထောင်စုတွင်းရှိ နိုင်ငံသားများမှ လေ့လာစောင့်ကြည့်ခြင်းကို ဆိုလို)
26. Election Commission (EC)	ရွေးကောက်ပွဲကော်မရှင်အလုပ်အမှုဆောင်အဖွဲ့
27. Election Day (Polling Day)	ရွေးကောက်ပွဲကျင်းပသည့်နေ့ (ဆန္ဒမဲပေးသည့်နေ့)
28. Election law	ရွေးကောက်ပွဲဆိုင်ရာ ဥပဒေ
29. Electoral poll (survey)	မဲဆန္ဒပေးမှုနှင့် ပတ်သက်၍ (စစ်တမ်းကောက်ခြင်း)
30. Exit poll	မဲရုံမှထွက်လာသော မဲဆန္ဒရှင်များအား ၎င်းတို့ရွေးချယ်သော ကိုယ်စားလှယ်/ပါတီကို စစ်တမ်းကောက်ခါ ရွေးကောက်ပွဲ အနိုင်အရှုံးကို ကြိုတင်မှန်းဆခြင်း
31. First Past the Post (FPTP)	ဆန္ဒမဲအများဆုံးရသူ အနိုင်ရသောစနစ်
32. First time voter	ပထမဆုံးအကြိမ် ဆန္ဒမဲပေးခွင့်ရသူ
33. Frauds	မဲလိမ်ခြင်း၊ မဲခိုးခြင်း
34. Ghost vote	ခိုးမဲ
35. Governor	အုပ်ချုပ်ရေးမှူး
36. Head of the district (District Chief)	ခရိုင်အုပ်ချုပ်ရေးမှူး(နယ်မြေအကြီးအကဲ)
37. Head of the village (Village Chief)	ကျေးရွာအုပ်ချုပ်ရေးမှူး (ကျေးရွာအကြီး အကဲ)
38. ID card (Identity Card)	စိစစ်ရေးကဒ်ပြား
39. Impersonation	အယောင်ဆောင်ခြင်း

40. Indelible ink	ဖျက်ရန်မလွယ်သည့် မင်
41. Ink patch	မင်ခံပြား
42. International observer	နိုင်ငံတကာစောင့်ကြည့်လေ့လာသူ
43. Invalid ballot paper	ပယ်မဲ (တရားမဝင်သောမဲ)
44. Irregularity	မမှန်မကန်ပြုလုပ်ခြင်း
45. Local Election	ဒေသတွင်း ရွေးကောက်ပွဲ
46. Manual for poll officer	မဲရုံဝန်ထမ်းများအတွက် လုပ်ငန်းလမ်းညွှန်
47. Multiple vote	ဆန္ဒမဲ အကြိမ်ကြိမ်ပေးခြင်း
48. Opening process	မဲရုံဖွင့်ခြင်း လုပ်ငန်းစဉ်
49. Outreach	ရောက်ရှိအောင် ချဲ့ထွင်ခြင်း
50. Oversea voter	နိုင်ငံရပ်ခြားရောက်ရှိနေသော မဲဆန္ဒရှင်
51. Parliamentary Election (General Election)	ပါလီမန် ရွေးကောက်ပွဲ (အထွေထွေ ရွေးကောက်ပွဲ)
52. Party agent	ပါတီ ကိုယ်စားလှယ်/မဲရုံကိုယ်စားလှယ် (မဲရုံတွင်း ဆန္ဒမဲပေးခြင်းဖြစ်စဉ်ကို စောင့်ကြည့်ရန် ပါတီမှခန့်ထားသော ပုဂ္ဂိုလ်)
53. Party leader	နိုင်ငံရေးပါတီ ခေါင်းဆောင်
54. Party List system	ပါတီအခြေပြုအချိုးကျကိုယ်စားပြုစနစ်
55. Phantom vote	မဲစာရင်းတွင်မပါဘဲ ထည့်သည့်မဲ
56. Political party	နိုင်ငံရေးပါတီ
57. Poll officer	မဲရုံအရာရှိ (ဝန်ထမ်း)
58. Polling booth	ဆန္ဒမဲပေးခန်း (မဲဆန္ဒရှင် ဆန္ဒပြုသည့်နေရာ)
59. Polling Centre	မဲပေးရမည့်နေရာ (မဲရုံ)
60. Polling Station (Precinct)	မဲရုံ(ပရဝက်)
61. Presidential Election	သမ္မတရွေးကောက်ပွဲ
62. Provincial EC	ပြည်နယ်ရွေးကောက်ပွဲ ကော်မရှင်

63. Proxy vote	ကာယကံရှင်ကိုယ်စား အခြားတယောက်ကထည့်သည့်မဲ
64. Quick count	မဲအမြန် ရေတွက်ခြင်း
65. Registration card	မဲဆန္ဒရှင်များ မဲထည့်ရန် ထုတ်ပေးထားသောကတ်
66. Registration process	မဲဆန္ဒရှင်များ ဆန္ဒမဲပေးရန်အတွက် မဲစာရင်းသွင်းခြင်း လုပ်ငန်းစဉ်
67. Regulation	စည်းမျဉ်းဥပဒေ
68. Returning officer	မဲဆန္ဒနယ်အလိုက် ရွေးကောက်ပွဲတာဝန်ခံ
69. Rigging	မဲကလိမ်ကျခြင်း
70. Seal	ချိတ်ပိတ်ခြင်း
71. Secrecy	လျှို့ဝှက်ခြင်း
72. Spoiled ballot paper	ပျက်စီးမဲ (ပယ်မဲ)
73. Tabulation paper	(မဲရလဒ်) စာရင်းသွင်းရန်ပြုလုပ်ထားသည့် ဇယားစာရွက်
74. Thumb print	လက်ငွေနှိပ်ခြင်း
75. Underage voter	အသက်မပြည့်သည့် မဲဆန္ဒရှင်
76. Unused ballot paper	အသုံးမပြုရသေးသော ဆန္ဒမဲစာရွက်
77. Valid ballot paper	ခိုင်လုံမဲစာရင်းဝင်မဲ (ပယ်မဲ မဟုတ်)
78. Vote buying	မဲဝယ် ခြင်း
79. Voter	မဲဆန္ဒရှင်
80. Voter education	ဆန္ဒမဲပေးခြင်းနှင့် ရွေးကောက်ပွဲဆိုင်ရာ အသိပညာပေးခြင်း
81. Voter list	မဲစာရင်း
82. Voter registration	မဲစာရင်းသွင်းခြင်း
82. Voting hours	မဲပေးရန်သတ်မှတ်ထားသည့်အချိန် (နာရီပေါင်း)

63. Proxy vote	ကာယကံရှင်ကိုယ်စား အခြားတယောက်ကထည့်သည့်မဲ
64. Quick count	မဲအမြန် ရေတွက်ခြင်း
65. Registration card	မဲဆန္ဒရှင်များ မဲထည့်ရန် ထုတ်ပေးထားသောကတ်
66. Registration process	မဲဆန္ဒရှင်များ ဆန္ဒမဲပေးရန်အတွက် မဲစာရင်းသွင်းခြင်း လုပ်ငန်းစဉ်
67. Regulation	စည်းမျဉ်းဥပဒေ
68. Returning officer	မဲဆန္ဒနယ်အလိုက် ရွေးကောက်ပွဲတာဝန်ခံ
69. Rigging	မဲကလိမ်ကျခြင်း
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71. Secrecy	လျှို့ဝှက်ခြင်း
72. Spoiled ballot paper	ပျက်စီးမဲ (ပယ်မဲ)
73. Tabulation paper	(မဲရလဒ်) စာရင်းသွင်းရန်ပြုလုပ်ထားသည့် ဇယားစာရွက်
74. Thumb print	လက်ငွေနှိပ်ခြင်း
75. Underage voter	အသက်မပြည့်သည့် မဲဆန္ဒရှင်
76. Unused ballot paper	အသုံးမပြုရသေးသော ဆန္ဒမဲစာရွက်
77. Valid ballot paper	ခိုင်လုံမဲစာရင်းဝင်မဲ (ပယ်မဲ မဟုတ်)
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