



شبكة الانتخابات في العالم العربي

Elections Network in the Arab Region

Preliminary Report

2019/10/7

The Elections Network in the Arab Region monitored the Tunisian legislative elections

The elections were held in a safe environment

The biggest challenge of making the electoral process in Tunisia a success was voter turnout

The Election Network in the Arab Region (ENAR) has received the approval of the Independent High Electoral Commission of Tunisia to monitor the legislative and presidential elections of Tunisia for the year 2019. The team of ENAR consists of 39 international observers from 13 Arab and foreign countries.

Observers from the ENAR team were distributed to 8 electoral districts in Tunisia; Tunis I and II, Ariana, Manouba, Ben Arous, Binzerte, Hammamet and Monastir. Observers of the network came with the staff of the electoral offices at the opening of the elections.

The ENAR team observed the progress of the electoral process during the opening, voting, closing and counting processes in 75 polling centers and 108 polling stations in cooperation with their local partner, Youth Without Borders, which monitored the elections in collaboration with 450 local observers included in the initial report.

The ENAR team will issue its detailed report on the overall legislative and presidential electoral process after the final official results are announced.



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The legislative election process on polling day highlighted the following points:

Positives:

1. Provided a safe and suitable environment for voters to arrive at the polling stations and facilitate the task of voting.
2. Adopted international standards for the secrecy of the ballot and direct voting, as well as providing equal opportunities for all to participate in the voting process.
3. Provided full transparency about the instructions and procedures related to the electoral process and polling, especially regarding the availability of information on the internet and inside the electoral centers.
4. Facilitated the task of voting for persons with disabilities.
5. Opened the polling stations on time with the presence of the required number of polling station employees, and the provision of basic requirements for the voting process.
6. Accepted participation of the elderly.
7. Responsible authorities took prompt and immediate action regarding some of the irregularities in the voting process.
8. Broadened the participation of candidates' representatives and of local and international civil society organizations in the process of monitoring and observing the elections.
9. Divided the voting centers according to age group, similar to the way the two-tier Tunisian school system allocates the upper floors to youth groups.



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10. Publicized information technology through the use of electronic messages to identify polling stations for voters and motivate them to participate in the electoral process, as well as training voting center staff.

Negatives:

1. The electoral centers were not divided based on districts in accordance with international standards in terms of adhering to international regulations regarding the maximum number of voters or the requirement of polling stations to be within 500 meters from the voters place of residence, which reflected negatively on the voting process.
2. The list of voters was published in some polling stations on polling day.
3. There was inconsistency between polling stations regarding the correct application of voting procedures through the entire voting process.
4. Electoral propaganda continued to be advertised by representatives of candidates inside and outside some polling stations, which affected voter decision.
5. There was a failure to comply fully with some laws and procedures by some party representatives while the electoral process was being conducted.
6. An increase in the number of canceled papers and white papers because of the lack of mechanisms that enable voting, especially for the elderly.
7. Depriving some voters from participating in voting due to the change of polling stations and offices between the presidential and legislative elections. In addition, some students were not able to participate because they were unable to return to their constituencies.



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Recommendations:

The most important recommendations regarding the election day:

1. The division of electoral districts in accordance with international standards, which ensures *adalah* in determining the number of voters in polling stations and allows voters to reach the polling site without exceeding 500 meters from their place of residence.
2. Upgrade the skills of workers in the management of the voting and ballot counting processes through specialized training.
3. Take measures to inhibit the practicing of electoral propaganda within 100 meters of polling stations in accordance with international standards.
4. Draw up a list of voters in the polling stations in advance so that voters can confirm their names.
5. Adopt the reports and recommendations of the observers and take them into consideration for the upcoming electoral process.
6. Crack down on officials who are in violation of the laws and procedures of the Independent High Electoral Commission.
7. Increase the number of staff from a minimum of three to five in each electoral office.

The ENAR team stresses that the electoral process in Tunisia has been conducted, in general, in accordance with international laws and procedures. Therefore, the Tunisian legislative elections are considered to be successful and a good example for Arab world to carry out fair and free elections.



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It is worth mentioning that ENAR was established as an initiative of the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) in 2006, with the participation of thirty-five civil society organizations from 12 Arab countries. Since 2006, the ENAR team monitored 24 legislative and presidential elections in Mauritania, Morocco, Jordan, Iraq, Kurdistan/Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan, Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya.