

This preliminary statement summarizes the observations of t

Shura Council (the upper house of parliament) elections held Jan. 29-30, 2012.¹ Runoff and rerun elections for the first phase will be held on Feb. 14-15², with any runoff or rerun races to be held Feb. 22. The Shura Council is then scheduled to hold its first session on Feb. 28, 2012³.

The Election Environment

The election of the Shura Council⁴ is the second representative election to be held since the fall of the Mubarak regime in February 2011. It is administered under the authority of the Supreme Judicial Commission for Elections (SJCE) as the supervising judicial authority for elections. Under the transition plan outlined by the interim-governing regime, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), the 180⁵ elected members of the upper-house Shura Council will join with the 498⁶ elected members of the lower-

t the 100 members of a constitution drafting committee. Under

then followed by a presidential election to be completed by the end of June 2012. The SCAF has publicly committed to a full transfer of power to the elected president.

-appointed role, and loosely-defined transition plan, has been a source of ongoing tension

three phase⁷ process between Nov. 28, 2011, and Jan. 19, 2012, convening on Jan. 23; two days before the first anniversary of the Jan. 25, 2011, revolution. The broadly recognized credibility of the elections

¹ Phase One Shura Council elections include districts in 13 governorates: Cairo, Alexandria, Gharbiya, Dakahliya, Menoufiya, Damietta, South Sinai, North Sinai, Fayoum, Asyut, Qena, Red Sea, and New Valley.

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voter fatigue and the exhaustion of party resources from the People s Assembly elections that only completed rerun races on Jan. 19, the convening of the first session of the People s Assembly on Jan. 23, and the focus of attention on the first anniversary of the Jan. 25 Revolution.

Party Participation The voter list and candidate and party registration processes for the Shura Council election were conducted simultaneous to those of the People s Assembly election. As such, voters were not provided with an opportunity to update their records between elections, and candidate and party registration for the Shura Council was conducted in October 2011. For the 60 majority seats allocated to the Shura Council

Parliament will have so few women, the Center reiterates its recommendation that the People's Assembly and the Shura Council takes steps to ensure that women constitute at least 30 percent of the 100-member constitution drafting committee..

Voter Information

In general, Carter Center witnesses noted an absence of official public information¹⁹ campaigns about the Shura Council elections in the days preceding the first round of polling. Where official public information was in evidence, it was observed that the information was often drowned out by other news, such as the anniversary of the Revolution. Similarly, the Carter Center witnesses noted that there was little visible campaigning among political contestants in the days ahead of the election. Whereas political party campaigning compensated for minimal official information campaigns in the People's Assembly election, its diminished presence in these elections may have contributed to the lack of voter interest and

While notable advances were achieved in the polling process, several concerns witnessed in the People s Assembly election were still evident. The most commonly reported problems appear to stem from an ongoing lack of procedural definition, training, and clarity of institutional duties. Numerous incidents were reported of polling stations opening after the official start time of 8:00 a.m. due to the late arrival of judges or party representatives.

haphazardly collected, and concerns over their orderly collection and storage appears problematic. The efficiency of the tally centers was observed to have been hampered by a lack of staff and computers, creating a bottleneck for judges seeking to register their count forms. As well, with only one tally center in each district, judges were required to travel extensive distances in some cases. In combination, these factors negatively impacted the efficiency of the centers. The Carter Center would therefore urge the SJCE to consider increasing the number of tally centers and the number of staff and computers being used at each site.

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