



**CARTER CENTER REPORTS WIDESPREAD IRREGULARITIES IN SUDAN'S VOTE
TABULATION AND STRONGLY URGES STEPS TO INCREASE TRANSPARENCY**

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In a statement released today, The Carter Center reported that based on its direct observations, Sudan's vote tabulation process was highly chaotic, non-transparent, and vulnerable to electoral manipulation. As a result, the Center is concerned about the accuracy of the preliminary results announced by the National

of injuries. The Center expressed alarm about this incident and urged the security forces, local authorities,

STATEMENT ON SUDAN'S COUNTING AND TABULATION PHASES

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The Carter Center commends the efforts of Sudan's polling and data entry staff to work long hours during the counting and tabulations process—on the heels of five full days of voting—and recognizes the collegial spirit shown by most political party agents and members of the security forces in supporting relatively peaceful counting and tabulation. In spite of these efforts, the Center reports that the counting and tabulation phases of Sudan's national elections were highly disorganized, non-transparent, and vulnerable to electoral fraud.

With state assembly elections still to be held in Gezira and Southern Kordofan and re-run races due to be held for dozens of seats throughout Sudan, it is important that measures be taken to correct the identified deficiencies in order to ensure the integrity of future polling.

On April 16, after five days of polling, counting of ballots began at polling stations around the country. Results Forms were then transported to the state High Election Committees (SHCs) for tabulation in the state capitals with results from each state then transmitted to the National Elections Commission (NEC) in Khartoum. There were delays in counting in some areas and logistical problems with the retrieval of ballots and Results Forms.

Counting

An accurate and non-discriminatory vote counting process, including the announcement of results, is an essential means of ensuring that the fundamental right to be elected is fulfilled.⁴ The Center notes the failure of officials to follow proper administrative procedures and to reconcile the number of ballots received with the number of ballots counted (i.e., valid, invalid, spoiled, and unused). This resulted in a significant number of Result Forms being inaccurately completed. The failure to correctly reconcile votes cast at the polling station created a significant burden for the SHCs and left the results process more vulnerable to manipulation at subsequent stages.

In most areas, counting began on April 16, the day following polling, in accordance with directives issued by the NEC. However, in Blue Nile, Gedaref and Upper Nile counting commenced immediately following the close of polling, demonstrating that a number of areas did not receive adequate instructions, nor did the station workers receive their prescribed rest.

In Abyei, Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, South Kordofan and Upper Nile, the Center witnessed political party agents assisting polling officials in counting ballots, although the Center cannot conclude that this practice was conducted with malicious intent. In West Darfur and Eastern Equatoria, security personnel participated in the counting process in contravention of electoral procedures.⁵

Carter Center observers reported that votes were often determined to be invalid when the marks upon them were not placed exactly within the circle, even when the intent of the voter seemed clear. According

Tabulation

Carter Center observers reported that the tabulation process was chaotic and lacked transparency throughout the country, raising

to have been motivated by a desire to speed the delivery of preliminary results, as well as frustrations with the high frequency of results that were quarantined due to problematic Results Forms. No instructions, official forms or training was provided for manual tabulation, resulting in a lack of standardization in the process. In Khartoum state, the SHC informed observers that the data entry process had been halted due to serious concerns about the quality of many forms, which led the NEC to intervene and establish a secondary manual tabulation center. At this secondary site, the process was highly chaotic, with counting forms not properly organized, secured or safe-guarded. Observers reported officials tabulating results on loose sheets of paper and crudely constructed forms in most states. The unplanned manual tabulation has undermined the accuracy of the results process. Ideally, results management systems should prevent either the SHCs or NEC from arbitrarily bypassing it without first resolving te NEC h,6JTJECm8ngfor72.024 7o. 8(o. ET

the barracks where he was detained. After polls closed, continued interference was reported to Carter Center observers by electoral authorities. In two counties, local commissioners using SPLA soldiers or other security agents also tried to interrupt counting and alter results. A senior constituency election officer was detained for 24 hours. Electoral officials reported that, threats were also made to detain other heads of polling stations if they did not falsify results. According to a member of Northern Bahr al Ghazal's SHC, on several occasions stuffed ballot boxes were delivered to polling stations by the governor's staff, and threats were made against the SHC when they did not comply with the governor's directions. This interference is unacceptable and compromised the integrity of the vote in Northern Bahr al Ghazal in contravention of Sudan's international commitments to ensure equal suffrage and fight corruption.¹⁹ The Carter Center urges the GoSS to assure the safety of SHC members and staff. In addition, the GoSS, in coordination with the NEC, should work with all the members of the SHC to locate polling stations that suffered irregularities and to conduct a full investigation.

The Carter Center Election Observation Mission has been in Sudan since February 2008 following an invitation from the leaders of the Government of National Unity and the Government of Southern Sudan. In early-April 2010, the Center deployed more than 70 short-term observers to observe the balloting, counting, and tabulation processes for the national elections. The Carter Center's observation mission was led by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, former Algerian Foreign Minister and member of the Elders Lakhdar Brahimi, former prime minister of Tanzania and Justice Joseph Sinde Warioba, and Carter Center President and CEO Dr. John Hardman. Following the conclusion of polling on April 15, Carter