

by both men and women (women and men voted in separate polling stations). The Federation of Women mounted a campaign to inform women about the voting process and to get out the female vote and clearly succeeded. These stations were well run and the women officials were well-prepared and highly committed to maintaining the integrity of the electoral process. This comment also applies to those polls conducted by men. In my opinion, this effort can stand as a model for other countries.

The grass-roots aspect of the election was extremely impressive, there was a high level of motivation of local election officials at the polls and intense concern for integrity of the system. These officials were well-trained, receiving several days training prior to the election. There was also active involvement of the political parties with respect to arrangements for transportation and provision of information for their scrutineers.

In my view, the National Electoral Tribunal's (TNE) role could have had more consequence, had it provided more assistance and guidance to the election officials on polling day, which would have avoided, among other things opening poll problems. Several polls opened one to one and one half hours late, due to this lack of guidance, as well as due to problems related to the non-immediate visibility of the indelible ink dye, designed to indicate that the individual had voted. Later, the TNE decided to extend the close of the poll by one hour to offset these problems. I and other international observers also had difficulty obtaining cooperation from the TNE the day before the elections as well as in receiving briefings and important documentation such as the electoral law. However, as a result of our own initiative and with the active cooperation of supervisory officials of the TNE, we succeeded in obtaining all of the information and answers to the questions we sought.

I also observed serious flaws which distorted an otherwise positive situation. The TNE refused to rule until the night before the elections on how the President would be elected: whether it would be by simple majority or whether it would be the candidate with the highest number of votes from the party receiving the majority vote. Also, the ballot contained the names and pictures of all the presidential candidates except one in whose stead there was the picture of a dead party leader whose picture had no name below it and also was the only one containing two party flags. In my opinion, this may well have constituted an unfair advantage for the candidate and the party.