

F. THE OBSERVERS' REPORT(S)

Observers may be asked to make one (or more) of the following types of reports:

1. "Off-the-cuff" reports

An informal, on-the-spot "report" is sometimes requested by the media, an embassy, political or electoral officials or others during the course of the election. In such circumstances, observers are advised to provide very little or no information, rather than comment, perhaps unwisely, on electoral processes which are not yet complete, or risk compromising their impartial status by making premature judgements.

2. Special reports

A special report may be made during the course of the electoral period preceding polling day. There may be one or a series of these reports. They could be status reports on the progress of the various electoral activities or they could focus on specific problems, abuses, or other negative situations which may be expected to have a detrimental impact on the election. These types of reports are sometimes useful as a basis for discussions with election, government or party officials in order to resolve problems when they are identified. Although such reports are often produced by pre-election monitoring or technical assistance teams, it may sometimes be desirable and useful for observers to prepare one or more interim reports.

3. The Observer's Report

During the course of the election, members of observation teams will often visit different polling stations and will record their comments separately. Subsequently these observations will be discussed and amalgamated into an observers' group report. The comments and suggestions which follow, provide some guidelines as to the context and approach to the preparation of this final report of the observer team. (A single observer who is not part of a team should also use the guidelines which follow in preparing his or her final report.)

4. The Observer Team Report

(a) Deciding on contents

This report should identify the participants of the observer group and briefly describe their activities from the time of arrival to the time of departure. The sources of their information, especially with respect to events which occurred