

Carter Center Statement on Kenya's Pre-Election Period

With less than two weeks until election day, the Carter Center observation mission issues this pre-election report and findings based on three months of observation activities. The Carter Center is conducting a comprehensive international election observation mission for Kenya's general election. It established a field presence and deployed a core team of experts and long-term observers (LTOs) in mid-April. LTO teams have visited 37 counties and 153 constituencies and have observed over 50 rallies to date. For the Secretary of State John Kerry and for the Prime Minister of Senegal Aminata Touré will lead an 80-person short-term delegation from 34 countries to assess the voting, counting, and tabulation process during the im-2 (m-2 (m-C (t)-25co dur)3 (i)-2 own

The success of KIEMS is of vital importance to enhance public confidence in the IEBC and the electoral process

Voter Registration. Successful and inclusive voter registration is essential to aligning Kenya with international best practices. Inaccuracies in the voter registry have been a source of contention in previous electoral cycles. Accordingly, in December 2016,

Voter Education. With less than two weeks to go before election day, the Center for Voting and Democracy has noted a lack of education on voting day procedures. Educating voters on what will happen when

Carter Center LTOs have reported that in some areas identified as hot spots concerns have emerged about militias and criminal gangs used by politicians to provide “security” during rallies and to intimidate their rivals.

requirements of the constitution. The Carter Center recommends that these criteria be clearly spelled out well in advance of future elections so that prospective candidates understand requirements for running for office. In addition, the roles of the IEBC and the EACC in reviewing whether a candidate has met the criteria should be clearly defined.

remaining electoral period. Politicians also have a responsibility not to make unsubstantiated allegations against these institutions that only serve to delegitimize them and reduce public trust in the electoral process.

Campaign Environment. The election campaign for the different races officially started between the end of May and the beginning of June

manner. It is also important that security forces are not deployed in such a way as to deter voters from voting.

TCC observers have noted several initiatives advocating for peace and a conflict-free electoral process in the last few months. The initiatives are promoted by a large variety of civil society organizations and institutions and include a diverse range of activities, from peace walks to conflict prevention round tables and meetings. These have been attended by political representatives, election officials, civil society members and politicians. Despite the positive and appreciable efforts, not many candidates took part

Civil Society Engagement The 2017 election enjoys the robust engagement of civil society actors. In a positive sign, the IEBC has announced that to date it has accredited 4,242 long-term observers, the overwhelming number of which are Kenyan nationals. It is estimated that by the July 31 deadline for accreditation, it will accredit more than 100,000 short-term observers. Over 1,500 media have requested accreditation to cover the election. This accreditation process has been open and transparent and the large number of observers is a testament to the IEBC's commitment to supporting the engagement of Kenyan citizens in the civic affairs of their country.

A number of domestic CSOs have observed the election period throughout the country, releasing periodic public statements and reports of their findings on the state of election preparedness. These groups also plan to observe the voting process, tallying and transmission of results. Groups have also assessed special interest groups' participation in the process and have been engaged with peace promotion, early warning mechanisms development, and conflict-mitigation efforts. Some groups have focused on the human rights environment around the election. Faith-based organizations have also contributed to peace promotion efforts around the country. State bodies such as the Kenya National Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman, and the NCIC are also monitoring the electoral process.

Participation of Women, Youth, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) The 2010 Constitution identifies six categories of persons as vulnerable or special interest groups (SIGs). These are women, older members of the society, persons with disabilities (PWDs); children, youth, members of minority or marginalized communities and members of particular ethnic, religious or cultural communities. Through various provisions, the constitution seeks to protect these groups against discrimination and address their needs.²

Despite the existence of these progressive provisions, the increase in participation of the SIGs, especially in the political sphere, has been slow in materializing. There are 1,462 female aspirants out of a total of 15,083 aspirants (10 percent) contesting for various positions in the 2017 elections. There are 10 female candidates for the governor's seat (4 percent), 38 for the senate's seat (10.8 percent), 151 for the MP seat (7 percent), and 932 for the MCA seat (7 percent). There is no female candidate for the presidency.

² These include Articles 21(3), 27(3)(4)(6), and 100. Specific gender issues are provided for under Articles 27(8), 81(b), 175(c), 177(1)(b) and 197(1). Issues regarding PWDs are addressed under Article 54 and those regarding the

