



Iraq's Electoral Preparations and Processes*

Report No. 11

Highlights for the Month

- First deliveries of ballot papers and election kits started arriving in the country.
- IHEC held another polling day simulation to test run its systems for the elections.
- Audit company shared its third audit report on the results management IT systems.
- Electoral Judicial Panel issues ruling on the announcement of special voting results.
- Lottery held to select polling and counting staff.
- IHEC firms up system for handling electoral complaints; training complete for IHEC legal staff.
- Electoral campaign period ongoing as IHEC monitoring committees report no major cases of campaign violation so far.
- IHEC intensifies outreach campaigns; taps Communication and Media Commission and other Ministries to support dissemination of IHEC awareness materials.

Deliveries of Ballot Papers and other Electoral Materials

IHEC started to receive, mostly ahead of the timeline, the various electoral materials to be used on election day. These included the ballot papers, election results forms, printed final voter lists, indelible ink and election kits.

The ballot papers were printed by the IHEC contracted German printing company, Giesecke & Devrient, in its facilities in Germany and Belgium. IHEC ordered a total of 26.1 million printed ballot papers. These include 24.8 million ballot papers to be used for regular voting on 10 October and 1.3 million ballot papers to be used for special voting on 8 October. In addition, the company also printed the reconciliation and results forms to be used for polling and counting. The first batch of ballot papers and forms arrived in Najaf Airport on 5 September and in Basra Airport on 6 September. IHEC staff received and transported the materials from these airports to the destination governorates for storage in secured IHEC warehouses.

On 28-30 August, IHEC also received the first deliveries of election kits and indelible ink which were all produced in China by an IHEC contracted company, Green Glory. The materials arrived at the airports in Baghdad, Erbil, Basra and Najaf. They were then transported by IHEC staff to IHEC warehouses, where

* This report, the eleventh in a series, is prepared pursuant to UN Security Council Resolutions 2576 (2021) and 2522 (May 2020). In extending UNAMI's mandate, the Council instructs that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNAMI shall: "further advise, assist and support the Government of Iraq and the Independent High Electoral Commission with efforts to plan and execute genuinely free and fair Iraqi-led, Iraqi-owned elections and referenda, including through regular technical reviews and detailed reporting on electoral preparations and processes, as part of the Secretary-General's regular reporting cycle".



United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)
بعثة الأمم المتحدة لمساعدة العراق (يونامي)

Iraq's Electoral Preparations and Processes - Report No. 11
Baghdad, 09 September 2021

they will be stored until they are packed and delivered to polling centers a few days before the elections. IHEC ordered a total of 58,197 polling station kits, 8,862 polling center kits and 67,089 bottles of indelible ink.

Similarly, IHEC also received all the printed materials, including the final voters list, manuals and posters that it ordered for printing by the Iraqi Media Network.

Polling Day Simulations

On 23 August, IHEC conducted the second of three planned polling day simulation exercises across Iraq. A total of 1,079 polling stations were involved with more than 8,600 IHEC staff mobilized to act as voters. The exercise imitated the entire polling, counting, transmission and tabulation process with the aim of identifying and addressing any technical issues ahead of the elections. All electoral devices were used including the voter verification device (VVD), polling station optical count scanners (PCOS) and results transmission systems.

IHEC stated that overall, the simulation went smoothly and most of the issues identified during the first simulation have been addressed. The rate of transmission of election results reached 100% in just a few hours after the closing of the polling process. IHEC also reported no discrepancy between the electronic and manual counts.

Unlike the first e-day simulation held in July, the second simulation was an open event witnessed by electoral stakeholders, including political parties, candidates, observers and the media. The event received positive coverage by the media. The third and final e-day simulation is scheduled to be held by mid-September.

Audit of the Results Management IT System

The independent audit firm contracted by IHEC, Hensoldt, provided its third report based on its findings from the first simulation exercise that IHEC conducted on 12 July. The report enumerated several potential threats identified during the first simulation, while also acknowledging that many of these threats may have already been addressed in an iterative manner as IHEC proceeded with the second election simulation exercise on 23 August. Hensoldt's third report also referred to the findings of the two previous reports submitted to IHEC, which, according to Hensoldt, have largely been addressed by IHEC and its technology providers, while also highlighting several medium-risk threats that will still need to be looked into by IHEC.

The manual tabulation system developed by IHEC with UNAMI support, which will be used to incorporate the results of the polling stations that will undergo a manual count, has also been shared by IHEC with Hensoldt for audit purposes. IHEC's IT team is addressing and providing responses to the audit findings on the manual tabulation system.



United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)
بعثة الأمم المتحدة لمساعدة العراق (يونامي)

Iraq's Electoral Preparations and Processes - Report No. 11
Baghdad, 09 September 2021

SJC forms Investigative Team to Counter Election Fraud

On 31 August, Iraq's Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) announced the creation of a team composed of several investigative judges which, in coordination with the executive branch and the security institutions, will monitor and take steps against any attempt to rig the upcoming parliamentary election. The SJC announced that the investigative team has commenced its work and has issued arrest orders against several suspects accused of electoral fraud. Subsequently, the Prime Minister's Office stated that the Iraqi security services carried out a preemptive operation in which they thwarted an attempt by a group of individuals to rig the elections by electronic means and blackmail.

EJP Ruling on the Announcement of Special Voting Results

In a ruling dated 22 August, the Electoral Judicial Panel (EJP) reversed an earlier IHEC Board of Commissioners' (BoC) decision on the announcement of special voting results. According to the EJP ruling, the preliminary results of the special voting day will be announced on the same day as the results of the regular voting.

Polling Staff Recruitment and Lottery Process

On 26 August, IHEC conducted an electronic lottery process to select individuals who will serve as polling and counting staff on election day. The event was held in a public venue in Baghdad to enable electoral stakeholders to witness the process. IHEC requires around 350,000 polling staff and reserves for the elections.

Prior to this, IHEC opened an online application portal for the submission of polling staff applications. At the close of the application period on 15 August, IHEC received more than 800,000 applications. Of these, around 500,000 applications were considered valid applications from which IHEC proceeded to select by lottery around 350,000 needed staff, primarily those applicants who are government employees and university students. Of note, IHEC extended the process twice to address staff application shortages in several constituencies in Baghdad, Ninewa and Basra. While most GEOs now have a full complement of staff, IHEC is still addressing polling staff shortages in certain constituencies in Baghdad-Karkh, Baghdad-Rasafa and Ninewa. IHEC stated that they will continue to receive applications until the required number of polling staff are met in these localities.

Training on Polling and Counting Procedures

IHEC has completed during the month of August, the second of the three levels of the training on polling and counting procedures. It involves the training of around 2,400 IHEC staff for voter registration centers who will in turn serve as trainers for the third and final level of the cascade training process.



United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)
بعثة الأمم المتحدة لمساعدة العراق (يونامي)

Iraq's Electoral Preparations and Processes - Report No. 11
Baghdad, 09 September 2021

The third level involves the training of all the 350,000 polling and counting staff on the election procedures. IHEC confirmed that preparations have already been made for the third level to commence by 6 September.

Electoral Complaints and Appeals Adjudication

On 23-25 August, IHEC organized a three-day training workshop in Erbil on electoral dispute resolution and the handling of electoral complaints and appeals. UNAMI provided technical and financial support to the activity. There were 45 training participants from the IHEC National Office and the Legal Section of Governorates Electoral Offices (GEOs). The training covered topics including investigation, classification and developing recommendations for subsequent IHEC Board of Commissioners (BoC) decisions. The database developed for recording and tracking the status of electoral complaints was also presented.

On 2 August, IHEC decided to set up committees for the classification of complaints that will be received on election day and throughout the electoral process. The committees will each be composed of four members, including one Commissioner, one Director-General, a staff from the IHEC Complaints and Appeals Section, and a technical staff from the electoral administration. A representative from the international assistance team will also be part of the committee. The guidelines for the complaint classification committees are currently being prepared, including procedures for categorization, follow up and investigation.

Campaign Monitoring Committees

The IHEC campaign monitoring committees at the central and governorate levels continue to follow up on the ongoing electoral campaign. Based on IHEC issuance, the local committees have the power to issue warnings to reported violators of the campaign regulations. In cases of non-compliance with issued warnings, formal reports are to be prepared and submitted to HQ for the IHEC Board of Commissioners' decision. So far, there have been no reports of serious incidents, which IHEC attributes to the campaign remaining relatively subdued throughout August.

In terms of formal complaints, IHEC has so far received five election campaign related complaints. The allegations include illegal use of official positions for campaigning as well as the illegal placement of posters in specific locations. These are being investigated prior to IHEC taking appropriate measures.

COVID-19 Measures

COVID-19 protective items, including masks, gloves and sanitation gels, are being procured for distribution and use at all polling stations on election day. The procurement is being arranged with a local supplier, with funds provided through the electoral support project handled by UNDP.



United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)
بعثة الأمم المتحدة لمساعدة العراق (يونامي)

Iraq's Electoral Preparations and Processes - Report No. 11
Baghdad, 09 September 2021

Public Outreach Activities

IHEC continued to intensify its public outreach strategy and voter awareness campaigns using various platforms, including social media, TV and radio broadcasts, advertisements, billboards and the dissemination of printed materials. A significant number of video materials have been produced and posted. IHEC also engaged various Iraqi artists, influencers and ordinary Iraqis to assist in providing motivational messages as a new approach to its outreach activities.

IHEC has also started to include sign language translations in its public outreach products. As of 29 August, 20 awareness videos have been translated and are ready for posting and television broadcasting. UNAMI OEA encouraged IHEC to adopt sign language translation for its video materials while OEA also supported the recruitment of the translator. IHEC also produced video material from an outreach activity with deaf and mute people in Karada, Baghdad.

IHEC signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Communication and Media Commission to boost the dissemination of electoral awareness materials. The Ministry of Communication is also supporting this effort by tapping internet service provider (ISP) platforms for information dissemination.

The 31 civil society organizations (CSOs) selected for the small grant facility for CSO engagement are midway into the implementation of their electoral awareness projects. Cumulatively, they are implementing 47 projects covering all 18 governorates. They continued to implement awareness-raising activities based on the briefing and materials received from IHEC and are also using autonomously produced outreach materials.

International Observation

IHEC announced that it has completed the printing of 5,000 badges that will be issued to accredited observers to facilitate their access to election locations. IHEC informed that they are currently receiving accreditation forms from entities intending to observe the elections. So far, the European Union and two international NGOs submitted international observer accreditation forms. IHEC also mentioned that it is sending separate invitations to at least 10 electoral commissions, mainly from Arab countries but also the Korean and Australian electoral management bodies, requesting that they send observation delegations for the upcoming election.

Election Security

The Supreme Security Committee for Elections held its periodic meetings in several southern governorates coinciding with visits to electoral facilities to check on the security arrangements for the elections. In the last week of August and first week of September, the Committee held meetings with the operations commands and the head of IHEC electoral offices in Muthanna, Babil, Najaf, Qadissiyah and Karbala. During the meetings, the plans were presented to secure the polling centers, IHEC warehouses, IHEC personnel and the voting public. The Head of the Security Committee mentioned that



United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)
بعثة الأمم المتحدة لمساعدة العراق (يونامي)

Iraq's Electoral Preparations and Processes - Report No. 11
Baghdad, 09 September 2021

they are planning to conduct several security exercises before polling day to identify security gaps and address them in advance.

On 2 September, UNAMI Election Security Advisers met with the head of the Supreme Security Committee for the Elections. They discussed the electoral security process, security plan, coordination and communication mechanisms, and potential security challenges in the upcoming elections. The Head of the Supreme Committee reiterated the Security Committee's readiness to support the UN in its election mandate and to provide the necessary protection and security escort to all UN monitoring teams for their movements throughout the country.

Note: UNAMI reminds all stakeholders that electoral preparations must remain free from political interference at all stages. This independence is essential to build public trust in the elections and their outcome.