

APPENDIX

IV

Sample
Reports

SAMPLE REPORTS

Monitors frequently publicize their observations in various types of reports. Reporting helps to achieve several objectives, such as contributing to the acceptance of legitimate election results or, in the case of a significantly flawed process, discouraging approval of the results. Reports also provide a historical record of an election's events and of your organization's activities. These records can help future monitors compare the past elections with subsequent electoral processes. Reports may also be useful in advocating electoral reforms, establishing your organization's credibility, recruiting volunteers or obtaining operating funds. This appendix illustrates four reports on different aspects of the electoral process.

REPORT ON THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

The Findings of the Electoral Assistance Bureau on the 1992 Preliminary Voters List represents a report of an investigation on Guyana's voter registration process. Several points are worth noting from this report. First, and most important, is that this report was researched, written and issued in the pre-election period. Publication of an assessment well *before* election day allows time for election administrators to make corrections and to find solutions to problems. It also alerts the citizens and the political parties to potential problems meriting further scrutiny. Second, the monitors in Guyana employed the technique of random sampling, which assisted them in developing a picture of the overall voter registration process without having to review every single entry on the list.

REPORT ON THE MEDIA

Many organizations have undertaken monitoring the media and issuing periodic reports throughout the campaign and election administration processes. The sample reproduced here, the "TV news during the elections," summarizes the findings of the Media Monitoring Project (MMP) regarding the 1994 elections in South Africa. The report was one of several that appeared in MMP's August 1994 journal entitled *Media Mask*. It provides a critical analysis of media coverage, placing particular attention to the amount and type of coverage received by competing political parties.

POST-ELECTION STATEMENT

Immediately following an election, significant pressure is placed on monitoring organizations to publicize their observations. A good post-election statement, such as the 1995 *Study and Research Group of Bangladesh (SRG) Election Observation* statement reproduced in this appendix, expressly acknowledges the preliminary nature of the conclusions it contains and indicates that a more comprehensive report will be issued after the official end of the electoral process. The SRG statement is notable also because it: reports the activities, specific findings (of both problems *and* successes) and general conclusions of the operation in a single page; did *not* publish these generalized conclusions prematurely (i.e., did not rely on incomplete information or isolated incidents); yet was issued soon enough after the elections to have an impact.

INTERIM STATEMENT

The final sample in this appendix comes from Ethiopia. The *Monitoring Mission Summary Report* of the Ethiopian Congress for Democracy (A-Bu-Gi-Da) represents an interim report of the 1994 constitutional assembly elections. An interim report may be issued several days or even weeks after the voting at a time when the voters and contestants are still waiting for an independent assessment of the process. An interim report often provides more complete information (e.g., official election results) and more thorough analysis than is possible in the immediate post-election statement. By its very name, the interim report also suggests that the observers intend to continue monitoring events and may, at a later date, issue a final, comprehensive analysis.

SAMPLE REPORTS

In the Ethiopian Congress for Democracy report, note the special attention paid to describing and assessing the political context in which the elections occurred. This provides an excellent example of a report that balances its evaluation of the administrative and technical process with an analysis of the political progress that was achieved through the electoral process. In Ethiopia's 1994 elections, a number of important political parties boycotted the elections, leaving many citizens and observers uncertain as to the significance of the process. Note also that the authors of the report offered limited, constructive recommendations as to how the elections might be improved from both a technical and political perspective.

REPORT ON THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

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**The Findings of the Electoral Assistance Bureau
on the 1992 Preliminary Voters List**

Among the checks of the current Preliminary Voters List the following represent the results of our investigation.

1. VALIDITY OF POLLING DIVISIONS:

Checks on the 1991 list had revealed the existence of hundreds of polling divisions for which corresponding numbers could not be found in the relevant law. What was also discovered was that a number of well-populated polling divisions had been completely omitted from the list.

In the opinion of Professor Gladstone Mills, member of last year's Delegation of the Council of Freely-Elected Heads of Government, those particular problems alone effectively invalidated the voters list and as such it could not be declared a viable one.

We were therefore particularly careful this time to carry out the same polling division checks and we were pleased to note that all but one polling division stuck precisely to Order No. 47 of 1990, which Order covers the designation of polling divisions.

The single omission was an Amerindian area, Epira, on the Corentyne River, which the current list merged with the neighbouring village, Orealla. We have been informed that the authority for this merger lay in the recommendation of the *Report of the Amerindian Lands Commission*. Since this merger would not prevent anyone in Epira from voting, we find the polling divisions completely acceptable and commend the Elections Commission for this major correction exercise. The merger of these two villages into one Polling Division must however be enacted in law eventually.

On this same question of polling divisions, however, there is one particular observation we need to make and that is on a decision effected in the same 1990 Order to combine several villages on the East Bank Demerara into a single polling division. These villages include Herstelling, Farm, Vreed-en-Rust, Covent Garden, Prospect and Little Diamond.

In this polling division alone the total number of registered voters is 4.024. This figure is exceeded only by nearby Golden Grove which has 4.059 registered voters.

We therefore ask that the Elections Commission pay particular attention to the polling stations for both these Divisions on election

REPORT ON THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

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day as they could obviously present logistical nightmares to voters and election officials alike.

We would also recommend to the Chairman of the Elections Commission (whoever might be so intrepid as to accept this post in the future) that these Divisions be subdivided into units of more manageable numbers before the following elections.

2. ID NUMBER DUPLICATIONS:

Last year our computer check discovered 1700 sets of duplicate or multiple ID numbers on the voters list — a set being two or more persons with the same number. This year we are pleased to see only 28 sets of duplicate IDs.

At least nine of these sets we think actually pertain to nine individuals, and on further checking we have concluded that in two other cases the problem arose because an incorrect ID number had been recorded.

We have drawn these discrepancies to the attention of the Elections Commission and they have promised to have these odd cases investigated and corrected immediately.

We therefore find that the problem of ID duplications, though not absolutely perfected, is not significant enough to be of concern. This exercise is certainly a welcome improvement over last year's fiasco.

3. PERSONS LISTED IN WRONG DIVISIONS:

The number of persons listed in wrong polling divisions last year generated perhaps the most anger among voters, and certainly presented too massive a task to be undertaken by the EAB. The corrective process required for this particular problem was then, and is now, extremely burdensome for both the voter and the Elections Commission, in that two operations have to take place — putting the voter in his/her right polling division, and at the same time ensuring that the name is removed from the wrong division.

In order to determine the extent of this problem this time, the EAB did a sample test of polling divisions in Regions 2,3,4,5 and 6 — five regions that comprise 88% of our voters. The sample we carried out represented 70% of the registered voters in these regions, or about 60% of the entire electorate.

The results show that about 1.3% of listed voters have been displaced in the sampled divisions alone, and this will affect a total of just over 3,000 persons. If we take into consideration the numbers of displaced voters in the divisions we did not check, and add the

REPORT ON THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

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possible displaced numbers for Regions 1, 7, 8, 9 and 10, then our estimate is that there would be about 5,000 persons in all who have been listed in wrong polling divisions.

This overall average of 1.3% found in wrong divisions is a considerable achievement by the commission considering the extent of the problem last year.

Further to this the EAB undertook the exercise of identifying the names of persons who had been listed in wrong divisions, and we have tried to indicate their correct divisions based on their recorded addresses.

Computer printouts of these 3,000 names have been made available to the Elections Commission and to political parties to be used as a corrective tool during the Claims and Objections period. The numbers by Region are as follows:

REGION	TOTAL VOTERS		VOTERS IN	
	IN REGION	SAMPLE TAKEN	WRONG DIVISIONS	PERCENTAGE
2	23,101	21,927	198	0.9%
3	50,188	38,209	920	2.4%
4	148,046	77,389	730	0.9%
5	28,126	26,364	546	2.1%
6	72,304	61,265	609	1.0%
TOTAL	321,765	225,154	3,003	1.3%
PERCENTAGE	100%	70%	1.3%	

4. THE PEOPLE TEST:

Last year, using the specifications recommended by well-known Trinidadian pollster Dr. Selwyn Ryan, the EAB did a computer random selection of 1475 names on the voters list and then went out to look for the corresponding persons.

In order for those numbers to be a close representation of the Guyanese society, the names chosen comprised Afro-Guyanese both urban and rural, Indo-Guyanese both urban and rural, persons of mixed race both urban and rural, and Amerindians. We also took care to ensure that the percentages of persons of those races reflected as closely as possible the racial distribution as indicated in the 1985 census, the last reliable enumeration taken.

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Our field investigations failed then to locate 487 of the 1475 persons we looked for, or just over 30%.

When the 1992 list was made available to us, we therefore immediately checked how many, if any, of those persons were still on the list. What we found was that of the 487 persons not located last year only 294 were still on the present list, 193 having been removed.

We therefore went looking again for those 294 persons, especially because it seemed that the address details in particular in last year's list were different from those in this year's list. However for various reasons, this number was reduced to 269 and we were able to locate all but 54 persons.

The final result was that only 54 persons, or 3.7% of last year's total test sample of 1475, have not been found.

These findings would no doubt go a long way in instilling renewed voter confidence, and in dissipating many doubts shared by the political parties.

However, there are two indicators in this test that we find particularly troubling. In West Ruimveldt we were unable to locate 49% of the persons sampled, and in Kitty (Central) we failed to find 47%. The Elections Commission itself had commissioned a study which revealed about three similar aberrations for which no explanation could be provided. A closer study therefore needs to be undertaken of at least these five areas.

These discrepancies apart, we find the overall 3.7% "not founds" to be not unreasonable, and again commend the Commission on this corrective exercise.

Results of Extended Ryan People Test (done June 1992)

AREA	TOTAL TESTED	DEAD	REMOVED	MIGRATED	FOUND	NOT FOUND	% NOT FOUND
Kitty (Central)	15	-	2	2	4	7	47%
N.E. La Penitance	22	-	5	-	14	3	14%
Cotton Tree	32	2	4	7	17	2	6%
Port Mourant	78	2	8	7	53	8	10%
Guyhoc Gardens	7	-	1	-	4	2	29%
West Ruimveldt	39	2	3	-	15	19	49%
Golden Grove	20	-	1	-	14	5	25%
Cummings Lodge	13	-	5	-	6	2	15%
Leonora	24	-	3	1	16	4	17%
Mocha/Arcadia	8	-	3	-	5	-	0%
Charity	11	1	2	-	6	2	18%
Total Sample Done (1991/1992)					1475		
Total Persons Not Found					54		
Percentage Persons Not Found					3.7%		

REPORT ON THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

*page 5 of 6***EAB'S CONCERNS FOR THE FUTURE**

The present voters list as sanctioned by the EAB must be regarded exactly for what it is — only a preliminary tool for carving the first rough form for a new democratic process. There is much yet to be done, many more tools required, and many concerns that need to be assuaged before we can be reasonably assured of a free and fair electoral process.

Some of our concerns include the following:

ID CARDS

According to the Elections Commission, there are still about 25,000 persons on the list for whom no ID numbers have been assigned. We had expected that when the Commission was presented last year with adequate photographic material, the issue of ID card distribution would have been settled by now.

The fact remains however that distribution continues to be extremely slow, and registration personnel often leave an area without attending to everyone. In almost every area visited by the registration team therefore, there is a backlog of persons without ID cards.

The level of attention given to the public by personnel at the National Registration Centre, Georgetown, is also totally inadequate. The Centre often refuses to see persons after 2 p.m., and even those who go during morning hours are shunted away. A Commission representative should be present at all times to monitor this work at the Registration Centre.

Although the Commission Chairman has given the assurance that persons without ID cards can still vote, there is some scepticism over this, and the Commission has to accelerate the distribution process in order to increase voter confidence. The private sector has offered to provide typists to speed up this exercise, and the Commission would do well to accept this gesture of assistance.

QUALITY OF ELECTORAL INK

In Kurdistan recently, despite the best assurances that the electoral ink was of "the highest quality", the opposition parties insisted on a test before election day. The ink was found to be easily removed, and the parties demanded a more permanent ink.

The EAB therefore recommends that two days in advance of polling day, each member of the Elections Commission should place his finger in ink randomly chosen by him in order to check its permanence

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later. (This exercise should not preclude them from voting at the appropriate time.)

THE PROBLEM OF VOTER CONFIDENCE

Early feedback both from our volunteers in the field and from our Election Hotlines indicate a level of resignation by persons whose names are not on the list this year. Some persons claim they registered on two occasions last year, and cannot be cajoled to do so again this year. Others cannot understand how they could have registered and their names be on last year's list, and yet not be on the current voters list.

An uphill task to regain the confidence of voters therefore now faces not only the political parties and the EAB, but especially the Elections Commission whose early stated aims were to increase voter confidence in the electoral process.

The success of the exercise just reviewed may serve to renew total public cooperation in this vital part of rebuilding the political future.

REPORT ON THE MEDIA

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TV news during the elections: An exercise in passivity



Rodney Tiffen, associate Professor of Government at the University of Sidney, Australia reports on the Media Monitoring Project's study of political news on television in the run-up to the elections and concludes that TV news coverage of the election was passive and lacking in initiative.

The Media Monitoring Project carried out an extensive quantitative study of television political news during the election period. The primary aims of the study were to examine the way in which political stories were structured, and the attention and type of coverage given to different parties and groups, and to different issues and themes.

Sample and Procedures

In television, the study covered the main evening news bulletins for the major SABC channels, TV1, CCV Nguni and CCV Sotho, as well as the evening bulletin of Bophuthatswana TV and the first morning bulletin on Good Morning South Africa. These five programmes were studied every day from 18 March to 24 April. Altogether the sample for the television news coverage comprises almost 1,000 political news stories spread over more than 100 bulletins on four stations during 32 days.

The procedure in television was that monitors, a different one for each programme, would complete a form summarising the stories according to a structured format, after which coders would translate this information into the categories constructed for the study. The study for television involved the coding of up

to 75 different variables for each political story. The great majority of these were to enable data to be coded on who appeared in what capacity in the news, allowing the presence of up to six people or groups to be coded in any story if necessary.

There are several gaps in the data due to problems in monitoring individual programs. The gaps are minor compared to the volume of data, and do not affect the total interpretation of the data in any significant way. But they do inhibit the capacity to make minute comparisons of particular stations or periods.

Amount and Type of Election Coverage

Coverage of political news during the election was extensive. TV1 morning news averaged 4.6 items per bulletin, Bop TV 4.3, TV1 evening news 5.0, CCV3 5.9, and CCV2 6.3. In all programmes political stories often took up more than half the bulletin during the election period.

Story Occasions

Overwhelmingly the gist for the news mill was

REPORT ON THE MEDIA

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provided by public occasions and the publicity seeking activities of political groups and institutions. Three major categories can be distinguished. The first, comprising almost half of the news occasions reported, involved deliberate publicity manoeuvres and public campaigning. This included the parties' election activities (ie rallies, leaders' visits to particular places etc) (21%) followed by press releases and public statements by parties (16%) and interest groups (6%) with press conferences and media interviews (5%) also prominent.

The second large group of news generating occasions were formal meetings and the proceedings of political institutions, totalling about 20%. This included the issuing of official and non-governmental reports (8%), meetings of interim official bodies such as the TEC (4%), and formal negotiations between conflicting groups (5%). Here the media fed off the public and largely pre-scheduled activities of other institutions.

The third group of story occasions involved what can be broadly labelled disorder news. Incidents of group violence (4%), strikes (5%) and other protest activity (5%) were the staples of this coverage. The institutionalised activities and public statements of law enforcement and investigative agencies (8%) tended to cover similar story subjects as the disorder occasions.

The extent to which the media were reacting to what major sources did and what public events happened is shown by the rarity of reports based primarily on media enterprise. Only two stories were labelled as special media reports. None were specifically called leaks or special investigations.

Sources in the News

The coding of the political stories during the election period revealed 1177 quotes from representatives. However, only a much smaller group of individuals featured regularly in the news.

The two most visible and widely cited individuals unsurprisingly were FW De Klerk and Nelson Mandela, coincidentally both

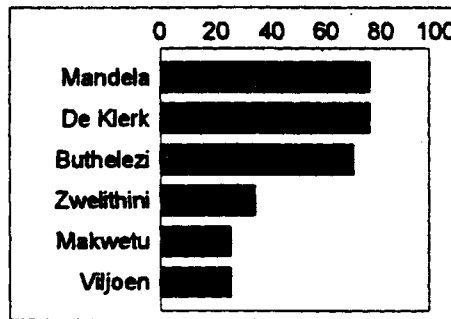


Table 1

mentioned in 78 stories in our sample. They both overshadowed all other members of their parties. De Klerk was mentioned about four times as often as the next two most quoted NP figures, Roelf Meyer (18) and Pik Botha (17), with no-one else mentioned more than six times (Danie Schutte and Hernaus Kriel). For the ANC, Cyril Ramaphosa was a clear second (26) and Thabo Mbeki third (9), with a wide spread after that. Similarly the other four most prominent leaders dominated coverage of their groups.

Table Two reflects the categorisation on which the next several tables are based. It gives the figures for the three largest parties first, then divides the minor parties into four groupings.

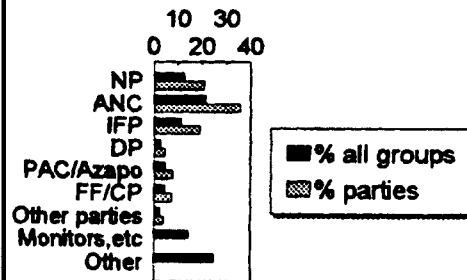


Table 2

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The last two categories are not parties. The first includes representatives from all independent and interim bodies monitoring or supervising aspects of the election (eg TEC, IEC, IMC, peace monitors, international observers). Of these the IEC and the TEC accounted for the majority of references. The final one includes representatives from a wide variety of groups: homeland governments, bureaucrats, police and military, interest groups like business and unions. No one of these receives sustained attention, although the police are the single most quoted group among this very scattered category.

The interpretation of the figures in Table Two must depend on various considerations which the observer brings to them: What does balance mean when the parties enjoyed such hugely differing amounts of support? when one party seemed overwhelmingly likely to be the major

party in the new government, when another party had been in office for all of living memory, when the parties differed so much in their organisational capacities, in their ability to generate news, in the size and enthusiasm of the rallies they held? Some have argued that in a multi-party system, groups should get coverage roughly proportional to their electoral support. However, one key to a democratic electoral system is that all major groups accept the legitimacy of the process and result and there is an argument therefore for minority groups to receive more air time than their numbers might strictly warrant. (Here and elsewhere it should be remembered that these figures cover only news programmes and not current affairs. It seemed, for example, that the

minor parties received proportionately more time in current affairs than in the news.)

Table Two shows that the ANC and its representatives were the most frequently quoted group, taking 21,6% of the total, and 35,7% of the parties quoted. The ANC received the single greatest coverage, but is the only party which received a lesser proportion of the coverage than its voting strength; the National Party received coverage roughly proportionate to its electoral support, while all other groups received a greater proportion of coverage than they received in votes.

In the results for Table Three, it should be remembered that the percentages for the minor parties are based on very small numbers, because of the small number of times others referred to them. Of the groups with

sizeable references from others, the references to monitors and interim bodies are mainly positive or neutral, while the final miscellaneous grouping also gets mixed references.

The major political parties predictably draw more negative than positive references from their opponents and others. More surprisingly, Inkatha gets a substantially more positive press from the other participants and the ANC draws the highest proportion of negative references. While critical surpass complimentary references to the ANC by 6:1, and to the Nationalists by 4:1, for Inkatha it is less than 2:1, with both more positive and fewer negative references than the other two large parties.

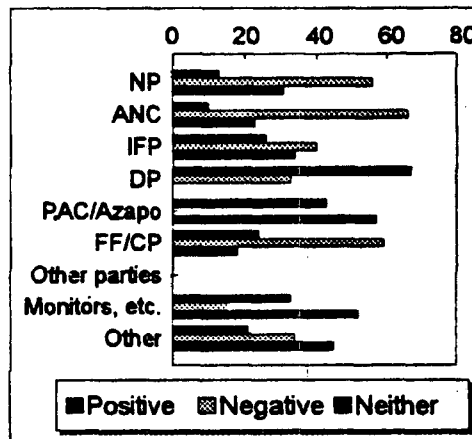


Table 3

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Table Four shows the pattern of references to others made by each group. While the single biggest category of references to other groups is negative (33%), about 20% of references were positive, and the rest (47%) balanced or mixed. This is perhaps a less critical and negative pattern of dialogue than one might expect in an election campaign. The monitors and interim bodies are the most conciliatory in their references.

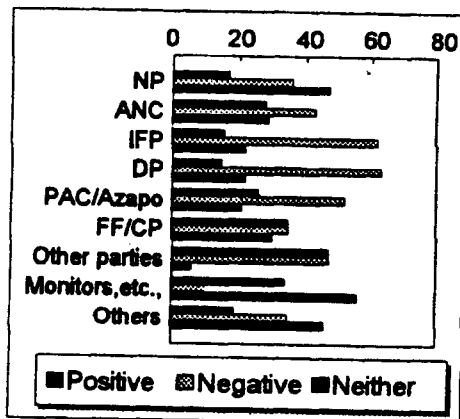


Table 4

Among the major political parties, Table Four shows the opposite pattern to Table Three. In the ratio of complimentary to critical references about others, the ANC had a ratio of 1:1.5; the Nationalists 1:2.1 and Inkatha 1:3.9. Thus while Inkatha received a lower proportion of negative comments from other groups than the other major parties, it was by far the most critical of others in its own comments. In contrast, while the ANC had the highest ratio of critical to complimentary references, its comments about others were the most positive.

Equity and Balance

As pointed out above, whether any set of numbers constitutes balance or equity in representing the views of the different parties depends on criteria which the observer brings to them. However concluding the discussion of the representation of the different groups,

and the types of claims they were making, it is pertinent to observe that whether or not they constitute some sort of equitable balance between parties overall, balance was much more rarely achieved in particular stories. The primary reason for this was the simplicity of story formats.

In the majority of stories only one source was cited. Of stories where the views of at least one group were quoted, 66% had only one source, 27% had two, and only 8% had three or more. Moreover, this was the case whether or not the story involved conflict. It was judged that 36% of stories involved an important element of conflict, but that in 77% of these only one side was cited, not both sides.

These figures suggest the passivity of the media reporting of the campaign. Little effort was made to secure a response from the criticised party in the same story. Often of course 'balance' was achieved over time, but the immediate action-reaction pattern by which the media secure dialogue and rough accountability between the parties was at best slow and imperfect.

Themes and Issues

The dominant issues were very much ones to do with the political and electoral process itself. Only 38% of stories were deemed to have a clear reference to policy, and over 60% of these involved issues to do with the political process. Two broad themes dominated: constitutional and election arrangements comprised about 60% of stories on political processes, while the campaign environment, whether it was free and fair, issues of voter education etc, accounted for most of the remainder (30%).

The next highest group concerned issues of crime and internal control (about 14% of total policy references). Sometimes this merged into stories of political violence; sometimes it was more general policies. One in five (18%) of the political stories coded contained some

REPORT ON THE MEDIA

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substantial reference to political violence. These tended to be reported more prominently in the bulletin, 48% of them were one of the first three stories covered. They also tended to involve more rounded reporting: in stories with at least one source quoted, 54% of stories involving violence compared with 30% of stories without violence quoted two or more sources. The proportion of the parties in stories involving violence largely conformed to their coverage in stories without violence.

A third cluster of issues received less but still substantial coverage. Labour relations, welfare and other stories centred upon themes of redistribution totalled nearly 12% of stories with some policy element. The major items here were about public servants' conditions, especially disputes because of insecurities that had arisen as a result of political change, and social welfare policies.

Relegated to virtual invisibility during the campaign were economic policy questions (about 1% of policy references) and questions to do with social policies and quality of life (health, education, environment, urban services etc) (about 20%).

The relative lack of policy emphasis and debate was unusual for coverage of an election campaign, but was less surprising in this particular election for two reasons. One was that many basic policy parameters to be followed by the Government of National Unity had already been agreed in multi-party negotiations and were not therefore to be decided by the election itself. The other was that in many ways the key issue in the election was South Africa's capacity to successfully hold a democratic election, and that this transcended all specific elements of policy. Nevertheless the emphasis has been criticised in so far as it reflected a tendency of the media to subordinate the other messages of speakers in favour of incidents of violence or the current state of negotiations.

CONCLUSION

The TV coverage of the election was extensive. In two important senses, however, these data also reveal a lack of initiative by the TV stations. Firstly, the stories concentrated overwhelmingly upon the public campaign occasions and the public statements of the parties, as well as the information releases surrounding the working of political institutions and formal negotiations. This is true to a large extent of all news reporting, but was particularly marked during this election campaign and suggests that the reporting was too passive. Secondly, there was a lack of editorial initiative in relating the claims of participants to each other, at least in the same story. Many stories had a simple source structure in which the political figures were able to put their views, without any counterbalancing even by those they were making claims about.

The figures on who appeared in the news do not present any gross departures from what might be expected given the electoral support and political resources of the major organisations. To the extent that groups talked about each other in the news, they tended to concentrate their attention on a narrower group of figures than the news cited and certainly not less diverse than, the perceptions of the political participants themselves.

The figures do reveal some interesting and subtle differences in the way the parties used their exposure. Notably Inkatha manifested a different pattern from the other two major parties. They made more references about themselves, and these had a very slightly higher proportion of positive references than the already predictably strong pattern of self-praise the others displayed. Moreover their references about other parties were more negative than the norm, and, perhaps more surprisingly, the comments by others about them less negative.

POST-ELECTION STATEMENT

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January 30, 1995

**Study and Research Group of Bangladesh (SRG)
Election Observation****Four Municipal Elections
Held on January 22, 1995**

SRG election teams were posted in the following manner --

- Shibgonj --** Full-time observers, a Coordinator and three mobile observers monitored at the polling centers in the Shibgonj municipal election.
- Sylhet --** Full-time observers along with a mobile observation team monitored forty-four polling centres of Sylhet out of fifty-six polling centres.
- Chandpur --** Full-time [] observers with the feedback of three mobile observers and two ward Coordinators monitored all the polling centres of Chandpur municipal area.
- Barisal --** Full-time observers, five ward Coordinators, and four mobile observers monitored forty-six polling centres in the Barisal municipal election out of forty-seven polling centres.

Generally, the municipal elections were held free and fair in Shibgonj, Barisal and Chandpur. Voters were enthusiastic. Election campaigning was widespread and effective. The candidates had no restrictions regarding election expenses. Polling agents were present at most of the polling centres The voter list was faulty to a certain extent. While in Barisal and Sylhet a few polling centres were [moved] even after the [official] publication of the [locations].

The election in Sylhet was generally held free, fair and peaceful except for some limited irregularities, (such as a few underage voting in different polling centres and a few cases of impersonation) but not on a massive scale. However, elections could not be held in seven polling centres because of hartal [national strikes] called by citizens of the area, who did not want their area to be a part of the Sylhet municipality. Some voters were present, but prevented from voting by pro-hartal elements. There was, however, no untoward incident.

Besides this, a ballot box was hijacked by some miscreants from Booth Number 1 of Polling Centre Number 13 of Ward Number 3. Voting was suspended here for sometime. However, the sealed ballot box was recovered with the help of the law enforcing agency within fifteen minutes of the hijacking. Balloting began as soon as the ballot box was brought back to the booth, where it belonged. Most of the candidates for Sylhet municipality election provided transport to carry the voters to the polling centres.

SRG will prepare [a] detailed election observation report covering these four municipality elections, which will be presented to the election commission in the near future.

INTERIM STATEMENT

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ETHIOPIAN CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY

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JUNE 5, 1994 CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION
MONITORING MISSION
SUMMARY REPORT
BY
A-BU-GI-DA
ETHIOPIAN CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY

22 June, 1994
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

I. BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

A-Bu-Gi-Da, the Ethiopian Congress for Democracy conducted a monitoring mission of the June 5, 1994 Constitutional Assembly elections. A-Bu-Gi-Da is a non-partisan civic organization that conducts a range of activities in support of the democratic process, such as civic education, monitoring, and public policy analysis. A-Bu-Gi-Da was created on June 24, 1991.

Because election monitoring falls under A-Bu-Gi-Da's mandate, the organization decided to monitor the Constitutional Assembly elections and established the following goals to govern the mission:

- to develop A-Bu-Gi-Da's capacity to monitor elections;
- to strengthen A-Bu-Gi-Da's local level democracy clubs through including them in the monitoring mission;
- to evaluate in selected localities the extent to which the election was free, fair, competitive and inclusive; and
- to issue a report of the findings of the mission outlining strengths and weaknesses of the June 5 election, and including suggested recommendations

At this juncture, A-Bu-Gi-Da would like to take this opportunity to emphasize the fact that like all non-partisan NGOs, it too is interested only in assessing to what degree an election system is practiced in the direction of democracy and not in finding faults and fixing blames to the day's government or its opposition.



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To implement its mission, A-Bu-Gi-Da organized a team of 69 monitors, including 10 staff members, 25 volunteers from Addis Ababa, and 34 members of local democracy clubs. The volunteer monitors, who had been given training in election monitoring by national and international resource people, had to sign a statement of non-partisanship before their assignment to the various monitoring stations. These monitors followed a coordinated system of information gathering including questionnaires for election officials, candidates, members of the public, as well as a monitoring checklist for election day. The mission covered a total of 35 constituencies in the following areas:

- 22 constituencies in Addis Ababa
- 4 constituencies in Northern Shoa
- 1 constituency in Mojo
- 2 constituencies in and around Debre Zeit
- 1 constituency in Awasa
- 2 constituencies in and around Dessie
- 1 constituency in Dire Dawa (pre-election monitoring only)
- 1 constituency in Bahir Dar
- 1 constituency in Jimma

In these areas A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors conducted 1,232 interviews and observed the voting in 668 polling stations. Based on these observations, A-Bu-Gi-Da has developed an assessment of the election in these areas. The following statement provides a summary of A-Bu-Gi-Da's findings, which will be followed by a more detailed report subsequently.

II. SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

A. Introduction

Elections are at the same time a technical exercise and a political process. The technical aspect incorporates the election administration, the logistical preparations, and the material processes used for registration and voting. The political component incorporates issues surrounding the level of competition, the level of voter involvement and interest in the election process, and the level of inclusiveness of all parties concerned. Election observers must evaluate the process from both the political and the technical angle. In accordance with this statement, A-Bu-Gi-Da has grouped its findings under two headings: "Administrative and Procedural Aspects" and "Political Aspects."

B. Administrative and Procedural Aspects of the Election

In general, A-Bu-Gi-Da concludes that, in the areas where it observed, the National Election Board did a satisfactory job in organizing and conducting the elections. In particular, A-Bu-Gi-Da found that:

1. The process was largely successful in providing citizens an opportunity to register and

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vote.

2. Materials were delivered on time and in sufficient quantities.

3. The polling station officials generally conducted their work fairly competently.

4. The Election Board developed a new and inexpensive training system. Although A-Bu-Gi-Da observers noted some areas where officials were not fully trained, in general, most officials appeared familiar with the procedures. 89.7% of the election officials polled by A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors said that the training was sufficient.

5. Most administrators were open and responsive to comments from A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors. For example, in response to comments by A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors, election officials in several cases ordered armed individuals to leave polling stations.

6. The National Election Board showed commendable flexibility when it agreed to modify a regulation barring public statements of their findings by observers until after the official declaration of results. Members of A-Bu-Gi-Da and other organizations had criticized this regulation as inconsistent with the freedom of speech provision in the Transitional Charter and international norms regarding election monitoring.

In addition, A-Bu-Gi-Da notes that the institution of the National Election Board as an independent body is a commendable development.

Notwithstanding A-Bu-Gi-Da's generally positive evaluation of the administrative aspect of the election, A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors did observe certain irregularities and procedural problems. These include:

1. The ballot was unnecessarily confusing. Many ballots had more symbols than candidates, and consequently election officials had to provide explanations to the voters on which symbols could be selected. This opened up a possibility of influencing the voter's choice. In a number of instances, A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors saw officials appearing to indicate with their hands and facial expressions which candidate should be selected. In one polling station an official had actually entered the voting booth where he was helping voters mark the ballot. Although possibly well intentioned, this guidance represents a serious infringement on the most important element of elections: the secrecy of the vote.

2. The second count of the ballots at the Woreda level provided ample opportunities for fraud. The election law indicates that all ballot boxes will be counted once at the polling station at the end of the day and once at the Woreda office a number of days later. The ballot box is under careful scrutiny throughout election day, so one can be reasonably certain of the accuracy of the election day count. However, it would not be difficult to change or stuff the boxes, which are not labeled, after they have left the scrutiny of observers in the polling station. In addition, the second count is time consuming and unusual by international

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standards. Although A-Bu-Gi-Da did not detect fraud during the Woreda counts it observed, the mission is concerned that the current system makes fraud possible.

3. There was insufficient voter education. In 70% (91 out of 131) of the polling stations covered outside Addis Ababa, A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors observed some confusion on the part of voters. In Addis Ababa, A-Bu-Gi-Da observed a rate of spoiled ballots of roughly 20%. In many cases voters asked for guidance on every step of the voting process. In addition, some voters also appeared ignorant of the basic idea of choosing a candidate. For example, some voters told A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors that they had chosen a particular symbol because it appealed to them, even though they could not say which candidate was represented by that symbol.

4. In at least one instance, the electorate was threatened with repercussions if they failed to vote. In the town of Armania, Northern Shoa Zone, A-Bu-Gi-Da observers heard local officials announcing on a megaphone "If you don't come out to vote, we will take some measures." Although this may have been an isolated incident, A-Bu-Gi-Da is concerned about the possibility that citizens were coerced to vote. In addition, A-Bu-Gi-Da is aware of allegations that some citizens were coerced to register. The Election Board should investigate these claims, and if they prove correct, should take corrective measures.

5. Armed individuals were allowed in or near many polling stations. For the most part, A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors did not observe these armed individuals acting in an aggressive or intimidating manner, but their presence may have had an effect on voters.

6. In one instance, the candidacy qualification signatures of one candidate looked similar to A-Bu-Gi-Da observers, and this similarity caused doubts as to the authenticity of the signatures.

7. In three cases A-Bu-Gi-Da monitors were restricted from doing their work. In one case, officials would not allow monitors to watch the vote count; in two cases monitors were briefly detained by police officials. Although these may have been isolated incidents, they represent a dangerous transgression of the election law provisions regarding observers.

8. The National Election Board was not sufficiently forthcoming to the Ethiopian public about its reasons for postponing elections in Region 5 and Dire Dawa.

C. Political Aspects of the Election

The administrative and procedural issues discussed in section B. are largely the domain of the National and Regional Election Boards, who deserve credit for the election's administrative successes and who should try to improve upon the election's shortcomings. Section C. covering the political aspects of the election, is addressed to a wider audience. A successful political process, one which is competitive and inclusive and stimulates citizen participation, is the responsibility of various government agencies as well as political parties,

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civic groups, churches, unions, and other organizations. It is to this larger group of political and civic leaders that the following comments are addressed.

As part of Ethiopia's transition to democracy, the Constitutional Assembly election was intended to resolve a political issue: who should determine the constitution, and what should be contained in that constitution. It is A-Bu-Gi-Da's belief that a complete monitoring mission must ask the question how successful was the election in resolving this political issue.

To arrive at a sound answer to the question, A-Bu-Gi-Da embarked upon gathering information in a number of ways. First, A-Bu-Gi-Da wrote to political parties to determine their reasons for participating or not participating in the elections. Second, A-Bu-Gi-Da interviewed candidates to determine if they offered alternative policies on the draft constitution. Third, A-Bu-Gi-Da interviewed citizens to determine their views on the process. Fourth, A-Bu-Gi-Da interviewed election officials to determine if the training they had received was sufficient to conduct the elections. Fifth, A-Bu-Gi-Da monitored the election on June 5, 1994. Through these and other sources A-Bu-Gi-Da made the following observations:

1. Opposition parties, such as the Gurage People's Democratic Front and the Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Coalition, indicated in letters to A-Bu-Gi-Da that among the many reasons for their boycott were 1) that they have been prevented from operating freely and 2) that they did not want to be a party to a predetermined EPRDF victory.
2. Because of the opposition boycott, no alternative view on the draft constitution was presented in an organized and systematic manner. In 28 out of 34 constituencies that A-Bu-Gi-Da monitored only one political party was competing. The absence of organizational structures of a variety of political parties has limited the intensity of campaigning. For example, candidates interviewed by A-Bu-Gi-Da conducted on the average only 3 or 4 meetings and posted only 100 to 150 posters.
3. In many constituencies monitored by A-Bu-Gi-Da, voters did not have a choice among different views of the constitution. Outside of Addis Ababa, in 75% of constituencies monitored there was no candidate who offered a different view on the constitution. In 25% of the constituencies only one candidate was running.
4. As the table on the following page illustrates, a high percentage of citizens expressed dissatisfaction with the competitiveness of the election and with the choice of candidates, particularly outside of Addis Ababa. The table summarizes the findings of A-Bu-Gi-Da's poll of public opinion about the election.

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CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION PUBLIC OPINION POLL

Place	Inter-views	Number plan-ning to vote	Is the election competitive?			Are you satis-fied with the Candidates?		
			YES	SOME-WHAT	NO	YES	SOME-WHAT	NO
Mojo	29	20	17	6	6	16	3	7
D/Zeit Town	24	12	8	7	9	7	6	11
D/Zeit Rural	30	21	17	4	8	17	2	9
Jimma	123	53	48	22	53	41	26	56
N. Shoa	202	107	61	30	80	48	31	94
Dessie	76	37	19	8	46	18	10	47
Kombo-lcha	48	37	41	2	1	38	7	1
Bahir Dar	104	74	43	23	38	33	34	37
Awasa	154	101	60	34	52	54	34	61
Total	790	462	314	136	293	272	153	323
Percent		58%	42%	18%	40%	36%	21%	43%
A. Ababa	442	292	218	72	141	205	78	141
Percent		66%	50%	17%	32%	48%	19%	33%

Note: Some people did not answer all questions.

5. Although complete figures are not yet available, a significant percentage of the population did not vote. The National Election Board announced a registration rate of 66%. If 80% of those registered voted, the percentage of eligible Ethiopians participating is only 53%.

6. The election law prohibited some former soldiers and WPE members from voting. In addition, the two-year residence requirement barred a sizeable number of eligible voters from voting. Also, there was no provision regarding eligible voters obliged to travel on election day.

7. A-Bu-Gi-Da heard an allegation from Ambo that an independent candidate named, Dejene Bellihu, and his supporters were harassed and detained for a given number of days. A-Bu-Gi-Da sent a group of monitors, who interviewed the candidate, officials and citizens in Ambo, and found the allegation convincing. Although this too may have been an isolated incident, it may contribute to the perception that the current government is not quite permissive of competition.

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From the observations cited above, A-Bu-Gi-Da concludes that the level of competitiveness and inclusiveness in the election are low. For this reason A-Bu-Gi-Da finds it doubtful whether the elected members of the assembly would satisfactorily represent the range of Ethiopian opinions on the constitution.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Technical Recommendations

1. The ballots should have the same number of symbols as there are candidates. In addition the candidate's name or picture should appear on the ballot.
2. Ballots should be counted only once, in the polling station, in the presence of observers and candidate representatives, who should each receive a signed and stamped copy of the record of the counting.
3. Armed individuals should not be allowed in the voting area.
4. Polling station procedures should be clearly established and strictly enforced. In particular, these procedures should insure that voters can vote in a completely secret place and free from any undue suggestions or influence from officials, observers, police or others.
5. The right not to vote should be respected. No government official or party representative should coerce citizens to vote.
6. Greater security should be exercised over the ballots. Extra ballots should be accounted for, ballots should be printed with serial numbers and on paper that can not be easily reproduced.
7. The number of signatures required for candidates should be reduced substantially.

B. Political Recommendations

1. The TGE and the boycotting parties should enter into a good faith negotiating forum. First and foremost they should be committed to creating a more inclusive, democratic process. South Africa provides valuable lessons of the importance of good faith negotiations and an emphasis on inclusiveness.
2. Citizens and political leaders should realize that they have a role to play in bringing about free and fair elections. Fairness in the process has been greatly increased in other countries by the actions of organizations outside of the government. Political parties have, for example, deployed observers who have confirmed that the ballot box was empty at the beginning of the day, watched the voting and then observed the count. Such scrutiny throughout the process can greatly reduce the possibility of fraud. Concern about fraud may

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have figured in the opposition parties' decision to boycott. In decisions about future elections, A-Bu-Gi-Da recommends that political parties not underestimate the steps they themselves can take to help create a transparent process.

3. A-Bu-Gi-Da believes that allegations about parties being unable to freely operate and other forms of harassment need to be taken seriously. A-Bu-Gi-Da intends to investigate specific allegations that it receives from parties, and encourages other independent, non-partisan organizations to do likewise. In addition, A-Bu-Gi-Da encourages the Transitional Government to actively promote pluralistic political activity throughout the country. It can do so by assuring all registered parties that their rights to organize will be respected and by ensuring that all officials and all security personnel understand and respect the inviolability of the freedom of assembly provision in the Transitional Charter.

4. Governmental and non-governmental organizations should conduct voter education programs to familiarize voters with the voting process.

5. Foreign governments, international NGOs and civic organizations should help facilitate the consolidation of the democratic process in Ethiopia.

For its part, A-Bu-Gi-Da is prepared to exert substantial efforts to contribute to more competitive and inclusive elections for the parliament. These efforts would include widespread voter education programs, training of party officials and functionaries and intensive monitoring of the entire election process.

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Selected NDI Publications

- *Civic Education and Parliamentary Dialogue in Albania 1991–1994*
- *The October 13, 1991 Legislative and Municipal Elections in Bulgaria*
- *The June 1990 Elections in Bulgaria*
- *An Assessment of the October 11, 1992 Election in Cameroon*
- *Democracies in Regions of Crisis—Botswana, Costa Rica and Israel (1990)*
- *The New Democratic Frontier—A Country by Country Report on the 1990 Elections in Central and Eastern Europe*
- *1990 Elections in the Dominican Republic*
- *An Evaluation of the June 21, 1992 Elections in Ethiopia*
- *The November 1990 National Elections in Guatemala (November 1991)*
- *The 1990 General Elections in Haiti (December 1990)*
- *The Public's Right to Know: Providing Access to Government Information—A Report on an NDI Conference on Promoting Government Transparency in Latvia (1994)*
- *Nation Building: The UN and Namibia (1990)*
- *Civil-Military Relations in Nicaragua (1995)*
- *Coordinating Observers to the 1993 Elections in Niger*
- *The October 1990 Elections in Pakistan*
- *Palestinian Perspectives on Democracy (1994 English/Arabic)*
- *The May 7, 1989 Panama Elections*
- *Voting for Greater Pluralism: The May 26, 1991 Municipal Elections in Paraguay*
- *The 1989 Paraguayan Elections: A Foundation for Democratic Change*
- *Reforming the Philippine Electoral Process: 1986-1988 (Reissued Summer 1991)*
- *The May 1990 Elections in Romania*
- *Pre-Election Report on the December 1993 Elections in the Russian Federation*
- *An Assessment of the Senegalese Electoral Code (1991 English/French)*
- *Uneven Paths: Advancing Democracy in Southern Africa (1993)*
- *Promoting Participation in Yemen's 1993 Elections*
- *Building a Civil Society in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1995)*
- *The October 31, 1991 National Elections in Zambia*

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