



### Minister of the Interior Opens Election Center



Left to right: Interior Minister Ziyad Baroud, Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, Speaker Nabih Berri, and President Michel Suleiman

Just before midnight on April 7, Minister of the Interior Ziyad Baroud inspected the Ministry's new election facilities with President Michel Suleiman, Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, Speaker Nabih Berri, and other distinguished guests.

President Suleiman called for combating election bribes and urged Lebanese media to uphold journalism ethics in order to safeguard freedom of speech.

*"This is a democratic race. We want competitive elections. Whoever wins, wins. And let us accept the results in the spirit of sportsmanship." - President Suleiman*

The new center will host security apparatuses, news media, the Supervisory Commission for Election Campaigns (SCEC), Lebanese civil society organizations, including NDI's partner in advocacy for electoral reform the Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform (CCER), and a liaison to international monitors.

### Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections Launches Monitoring Effort



From left to right, Executive Director of LADE Yara Nassar, Secretary-General of LADE Ziad Abdel Samad, Board Member of the Lebanese Transparency Association Faysal Kak, General Coordinator for Elections LADE Gilbert Doumit

On April 2, the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) held a press conference to formally launch the democratic observation effort. Members of the press, civil society, the international community, and other stakeholders attended.

### NDI is Accredited and Deploys LTOs

NDI has officially been accredited by the Ministry of the Interior to observe the election. The mission will include eight Long Term Observers (LTOs) deployed for 10 weeks before the election, two pre-election assessment delegations, and 30 Short Term Observers (STOs).

The eight veteran LTOs hail from seven countries. Teams have been deployed in Beirut, Chekka in the North, Zahle in the Bekaa valley, and Jezzine in the South.

LTO teams will cover all districts in their region, prioritizing a mix of hotly- and less- contested areas to provide a complete picture of the range of campaign activity. Two weeks into their pre-election monitoring, LTOs have met with candidates, political parties, NGOs, and election officials.

### Candidate Registration Closes April 7

By the Numbers:

- 701:** Total number of candidates running for 128 parliamentary seats;
- 12:** Number of women candidates;
- 69:** Largest number of candidates running in a single district, for Zahle's seven seats;
- 40:3:** Highest ratio of candidates to seats, in Dinniyeh-Miniyeh;
- 1:** Number of uncontested seats. MP Hagop Pakradounian became the first uncontested in the race for the Armenian Orthodox seat in Metn;
- 17:** Number of uncontested seats in 2005;
- 2:** The number of Gebran Bassils running in Batroun. One is the current Minister of Telecommunications and son-in-law of Michel Aoun. The other one is... not.



LTO teams for the North, Bekaa, and South before deployment (not pictured: Beirut team)

### Dueling Billboards



Future Movement (FM) Billboards

Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) Billboards



FPM billboard, "There is no future without change."

The image on the right which reads "There is no future without change," is a clever play on words and symbols, as the color blue represents Future Movement, a member of the current majority coalition, and orange represents the Free Patriotic Movement, an opposition party. Therefore, FPM imposes its slogan of "change" on FM's ownership of the "future."

### Election Resources

List of registered candidates by name (including religion and district) released by the Ministry of the Interior as of April 8, 2009:

[http://www.elections.gov.lb/Candidates-Corner/Registered-Candidates/CandidatesFinalList\\_07042009.aspx](http://www.elections.gov.lb/Candidates-Corner/Registered-Candidates/CandidatesFinalList_07042009.aspx)

List of registered candidates by district (grouped to show the number of candidates contesting each seat) released by IFES as of April 8, 2009:

[http://www.ifes.org/publication/d43fc99ae34ce89fbe5972324d89b3f5/IFES\\_Candidate\\_Registration\\_Presentation\\_040809.pdf](http://www.ifes.org/publication/d43fc99ae34ce89fbe5972324d89b3f5/IFES_Candidate_Registration_Presentation_040809.pdf)

NDI's newly released Election Terminology Glossary (English-Arabic):

[http://www.aswat.com/files/AR-EN\\_Election\\_Term\\_Guide\\_2009.pdf](http://www.aswat.com/files/AR-EN_Election_Term_Guide_2009.pdf)

#### In the News:

Ziad Majed's concise analysis of the June election in the Middle East Bulletin:

<http://www.middleeastprogress.org/2009/03/an-analysis-of-possibilities/>

Latest news on Lebanese parliamentary elections:

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/lebanon/090409/lebanons-political-season-kicks?page=0,0>

[http://dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition\\_id=1&categ\\_id=2&article\\_id=100844](http://dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=1&categ_id=2&article_id=100844)

Article on NDI's observation delegation in An-Nahar (in Arabic):

<http://www.elections.gov.lb/Observers-Corner/International-Observers.aspx>