



JORDAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

JANUARY 23, 2013



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INTERNATIONAL REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE

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GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

Civil Status and Passport Department (CSPD)	The CSPD is the government entity that handles issues of citizenship. It performs numerous tasks including issuing travel documents and national identification cards, registering new citizens, documenting deaths and certifying divorces. During the run-up to the elections, the CSPD was the government institution responsible for voter registration and the issuance of election cards.
District Election Commission (DEC)	The chief electoral body responsible for administering elections at the district level; each of the 45 districts nation-wide had a DEC.
East Bankers	This term refers to Jordanian citizens from the tribes whose ancestral lands were east of the Jordan River and who have traditionally made up the bulwark of the monarchy.
<i>Herak</i>	<i>Herak</i> is a diverse grouping of pro-democracy supporters that has sprung up since the beginning of the Arab Spring. Of particular note is that <i>Herak</i> supporters are from the East Bank tribes, historical supporters of the monarchy.
Islamic Action Front (IAF)	The IAF is the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan. Founded in 1992, the IAF boycotted the recent parliamentary elections as well as the 2010 elections.

Independent Election Commission (IEC)	The IEC was appointed by King Abdullah II on May 2012, to take over election administration from the Ministry of Interior, which had previously conducted all of Jordan’s parliamentary elections. The IEC introduced new election procedures, including allowing citizen and international election observers, and requiring voters to register in the electoral district where they wish to cast their vote, and select the polling center at which they plan to vote.
International Republican Institute (IRI)	A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, IRI advances freedom and democracy worldwide by developing political parties, civic institutions, open elections, democratic governance and the rule of law.
<i>Majlis al-Aayan</i>	The Upper House of Parliament.
<i>Majlis al-Nuwaab</i>	The Lower House of Parliament.
<i>Mukhabarat</i>	The Arabic term used to describe the domestic intelligence apparatus in Arab states. In Jordan, the <i>Dairat al-Mukhabarat al-Ammah</i> , or General Intelligence Directorate, is commonly referred to using this term.
National Dialogue Committee (NDC)	A 52-member independent body comprised of representatives from civil society, professional associations and political parties, tasked in 2011 with making reform recommendations to King Abdullah’s government. The NDC recommended that the IEC be formed and oversee elections in Jordan instead of the Ministry of Interior.
Single Non-Transferrable Vote (SNTV)	The SNTV system is also known as the “one man, one vote” law in Jordan. First adopted in 1993, the SNTV system has been in use in Jordan ever since. Under SNTV, each voter casts one vote for a candidate even if there is more than one seat to be filled in each electoral district. Those candidates with the highest vote totals fill these seats. SNTV in the Jordanian context

presents political parties with a challenge. The rationale for adopting this law was that most voters would choose tribal or familial candidates if given one vote. Due in part to this law, distribution of parliamentary seats in Jordan has been skewed towards less populous tribal areas in the southern part of the country.

West Banker

Term referring to Jordanians of Palestinian origin, or those from the West Bank of the Jordan River.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 23, 2013, approximately 1.3 million Jordanians voted in elections that saw more than 1,425 candidates running for the 150 seats in the *Majlis al-Nuwaab*, Jordan's lower house of parliament. These elections marked a step forward for Jordan on its path towards a constitutional monarchy. The elections were carried out under the supervision of Jordan's new Independent Election Commission (IEC) in accordance with a controversial election law that Jordanians across the spectrum believe needs to undergo further reform.

The Kingdom of Jordan is a constitutional monarchy whose executive, King Abdullah II, wields significant authority through an appointed prime minister and cabinet. The bicameral parliament is divided into the *Majlis al-Aayan*, or upper house, consisting of 60 appointed members, and the *Majlis al-Nuwaab*, the lower house made up of 150 seats. Of those, 108 are elected from 45 single and multi-member districts and 27 are elected through national proportional lists, which are not required to be formal political parties. An additional 15 seats are reserved for a women's quota. Election districts in Jordan are disproportionate, with the less populated rural districts having significantly fewer citizens per representative than the more populous urban districts.

The International Republican Institute (IRI) has 30 years of experience observing more than 150 elections in more than 46 countries. IRI was represented by a delegation of election witnesses for the November 2010 parliamentary elections, and was invited by the IEC to send a group of official international observers for these elections.

The findings and recommendations presented in this report are drawn from the observations of IRI's three teams of long-term observers which deployed to the field two months prior to Election Day and 15 short-term observer teams which deployed immediately before Election Day. Long-term observers witnessed the campaign period and provided detailed context for the short-term observers by meeting with a wide range of electoral stakeholders throughout the country. Short-term observer teams, including international delegates and IRI staff, arrived in Amman three days prior to the elections and were briefed by stakeholders and the long-term observers before deploying to all of Jordan's 12 governorates. On Election Day IRI teams observed voting at more than 175 polling stations.

The 2013 parliamentary elections showed both the significant progress Jordan has made and the long road ahead. Improvements in voter and candidate registration, transparency in vote counting, ensuring the secrecy of the vote and providing the conditions for election observation for both citizen and international groups all made for more transparent and legitimate elections. The institutionalization of the IEC, and its work in operationalizing many of the National Dialogue Committee's (NDC) recommendations, added to the sense among citizens that the elections were not being stage-managed or interfered with by the government or its surrogates.

It is troubling that the Municipal Law was not amended to grant the IEC legal jurisdiction over the August 27, 2013 municipal elections. Instead the IEC was only asked to oversee the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in this effort. This decision detracts from important steps taken towards conducting more credible elections in Jordan.

While many technical improvements were readily apparent in the IEC's handling of the parliamentary elections, particularly in voter and candidate registration and the voting process on Election Day, problems still persist. The IEC's failure to bring charges against candidates who bought votes and campaigned illegally on Election Day, as well as confusion in the announcements and audits of final election results, need to be addressed.

On larger issues, the current election system may well be one of the most significant obstacles to Jordan's further democratization. Despite the addition of a national proportional list, voting was dominated by the single non-transferable voting system (SNTV), which in the Jordanian context contributes to unequal representation of rural areas over urban areas. Furthermore, King Abdullah II, in one of his publicly released white papers, discussed the need for the development of political parties with platforms and policy prescriptions. Yet the 27 seats reserved for the national lists are not enough to foster the development of political parties. The lack of parties with coherent political platforms led to confusion among citizens as to the need for and purpose of the national list system.

Finally, political parties can truly develop only when the elected chamber they are running for has real authority, which in the Jordanian context translates into more power for the lower house of parliament in choosing the prime minister and forming the government, along with increased independence and real legislative, budgeting and oversight power. This means further constitutional reforms that increase the parliament's powers at the expense of the powers of the monarch.

The King's view is that an incremental approach to democratization is more in line with public opinion, and he has prioritized stability and security. This approach was largely validated by the failure of the opposition's election boycott to gain traction as seen by a voter turnout of close to 57 percent. Yet this does not conceal palpable frustration, particularly on the part of political elites, political parties and movements, with an electoral system that, despite technical improvements, has arguably produced another rubber-stamp parliament. The current system has continuously failed to proportionally include various political and social groups and limited voters to one vote at the district level. This shortcoming has further empowered entrenched elites and has meant the retention of an unequal districting scheme that distorts the true political landscape of the country.

INTRODUCTION

Jordan's January 23, 2013 parliamentary elections were largely a referendum on the King's efforts toward reform. The King's supporters argued that gradual reform was best for the country while his detractors countered that a strong boycott movement would signal dissatisfaction with the pace of reform and force more drastic changes to the new election law and the constitution. For the international community, these elections were the first to be held in the country since the Arab Spring, a barometer that would show whether a small, relatively moderate kingdom, surrounded by chaos, was weathering the monumental change in the region through gradual, managed reform.

Faced with a history of flawed elections and public frustration with democratic processes and the general direction of the country, King Abdullah II called for comprehensive reform in the spring of 2011. The capstone of the ensuing reform process, the new election law, however, was controversial in its failure to address many of the shortfalls of the previous law, despite recommendations to improve them by the royally-appointed NDC. Procedurally, however, the introduction of the IEC was a significant step forward, particularly given what it was able to accomplish in the brief amount of time between being established on June 19, 2012, and the January 23, 2013 elections.

Three citizen observer groups were accredited by the IEC to monitor the elections, namely, the Civil Coalition for Monitoring the Jordanian Parliamentary Elections (RASED), the Integrity Coalition for Election Observation and the National Council for Human Rights. Together, these groups deployed more than 500 long-term observers to monitor the pre-election period and nearly 7,000 observers on Election Day, the most robust observation effort in Jordan's history. The efforts of these civil society organizations were critical to enhancing the overall legitimacy of the electoral process. They monitored and provided written assessments of all critical stages of the election process, from voter registration to candidate registration, to Election Day and adjudication of complaints. Their work attested to the capacity within Jordanian civil society to hold the electoral authorities accountable as well as to the IEC's willingness to break new ground by being transparent, responsive and communicative about a process that had hitherto been closed and prone to manipulation.

Five international groups observed the elections. In addition to IRI, the National Democratic Institute, the European Union, the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation sent teams of observers. In total, these groups included more than 40 long-term observers and close to 200 short-term observers. Their work, like the work of citizen monitoring groups, was facilitated by a cooperative and open IEC.

The 2013 parliamentary elections marked the first time that IRI's delegation served as fully accredited election observers in Jordan after having the status of election witnesses in 2010. IRI agreed to participate in this role at the invitation of the IEC, which requested that international organizations be critical and offer constructive suggestions to improve future election administration. In seeking to improve Jordan's election systems, IRI commends the IEC for its open and transparent approach in interacting with all observer groups during the election process.

To observe the elections IRI deployed three teams of long-term observers two months prior to Election Day. Each covered one region of Jordan – north, center and south – to provide a longer-

term view of election preparations and the campaign period. IRI's short-term observers, 15 in all, were briefed in Amman by candidates, civil society leaders, citizen observers and IRI's long-term observers before they deployed. The long- and short-term observer teams then visited more than 175 polling stations in all of Jordan's 12 governorates on Election Day. Following the elections, IRI released a preliminary statement. This report constitutes the final document, which will be shared with the IEC and the Government of Jordan as they look forward to additional reforms and procedural improvements.

POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Hashemite monarchy in Jordan is led by King Abdullah II, who is the head of state and the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The King, through a series of white papers and speeches on the topic, announced his decision to carry out reform with the longer-term goal of transforming Jordan into a constitutional monarchy. But a weak parliamentary mandate and an entrenched, conservative political elite have both complicated and slowed the King's reform agenda.

As a political class, East Bankers have disproportionately benefited from patronage networks created by the existing order, which a democratic and merit-based system threaten to disrupt.¹ Such positions of privilege have been sustained, in part, by laws that favor less populated, tribally-dominated areas, and allow the King to appoint the upper house and have the final say in the nomination, hiring and firing of the prime minister. The King is constitutionally permitted to veto new legislative measures and dissolve the parliament if necessary. In theory, the veto authority is limited by the bicameral parliament, comprising an appointed senate and an elected house of deputies, where a two-thirds majority in both houses can override the King's veto in legislative matters. This situation, however, has never occurred, as both chambers of parliament have been traditionally stacked with loyalists from large tribes that have usually served as the power base for the King.

As a result of this framework, actual policy discussion in parliament has tended to be weak, and issue-based alliances have rarely been formed. Rather, patronage and service delivery to their respective constituencies (tribes, in most cases) have often been the main concerns for many members of parliament. Administered by the Ministry of Interior, elections in 2007 and 2010 reinforced this status quo, as internal security services were seen to have played a significant role in influencing election results.

The Arab Spring, however, catalyzed debate over the need for political change. The two main pillars of the pre-election opposition were the *Herak*, the largely governorate-based popular movement that arose in Jordan in response to the Arab Spring, and the Islamic Action Front (IAF), the largest and most organized political party in Jordan.

Faced with the opposition's demands, the Royal Court has repeatedly promised reforms. In 2011, the King set up the NDC, which was tasked with drafting proposals for changes to two key documents – the national election law and the political party law. In April 2011, the King formed the Royal Commission on Constitutional Review to develop recommendations for constitutional changes.

The 52-member NDC, chaired by Senate President Taher al-Masri, was established in May 2011 and included ministers, pro-reform members of parliament, journalists, centrist political parties, religious leaders and civil society representatives, although it included only four women. Despite its prominence as the leading opposition party, the IAF chose not to participate because the committee was not mandated to discuss constitutional changes to articles 34, 35 and 36, which reference the

¹ Muasher, Marwan. *A Decade of Struggling Reform Efforts in Jordan: The Resilience of the Rentier System*. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 2011. p. 14.
<http://carnegieendowment.org/files/jordan_reform.pdf>.

King's powers with respect to holding elections, appointing and dismissing the prime minister and appointing the senate.

At the conclusion of its two months of deliberations, the most significant recommendation by the NDC was to discard the controversial SNTV system. As an alternative to SNTV, the NDC backed a two-tier electoral system with 15 seats to be elected through a national proportional list, while the remaining 115 seats would be determined through a bloc-vote system at the governorate level.² This bloc-vote system was last used in 1989, and allowed voters to select as many candidates as there were seats in the constituency. This format was widely believed to have increased political party participation and was supported by the IAF whose candidates won roughly a quarter of seats in the lower house in the 1989 elections. The NDC proposals, however, were not ultimately adopted.

The recommendations of the Royal Commission on Constitutional Review, which was made up mostly of former prime ministers appointed by the King and which notably did not include opposition representatives, were meaningful but limited in scope. Eventual changes to the constitution recommended by the commission created a constitutional court and restricted the government's right to issue controversial provisional laws (which had regulated previous elections) but did not substantively deal with or address the issue of parliament's powers versus the monarchy's. Passed by parliament in 2011, the constitutional changes created an independent election management body, long a demand of reformists, and recommended by international observer groups, including IRI, as a best practice.

The end result of the debate over the election law was a useful, but ultimately cosmetic, set of changes passed by parliament in July 2012. Though improvements were made to the electoral process from a technical perspective, primarily to voter registration, transparency in the vote count, ensuring the secrecy of the vote and election observation, the code disappointed reform activists who advocated for measures that would have provided more representative districting and equitable representation.

Changes to the political party law as envisioned by NDC widened the scope for party activity in Jordan by reducing the oversight role of the Ministry of Information in party affairs, decreasing the number of founding members required for registering a party and allowing parties to own media outlets. A good number of the NDC suggestions regarding political party law were rolled back, with the exception of media ownership, limiting the impact of the reforms; nevertheless, the political party law adopted by parliament in 2012 was an improvement over the 2007 law. Such changes only begin to scratch the surface, however; constitutional change is necessary for parties to fully flourish in Jordan.

Following the adoption of the election law, the newly-mandated election management body, the IEC, announced elections for January 23, 2013. The King dissolved parliament accordingly in early October 2012. Once the cabinet resigned, Abdullah Ensour was appointed prime minister and tasked with the formation of a transitional cabinet and preparation for the elections. Ensour, a

² *Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (IX): Dallying with Reform in a Divided Jordan*. Middle East/North Africa Report, No. 118. International Crisis Group. 12 March 2012. p. 6-7.
<<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iran%20Gulf/Jordan/118-popular-protest-in-north-africa-and-the-middle-east-ix-dallying-with-reform-in-a-divided-jordan.pdf>>.

former lawmaker who served in both houses of parliament, was the fifth prime minister to serve since the onset of the Arab Spring in early 2011.

Overall, the opposition did not buy into the government's approach to reform. Instead they criticized the NDC, the new election law and what they deemed as the government's rush to elections as insincere efforts built more for posturing than real reform. The *Herak*'s concerns were initially expressed through economic demands, but price hikes in November 2012, dissatisfaction with the election law, and reports of government corruption led to calls from some members for the end of the current monarchy. A number of political parties, including the IAF, who had boycotted the elections in 2010 subsequently announced their intentions to boycott the January elections in protest against what they believed was the government's failure to deliver meaningful reform to the election law and the political process more broadly. The IAF, parts of the *Herak* and other opposition movements organized joint protests in the lead up to elections.

Though the recommendations of the NDC were largely neglected, government representatives and supporters of the King maintain that progress was made by adopting the new election law and through constitutional changes. Supporters of the King's reform agenda emphasize that these efforts are part of an incremental approach that is more in line with public demands and with maintaining stability and security in a volatile region. During a speech in October 2012, the King himself said the next parliament would be a "gate to comprehensive reform," stating further that parliament would be "the institution constitutionally mandated to continue achieving true change and overcoming national challenges." As such, the King and his government saw changes to the election and political party laws as steps forward in the country's democratic transition.

Government representatives and supporters of the Palace disagreed with calls for constitutional changes that would curtail the King's power so early in the reform process. While they acknowledge there are obstacles slowing reform, they point the finger at the circle of entrenched elite around the King rather than at the King himself. This political elite, which has been identified by the King himself, is bolstered by ties to the Royal Court and security services and is influential in business circles, stands to lose the most from political reform and has resisted calls for change.³ Resistance was evident during the process of reforming the election law in the summer of 2012 under the premiership of Awn Khasawneh, when a more reformist version of the election law was reportedly shelved after interference from governmental entities that felt threatened by the NDC recommendations.

Chief among the "threatening" reforms were more equitable representation between districts and introducing more than one vote at the district level, innovations that likely would have benefited the IAF.⁴

³ Goldberg, Jeffrey. "The Modern King in the Arab Spring." *The Atlantic*, 18 March 2013. <<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/04/monarch-in-the-middle/309270>>.

⁴ In two separate stakeholder interviews, one with a former Prime Minister and another with a prominent Palestinian Jordanian candidate thought to have close relations with the IAF, IRI long-term observers were informed that substantive changes to the law did not occur because of government fear of the IAF. Specifically, they both alleged that in negotiations held over the law, the IAF failed to give guarantees to the government that if they were able to gain a sizeable chunk of representation in parliament that they would not pursue constitutional changes to articles 34, 35 and 36, which reference the King's powers with respect to holding elections, appointing and dismissing the prime minister, and appointing the senate.

Economic Challenges

In Jordan, economic issues can quickly affect the political discourse when citizens are exposed to economic shocks. The most serious example occurred in November 2012, when Jordanians rioted in response to the government's decision to raise prices on basic petroleum products.⁵ The domestic economic environment remains fragile, and coupled with the slow democratic reform process could still be the cause of future unrest.

An official unemployment rate of 12.5 percent,⁶ high levels of poverty, multi-year budget shortfalls and economic pressures stemming from the flow of refugees from Syria have put Jordan in dire economic straits. With few natural resources and a small industrial base, primary contributors to the economy include tourism, expatriate worker remittances and the service sector. In addition, Jordan is heavily dependent on aid from abroad. In 2012, the government expected to receive \$2.6 billion in foreign assistance from multiple donors, most notably the Gulf countries, the European Union and the U.S. It should be noted that this level of aid is lower than in the previous years, adding to the general economic woes of the country. Jordan's debt has also increased noticeably in the past three years due to higher electricity, gas and other energy prices in international markets, reaching \$18.9 billion in 2011. This brought the debt to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio up to 72 percent, exceeding the 60 percent legally permissible in the constitution.⁷ Jordan's budget deficit in 2012 was nearly eight percent of GDP, a dramatic increase over the 5.7 percent deficit in 2011.

In order to address the country's growing deficit, the government signed a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in August 2012. The agreement mandates a reduction in public spending, specifically on subsidies, in exchange for a bill of economic health from the IMF which will enable Jordan to borrow money on international markets. In a controversial decision connected to the IMF conditions, the Jordanian government lifted subsidies on oil derivatives in November 2012, raising the prices on a range of fuel products. Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour justified the harsh measures, saying that the state was headed for a budget shortfall of up to U.S. \$3.5 billion in 2012, mostly as a result of high oil prices and disruption of Egyptian gas supplies. The upside of the difficult decision was that, if the government will be able to stick to a fiscal reform program largely focused on removing energy subsidies and reducing budget deficits, the IMF predicted that Jordan's economy could be stabilized by 2015 with a projected growth rate of 4.5 percent.⁸

Demographic Breakdown

Jordan's demographics present unique challenges to political representation for Palestinian-Jordanians, youth, women and minority groups. In particular, the status of Palestinian-Jordanian representation in parliament is especially sensitive, given their history in the country.

⁵ *Reuters*. "One dead in Jordan riots, more protests planned" 15 November 2012. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/15/jordan-protests-idUSL5E8MFBNU20121115>.

⁶ *The Jordan Times*. "Unemployment figures inaccurate — Katamine" 18 March 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/unemployment-figures-inaccurate---katamine>.

⁷ *Petra News*. "PM: Government to refrain from any surprise decision on fuel subsidy, open to all opinions" 11 March 2012. http://www.petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=89452.

⁸ *The Jordan Times*. "IMF top official optimistic about Jordan economic trajectory" 21 March 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/article/imf-top-official-optimistic-about-jordan-economic-trajectory>.

While exact figures are not readily available, Jordan's citizenry is roughly split between East Bank Jordanians, who have inhabited the country since before the 1948 war between Israel and its Arab neighbors, and Palestinian-Jordanians, who came to Jordan as refugees during and after 1948. East Bankers are thought to account for about half of Jordan's estimated population of 6.4 million people⁹, with Jordanians of Palestinian origin making up the other half.¹⁰ Palestinian-Jordanians have tended to concentrate in urban centers such as Amman and Zarqa, while most East Bankers have continued to reside in their rural ancestral homelands in the north and south of the country.

While East Bankers make up Jordan's political elite, Palestinian-Jordanians have tended to be reluctant to participate in national politics and uncertain about their political role within Jordanian society. The SNTV system, by giving voters one vote when their primary preference is to vote along tribal lines, has abetted underrepresentation of many citizens. This system is combined with unequal districting, particularly in urban areas like Amman, Irbid and Zarqa. In Amman, for example, 112,000 inhabitants were represented by one parliamentary seat; whereas the more rural governorate of Balqa was allocated one seat for every 40,000 residents.¹¹ Similarly, in Tafleeh, one seat per 25,000 citizens was allocated. These inequities were reflected in voter registration, where Irbid's seventh district averaged one seat per 48,701 voters, while Ma'an's second district averaged 6,733 voters per seat, giving a vote in Ma'an almost eight times the weight of a vote in Irbid.

Age distribution trends in Jordan are troubling as the population is young, with more than 65 percent under 30 years of age, and mostly urban, with about 70 percent of residents living in urban areas. Urban youth have been sidelined by the so-called one man, one vote system combined with societal preference to defer to older men in political matters. In the newly elected parliament, out of 150 members, only three are under the age of 35 and only seven are under the age of 40.

The quota system remains crucial to minority representation in parliament in light of the tribal nature of Jordanian politics and political parties' immature development. Minority communities include Circassians, Chechens and Armenians, and make up less than five percent of the total population. Christians, including Armenians as well as indigenous and those of Palestinian origin, make up three to five percent of the population. Under the current, as well as the previous election law, Christians are allotted nine seats, giving them slightly more representation in parliament than their percentage of the population, while Circassians and Chechens are allocated three seats combined. Many members of minority groups believe that without access to quota seats they would have no representation in the parliament; in fact, no minority candidates were elected outside the quota system in these elections.

⁹ Government of Jordan, Department of Statistics. *Population & Growth Estimation*. 2012. <http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/index.htm>.

¹⁰ According to a report from the Brookings Institution, the number of Jordanians of Palestinian origin could reach as high as 70 percent. Shaikh, Salman. *Now the Pressure's Building on Jordan*. Spring 2012. <<http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2012/03/15-jordan-shaikh>>.

¹¹ According to a report from the International Crisis Group, 25 seats are distributed across Amman's 2.8 million citizens, while 10 seats are given to the rural governorate of Balqa with 400,000 inhabitants. Similarly, four seats are given to Tafleeh Governorate which has only 100,000 inhabitants. International Crisis Group, p. 7.

Gender Roles in Government and Society

Because of societal norms, many women in Jordan are generally ill-informed about politics and disinclined to participate. At a time when Jordan's laws regarding political parties and elections have changed, women remain far less knowledgeable about their rights as citizens and are subject to pressure from male relatives to vote for candidates who they themselves may not have otherwise supported. Or they remain on the sidelines, passive and disinclined to engage in anything "untraditional." Thus, many women are marginalized in the political process, discouraged or unwilling to vote their conscience, unlikely to involve themselves in political campaigns and even less inclined to run for office. Often living isolated in closed and conservative communities, they thus cannot play a role in the amelioration of their own socio-economic situation. This helps perpetuate the subjugation of women in society as appendages of their husbands, brothers or fathers, rather than as citizens acting according to their own conscience and will.

Though the quota for women in the parliament has been steadily raised from six to 12 to 15 in the current law, or 10 percent of the seats in the lower chamber of parliament, this is below the 20.4 percent global average¹² for female participation in parliamentary governments. The women's quota works as a "first loser" mechanism, in which the female candidate who receives the highest percentage of votes in her district among all female candidates but who does not get enough votes to win a seat outright against male competitors, gains a seat in parliament. In practice, some smaller tribes that have struggled to win seats outright have used the women's quota to gain representation in parliament by putting forward female candidates in small districts where just a few voters can sway election results through the "first loser" mechanism.

Evidence of the limited role women play in government is apparent in the legal committee in parliament, tasked with formulating recent electoral reforms, which had no female representation. In addition, Prime Minister Ensour's transitional government, in place prior to the elections, consisted of an all-male cabinet. It should be noted that the quota system does not extend to the national list portion of the lower house, and no rules for placement of women on these lists were adopted.

Media

Jordanians are large consumers of media and as such the control of media outlets continues to be a major issue in the Kingdom. IRI's opinion poll conducted in July 2012 showed that the overwhelming majority of Jordanians receive their news from television.¹³ According to the same IRI poll, the top television stations for information on politics are Jordan TV, Al Haqeeqa Al Dawlia and Nour Jordan.¹⁴ Most broadcast news organizations are either partially or completely owned by the government, including top-ranked Jordan TV. As with television news, several of the newspapers in Jordan are partially owned by the government, and coverage of the King and the royal family is uniformly positive.

¹² *Women in National Parliaments*. Accessed 20 March 2013. <<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>>.

¹³ International Republican Institute Poll. *National Priorities, Governance and Political Reform in Jordan*. 17-20 July 2012. p. 61.

<<http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2012%20September%2024%20Survey%20of%20Jordanian%20Public%20Opinion%2C%20July%2017-20%2C%202012.pdf>>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

In August 2012, the Jordanian government signed off on several new amendments to the press and publications law that press freedom advocates believe negatively affected online publications. These amendments, which were publicized by the government as reigning in unruly and unsubstantiated reporting online, included requirements that online media register and obtain a license from the authorities, as well as appoint a chief editor who is a member of the Jordanian Press Association. Under the new law, chief editors are also to be held accountable for all comments posted on their websites, a clause which led several media sites to disable the ability for readers to comment on stories. In addition, content is restricted for print and online press, with online journalists disinclined to write anything negative about friendly heads of state, nor tackle subjects in a way that might impinge upon national unity. Online media representatives questioned the timing of these restrictive amendments, stating they were done purposefully to curtail the freedom of the online press during the pre-election period. Due to the negative reaction from the press, the law was suspended pending a review by the new parliament, and thus it was not in effect during the election period.

Security

Located in the midst of a region in turmoil, Jordan's security situation is deeply affected by external factors. The civil war in Syria and the Israeli-Palestinian peace process give Jordan great geostrategic relevance. Given Jordan's delicate economic situation and its dependence on foreign assistance, maintaining stability has become a crucial task for the King and his government, and a prime justification, as cited earlier, for a slow approach to reform in order to maintain stability in Jordan.

Despite the high concern for security, restrictions on political life have been eased in recent years, paving the way for the emergence of more independent unions and human rights organizations. A major step forward was easing of the freedom of assembly in spring 2011, when the government changed laws requiring those wanting to hold meetings in public places only to notify authorities, rather than request permission. Accordingly, since the start of the Arab Spring, political rallies have occurred in Jordan on a weekly basis without government obstruction.

On a domestic level, safety and security in Jordan is high, in part due to the fairly tight grip of the police and the *Mukhabarat*. When protests following the November 2012 hike in fuel prices led to sporadic violence across the country, the wounding of 12 policemen and the death of one person in Irbid,¹⁵ the police showed a high degree of professionalism in handling the protesters without escalating the situation. This has generally been the case for police response to regular protests since the start of the Arab Spring.

¹⁵ *The New York Times*. "Protests over gas prices in Jordan turn deadly." 12 November 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/15/world/middleeast/jordan-protests-turn-deadly-on-second-day.html?_r=4&>.

Electoral Framework

Technical Improvements

The most notable reform of Jordan's electoral system was the creation of the IEC, which took over administrative duties from the Ministry of Interior for parliamentary elections. Regrettably, the Municipal Law was not amended to give the IEC legal jurisdiction over the 2013 municipal elections, and instead the IEC was tasked by Jordan's cabinet with an unclear supervisory role over the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

Additional positive developments included changes made to the voter registration procedures that led to a more reliable system of registering voters and one that was more resistant to tampering. In addition, advances in polling procedures that required votes to be counted at the polling station in the presence of both citizen and international observers as well as candidate and list representatives increased confidence in the final results. The addition of 27 seats to the parliament to be elected on a national basis through proportional representation was also a step forward for Jordan, representing the first time in the country's history that proportional representation was instituted.

Finally, Election Day procedures were strengthened by the use of symbols and numbers on pre-printed ballot papers, which eliminated the need for "whisper voting," a tactic intended in previous elections to allow illiterate voters to cast votes by whispering their vote to the chairman of a polling station but which raised concerns among observers about the secrecy of the vote and potential vote buying because of apparent abuse.

Still, despite all of these technical improvements, the sidelining of the IEC in favor of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs administering the August 27, 2013 municipal elections brings these advances into question. Independent administration of elections is crucial for democratization to progress, and therefore Jordan is urged to facilitate the return of the IEC to its role in supervising all aspects of election management.

Shortcomings

The new system retained many of the shortfalls of the previous election law. The upper house of parliament remained unchanged by the new law, as the King retained the power to appoint the Senate, which is not to exceed half the number of representatives in the lower house. Many stakeholders, including prominent government officials, perceived the 27 seats set aside for lists in the lower house as too few to spur the development of parties or other political entities formed around platforms. For them, reform of the election law was a missed opportunity because it left intact the controversial district-level, SNTV system, which comprises 82 percent of seats under the new law. Retention of the SNTV system was magnified by failure to address the current districting structure. The districts, 45 in all, tend to be smaller and less populated in rural areas, further supporting tribal candidates and contributing to an unfair competitive environment.

The new election law fell short of providing meaningful incentives for increased participation, particularly by political parties, which have been touted by the King himself as a linchpin of future reform efforts. Specifically, both registered parties and any group of nine or more citizens wishing to form a list were eligible to run for the reserved list seats during the elections. This led to a

profusion of lists and diluted the field for voters who were unfamiliar with this innovation. A result was that lists in effect became another vehicle for the tribal votes to influence politics. The decision to make lists closed led to controversies arising over candidate placement on respective lists, leading to speculation that financial backers usually carried the day in such disputes.

The government's attempt to present the law as a step forward in a gradual process toward greater political reform clashed with the view that the law repeated the same mistakes of the previous law. By failing to include various political and social groups in the drafting process, limiting voters to one vote at the district level, retaining unequal districting and neglecting the development of political parties through a more robust proportional element, the modified system has failed to produce any substantive change.¹⁶

Finally, any discussion of the election law must be placed in the context of the mandate of the parliament itself. The Jordanian parliament has proved to be an ineffectual institution that has neither the autonomy nor the authority needed to advance legislative measures or effectively hold the government accountable.

Electoral Administration Bodies

Following a constitutional amendment in 2011, the IEC was established in April 2012, by a special law that, along with the new election law, constitutes Jordan's reformed electoral framework. Despite the challenges, the establishment of the IEC increased public confidence in the election process and was an important step to reduce election fraud.¹⁷ The creation of such an independent body was deemed necessary after irregularities in previous elections, which were run by a committee under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior, seriously damaged public trust in the integrity of Jordan's political system. The same reform should be made to the municipal election framework to transfer authority from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to the IEC, as previous municipal elections suffered from the same public mistrust in results.

Mandated to perform its tasks in a manner of integrity, transparency and impartiality,¹⁸ the IEC was able to establish a more independent election administration apparatus in spite of having to rely heavily on the Ministry of Interior's support. Administration of the elections consisted of three tiers – the IEC, district election commissions (DEC) and polling stations. There were 45 DECs, one in each district, and 4,069 polling stations nation-wide. The IEC successfully trained approximately 32,000 polling staff in the pre-election period and was responsible for the largely effective administration of voter registration, which was implemented by the Civil Status and Passport Department (CSDP), as well as candidate registration and Election Day. In addition, the IEC had the responsibility of ensuring coordination with other legal bodies concerning the investigation and prosecution of alleged violations during the campaign period. IRI observers concluded that all levels of the election administration were professional in the way they carried out their duties. IRI's long-

¹⁶ *The Jordan Times*. "Election law amendments death blow to Jordan's reform drive" 11 July 2012. <<http://jordantimes.com/elections-law-amendments-death-blow-to-jordans-reform-drive>>.

¹⁷ International Republican Institute Poll. *Jordan Post-Election Public Opinion Survey*. 4-7 March 2013. p. 10. <<http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2013%20April%2010%20Survey%20of%20Jordanian%20Public%20Opinion%20C%20March%204-7%202013.pdf>>.

¹⁸ Articles four and 12, Jordanian Election Law, 2012.

term observers attended polling staff trainings during the pre-election period and determined that they were comprehensive and conducted professionally.

However, the rushed timeline for the elections created challenges, specifically for the IEC. The commission itself was only established in May 2012, leaving just eight months for the new entity to establish an organization, hire staff and prepare for nationwide elections under a new election law. Adding to the time pressure, the hastily passed election law left a number of legal instructions without clear definitions, requiring executive instructions to be issued by the IEC. One international election expert advising the IEC estimated that the commission should have been given a year to a year and half to fully implement all the changes to the law before Jordan held parliamentary elections. As result of the tight time frame, the IEC was overwhelmed and understaffed, requiring the institution to pull public servants from government ministries, thus possibly compromising its independence.

PRE-ELECTION ENVIRONMENT

Voter Registration

The two government institutions that assumed the majority of the responsibility for voter registration were the CSPD and the Ministry of Interior. Under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior, the CSPD has 73 offices across Jordan and manages records for all the country's citizens. During the voter registration process, the CSPD was responsible for issuing election cards to voters. Predictably, its affiliation with the Ministry of Interior led some to question the integrity of the voter registration process. Many felt that the IEC should have taken full ownership of the process to increase public trust. In addition, the IEC's decision to employ additional staff from the Ministry of Interior further raised concerns. The rushed timetable, though, left the IEC in need of the CSPD and Ministry of Interior for institutional support, and with few other options.¹⁹

A central objective of the election law was the creation of a new and more reliable national voter list. Past election fraud was, in many cases, tied to manipulation of loopholes in the voter lists. Such fraudulent practices included multiple voting by individuals at different polling stations. The registration process, initially intended to run for one month, was extended twice by the IEC, eventually running from August 7, 2012 through October 15, 2012. The list compiled in the run-up to the upcoming elections replaced previous versions and will hopefully serve as basis for the administration of future elections.

At the end of this process, the IEC stated that the total number of registered voters was 2.27 million or 70 percent of eligible voters, but the number used by citizen election monitoring groups was about 65 percent.²⁰ IRI believes the IEC's higher percentage may have been computed by excluding certain voters, including out-of-country voters, from the number of eligible voters. Although there are no provisions for absentee voting, including eligible voters living outside of Jordan, they remain eligible nonetheless and should be included in voter registration statistics.

The election law included several stipulations that largely served to improve the voter registration process and reduce the likelihood of fraud. Key regulations included:

- Voter cards were issued as proof that the holder was eligible to participate in the elections. The voter cards replaced identity cards, which had been used in previous elections and which had insufficient safeguards against forgery. Without an election card, featuring the voter's photo and basic information along with multiple fraud-proof markings, an eligible voter was not be able to cast a ballot on Election Day.

¹⁹ A citizen observation representative added that the IEC could have recruited staff from civil society instead of the Ministry of Interior, but he said the IEC ultimately believed it did not have the time to recruit and train new staff. For its part, the IEC felt public servants at the Ministry of Interior were trustworthy and competent.

²⁰In IRI long-term observer meetings with RASED and the Integrity Coalition, both estimated that about 64-66 percent of eligible voters registered. Thus, the estimated rate of registration varied depending on the sources ranging between 64-70 percent of eligible voters. The total number of registered voters was said by the IEC to be 2,272,182. The number of eligible voters initially appeared to be 3,565,139, thus providing the basis for the lower estimates of RASED and Integrity Coalition. The discrepancy appears to be a result of the IEC deducting out-of-country voters and perhaps members of the military (who are not allowed to vote) from the total number, thus reducing the official number of eligible voters to 3,242,857, rather than the larger initial number.

- During registration, Jordanians who had changed their place of residence were allowed to choose to vote in either their home district or in the district where they currently reside. While this stipulation was welcomed overall for assigning voters to a district, thereby reducing the chance of multiple voting, concerns were raised that it opened up the possibility of voters being subjected to pressure regarding their selection of district, meaning in the Jordanian context pressure from family members to vote for candidates from their tribe. In particular, families living in urban settings were less likely to vote for a candidate in their current place of residence, instead travelling back to their home district to support their own tribal candidate.
- Christians, Chechens and Circassians received the right to register to vote in a district where a seat was reserved for a member of their community if such a seat was not available in the district of their residence.
- For the first time in Jordan, voters had to choose the polling station at which they would cast their ballot on Election Day at the time of registration. This stipulation allowed for the creation of precise voter lists in each polling station, which facilitated the provision of sufficient ballots for each station, and thus made double voting or other forms of manipulation less likely.

Generally, civil society gave the voter registration process a positive assessment. Of those whose names became part of the voter registry, most voters signed up of their own free will and not because they were coerced, or worse possibly paid, to do so by potential candidates. In addition, unauthorized incidents of group registration and illegal transfer of voter cards were limited, while the majority of cards were issued without mistakes. Though a significant portion of the population had a family representative process their paperwork for registration, these were largely done by immediate family members and therefore consistent with the election law.

Nevertheless, the very existence of group registration likely led to a higher number of voters being registered than would have had to in person. Group registration also abetted in vote buying, with registrars, lawful or not, withholding voter cards in order to sell them back to their rightful owners.

After the conclusion of the voter registration, the Integrity Coalition for Election Observation and RASED, issued statements asserting that the process for the most part complied with the new election law. In their view, any violations that took place were not committed systematically, but rather stemmed from a lack of training the CSPD staff had received. As such, mistakes were not expected to significantly affect the results of the registration process or compromise the reliability of the voter list as the basis for future elections.²¹ The most commonly cited mistakes reported were:²²

Unlawful group registration: Observers noted that in some cases CSPD staff handed out electoral cards without the required check of the family relations, thus enabling persons to register citizens who were not their immediate family members. This opened the door to

²¹ Statement on the Voter Registration Process, Integrity Coalition for Election Observation, undated; Interview with RASED representatives, 6 December, 2012.

²² Unless otherwise stated, the alleged violations were taken from the Statement #4 of the Civil Coalition for the Monitoring of the Elections, 4 September, 2012 and the Civil Coalition for the Monitoring of the Elections' preliminary report on the verification of preliminary voters' lists published by the IEC on 5 November, 2012.

vote buying. In many cases, women did not register themselves, deferring to men. This was most often done with their consent but begs the question of whether these women were then influenced to vote in a certain way, thus perpetuating women's political dependence.

Election cards held by prospective candidates: A RASED survey indicated that between 108,000-121,000 election cards were being forcibly held by prospective candidates or their representatives. This practice was illegal and potentially provided opportunities for vote buying by giving perpetrators leverage over voters regarding their voting decision. In one example of a case where undue influence of voters may have occurred, a candidate in Amman announced in a YouTube video that he had 9,000 voter cards given to him by his supporters.²³

While the IEC for the most part struggled to find effective ways to prevent such actions,²⁴ on December 12, 2012, in the first court ruling under the new election law, the Irbid Court of First Instance sentenced two persons in absentia to three months in prison for holding a large number of voter cards.

Presence of prospective candidates at registration stations: The presence of prospective candidates or their representatives was perceived by many as a way to exert pressure on citizens. Though their presence can be interpreted as early campaigning and therefore constitutes a violation of the election law, some registration stations did not undertake appropriate action to remove them.

After completion of the registration process, every citizen had the chance to check his or her personal details on the preliminary voter list or object to the registration of another person. During this seven-day complaints period, the IEC received around 26,000 contestations, 97 percent of which came from voters against other voters.²⁵ Other complaints included objections about ineligible voters, including military personnel, and names of voters who had received an election card but whose names did not appear on the voter list. The IEC accepted a little more than 4,000 complaints, dismissing the rest as being unsubstantiated according to the election law.

Voter Education

New procedures introduced by the election law – in particular, the establishment of the IEC, new voter registration procedures, introduction of a national proportional voting system and a pre-printed ballot – increased the importance of voter education campaigns in the elections. The IEC was legally mandated with informing the public about changes in the election code, along with any additional modifications made through executive instructions. To do this, the IEC was required to post changes to the official election website (www.entikhabat.jo) and notify two newspapers.²⁶ Additional tasks the IEC was responsible for regarding voter education included: notifying voters of the location where they could obtain their cards; notifying voters that they would have one month to

²³ *The Jordan Times*. "Former MP charged in election crime." 13 December, 2012. <<http://jordantimes.com/former-mp-indicted-in-election-crime>>.

²⁴ RASED. *The Credibility of the Independent Electoral Commission is at Stake*. 11 December 2012.

²⁵ RASED. *The Credibility of the Independent Electoral Commission is at Stake*. 11 December 2012.

²⁶ Though it is not stipulated to which newspapers the IEC must submit their information, the three main Arabic papers are *Alghad*, *Alrai* and *Addustour*. The main English paper is *The Jordan Times*.

receive their cards from the announcement date; and publicizing the polling and counting stations in all electoral districts.

Given the many other tasks it had to undertake connected with organizing the elections, voter education efforts appeared to be scattered and too broadly focused. But this may well have been a result of the IEC having to educate the public on the many changes in the election law and IEC executive instructions in a short period of time. The IEC developed and deployed posters, brochures and billboard advertisements on such topics as voter registration, complaints and Election Day procedures, including each voter having two votes. Heeding survey research, the IEC used television effectively; during the voter registration process voters were more likely to have seen education material from television programs than any other educational source. Though less frequently used, another component of the IEC's outreach was direct citizen engagement through a hotline number (122) and the official election website, where voters could email inquiries to IEC staff. The IEC also used Twitter and Facebook to further interact with voters. Finally, Election Day outreach included the deployment of trained IEC volunteers at each polling location. These volunteers were available to assist voters with questions regarding Election Day procedures.

Recognizing that the IEC was under a short time frame and had limited resources, the commission should be commended for doing its best to inform voters about the various stages of the electoral process, and particularly for mounting a nationwide campaign to explain to voters that they now had an additional vote to be used for a national list. But there is room for improvement. IRI post-election polling showed that just 51 percent of voters believed they were well informed about Election Day voting procedures, with just a third of voters saying they were well informed enough to make an informed choice when voting for a national list.²⁷

Candidate registration

Candidate registration was held from December 22-24, 2012, without any major violations or complaints, according to IRI long-term observers. Candidates intending to compete for district seats submitted their applications to the head of their DEC. These applications were then sent to the IEC, where they were reviewed by the Board of Commissioners. Meanwhile, those competing for the list system directly submitted their registration to the IEC. Each list appointed a representative to submit the application, and a review similar to the one that took place at the district level was conducted by the IEC.

The IEC accepted all district level applications. Only one list application was initially rejected because it had the name of an individual, the Saddam Hussein list. After an IEC decision though, the list agreed to change its name to the Nation's Honor, thus ensuring that all 61 lists were approved to compete. As a result, no official appeals were filed with the courts.

Candidates were required to leave deposits with the municipality where they registered ranging from 500JD to 4,000JD, based on the size of the municipality, to ensure they would clean up campaign material after the elections. Though not stipulated under the election law, candidates were asked to volunteer information on their campaign's financial sources to be posted publicly by the IEC. Follow up on this request, however, varied from one DEC to another. Most candidates interviewed

²⁷ International Republican Institute Poll. *Jordan Post-Election Public Opinion Survey*. 4-7 March 2013. p. 24-26.

by IRI long-term observers said they did not provide this documentation to the DEC, in part because no penalty was stipulated in the law for non-compliance.

Candidates

Overall, the number of candidates in local districts totaled 698, including 569 male and 129 female candidates. On a national level, 736 male candidates and 84 female candidates composed the 61 registered lists. The number of registered candidates was significantly higher than in 2007 and 2010, largely due to the introduction of national lists, which had a minimum of nine candidates on each list stipulated by the IEC. Most stakeholders, however, noted the lack of new entrants into the race. While some new faces emerged, the same tribes that traditionally gained representation fielded the strongest candidates. As such, the importance of tribal identification remained the most influential feature driving voting behavior in the elections.

Only 14 percent of candidates who registered were female, reflecting the continued difficulty women have running for elected office in a conservative society. As with candidates in general, tribal identification played the major role in the nomination and election of female candidates. Female candidates complained to IRI long-term observers that the SNTV system lowered their ability of getting a fair chance to compete, since men in families often pressure their wives to vote for the male candidate they support. Under a two-vote system, these candidates maintain, more women would use their second vote to choose a female candidate. While some female candidates interviewed by IRI delegates believed the female quota requirement should be abolished because it allegedly only produces weak candidates who seek to further tribal interests, other female candidates expressed support for the quota requirement, stating it was the best chance for mixed gender representation in parliament. In general, female candidates campaigned on the need to deal with corruption and fix the economy, but many also mentioned that they hoped to advance women's rights as well if elected. One obstacle common to most female candidates was lack of funding for their campaigns, as it is rare for men within the family, or husbands, to finance their campaigns.

National List

While some pointed to the fact that 61 lists registered for these elections as an indicator of enthusiasm for the list system and perhaps, more broadly, for political parties, the general consensus among stakeholders IRI observers interviewed was that the number of lists competing was too high, and that lists in general did not stand for new ideologies or have true national platforms. Many believed that those who competed for list seats did so because of their financial backing. Generally, voters were less interested in the list-based system, often stating that it only furthered well-financed political elites and served as another electoral mechanism for the tribal vote to retain influence in parliament. The introduction of the national list, combined with the weak mandate of parliament, did not sufficiently incentivize political parties nor did it usher in new political ideologies in ways commensurate with the King's vision for political reform. This points to the need for further reforms that support the development of political parties that campaign on issue-based platforms.

In their discussions with election stakeholders, IRI long-term observers often heard calls for the lists to be open, thus allowing the voter to choose which member of the list he or she would like to win a parliamentary seat. Open lists for this reason would accord with Jordanian citizens' preference for

and habit of voting for individual candidates.²⁸ Not surprisingly list candidates, but also many other stakeholders, said the 27 seats accorded to lists, accounting for just 18 percent of seats, was too low.

Opinions differed on whether lists in the future should be restricted to political parties. While most saw limiting lists exclusively to parties as a necessary step to develop political parties, others thought parties were too weak and not the best way to mobilize Jordanians.

Political Parties

Due to the strong political pull of Jordan's tribes, distrust among citizens of political parties in general and the limited nature of election law changes beneficial to parties, election activities remained minimal for political parties. Parties which were boycotting the elections told IRI long-term observers that there had been systematic efforts to weaken political parties in Jordan. For example, they referenced the ban of parties from 1957 to 1989, and said they believed that joining parties was still taboo because of governmental pressure. Participation within a party, some added, could result in the loss of a job or family disapproval. As a result of this stigma, few parties have a presence in Jordan. The only party that consistently registers with voters is the IAF, which boycotted the elections. Most parties are loyal to the monarchy, with the IAF and the Communist Party most closely affiliated with the opposition. While the IAF and *Wasat*, or the Islamic Centrist Party, have an Islamic ideological leaning, most parties tend to have a secular orientation. The IAF's decision to boycott, though, gave an opportunity for other parties to increase their national presence.

Boycott

Those who boycotted the elections included the IAF-led opposition and the *Herak*. The IAF-led opposition was strengthened by the inclusion of the National Front for Reform, a movement led by former-Prime Minister Ahmad Obeidat that had gained popularity since its inception in May 2011. A small minority of civil society groups, labor unions and political parties joined the boycott movement as well. For this coalition, the primary problem with the current election law was the retention of the SNTV system, not the percentage of seats allocated to the national list, although this was also a concern.

The IAF specifically believed that the SNTV system, coupled with the districting structure, provided unfair representation for those living in urban settings. Economic problems, representatives of the party said, could not be solved without proper political representation. The party also did not have faith in the electoral process, stating that serious violations had occurred during the voter registration phase and vote buying was widely used to coerce voters during the campaign period. The IAF maintained that the use of political money, even in conditions of a well-administered election, delegitimized the integrity of the elections.

The IAF, in coordination with the National Front for Reform and the *Herak*, held two protests in Amman during in the pre-election period. The first, held in early December, was attended by approximately 5,000 people; while the second, held on January 18, 2013, had closer to 2,000 participants. Though the first demonstration seemed to increase pressure on the government, the

²⁸ International Republican Institute Poll. *National Priorities, Governance and Political Reform in Jordan*. 17-20 July 2012. p. 43.

decrease in supporters that took to the streets for the second protest just before Election Day gave credence to the government's stance that the boycott movement was not popular among Jordanian citizens.

Many candidates, citizens and civil society representatives opposed the boycott movement. Though candidates occasionally admitted that they had thought about boycotting the elections because they believed the election law failed to fulfill promises to reform, many agreed participation and a chance to work in parliament were ultimately the best ways to advance reform. The theme of maintaining stability and security was one often cited by candidates as a major motivation for their campaigns, and they frequently referenced Egypt's current political turmoil and Syria's civil war as reasons for why patience and respect for the King's gradual approach to reform were needed.²⁹ The IAF itself was divided internally on the issue, with a splinter group emerging during the pre-election period. This movement, headed by a prominent IAF official, maintained that the IAF should participate in elections in order to influence the course of reform.

Campaigning

The election campaign commenced on December 23, 2012, during the period of candidate nomination, and ended the day before elections on the evening of January 22, 2013. Candidates were prohibited from using ministries, government offices, public institutions and places of worship to advance their campaign. The time allotted for campaigning was thought by many to be too short, particularly for the national list system. With national proportional voting introduced for the first time, national list representatives often complained that their campaigns did not have enough time to inform voters on their lists' identifying numbers and symbols. District level candidates, however, were generally satisfied with their month-long campaign period, with many of them not even beginning to hold campaign activities until a few weeks before Election Day. Such behavior is evidence of a country new to competitive campaigning, a demanding process in which each day is seen as a 24-hour period during which campaign organizations with issue-based platforms compete to get their message out, push for media coverage and react to opposition attacks, all with the end result of achieving pre-determined vote goals on Election Day.

Importantly, campaigning took place without interruptions, conflict or government interference. Freedom of speech, assembly and movement by individual candidates and lists were generally respected by law enforcement agencies and the public throughout the campaign period. Equally important, as stated above, the opposition in the form of boycotters was allowed to protest peacefully without interference from police or security services.

In general, campaigns seemed to rely on the candidate's reputation, family name and, in some cases, their minority background for support. Candidates often portrayed themselves as service providers and made their case to citizens by making promises to increase voters' standard of living, provide employment opportunities, improve public infrastructure and ensure better access to health coverage. Though almost all candidates discussed the need to decrease corruption and increase employment opportunities, only a few were able to outline detailed platforms.

²⁹ One candidate in Zarqa's second district's campaign slogan read "God. Nation. King."

Given the large number of candidates who came from tribes, alliance building was an essential component of most campaign strategies. In some cases, tribes held primaries to agree on a consensus candidate for district elections. Tested tribal bonds of unity assured the consensus candidate of the support of his tribe and possibly of election if his tribe was large enough in the given district. This approach did not always work, however. In some instances, tribal candidates refused to concede their seat when a consensus candidate was chosen, thus forcing families to choose between multiple candidates from the same tribe. In addition, IRI's observers heard of numerous cases where candidates were alleged to have been paid to run with the sole purpose of taking votes away from another candidate, often from the same tribe. This theme of internal tribal divisions persisted throughout the pre-election period, decreasing the tribes' opportunity to consolidate its supporters toward chosen candidates. Tribal candidates refusing to concede to the consensus candidate and in some instances accepting payment to disrupt the campaign of a fellow tribal candidate reveal internal tribal divisions and show that tribes themselves are not monolithic entities but are themselves struggling to deal with differing views in a more competitive and open electoral environment.

Candidate headquarters during the campaign period were usually tents. Most candidates visited by IRI observer teams said that the tent opening ceremony was the primary campaign event used to formalize their candidacy and that the tents were the main venue used for inviting supporters to hear their campaign pitches. During these events, candidate brochures were distributed and speeches given by leading figures in society as well as by the candidates themselves. Many of these launches occurred only a week or two before Election Day, and were subsequently used for community meetings and social gatherings each night thereafter. A second popular campaign tactic most candidates used was social visits to families. Debates between candidates were supported by both local and international groups, including IRI, but not on a widespread basis. The debates that were held provided an important opportunity for voters and the media to compare candidates. In the future, these types of multi-candidate gatherings should be encouraged, possibly with the support or patronage of the IEC.

Campaign spending for the month-long campaign period cited by candidates and their campaign managers ranged from 5,000 to 150,000 JD depending on the district, but without financial disclosure requirements it was impossible to verify these claims. Most candidates said they were individually financing their campaign.

In general, candidates in urban centers more frequently included a media component in their campaigns than candidates in rural districts. Generally, candidates judged that the one-minute of free air time on national television offered to all registered candidates and national lists was fairly administered. Candidates who were better financed were able to take advantage of private electronic media outlets, which often were willing to paint candidates in a positive light if they paid for their coverage. In a few cases, candidates hired media advisors to amplify their media presence.

Violations of campaign regulations

Though most agreed that overall the IEC did a good job administering the elections, it failed in its mandate to play a more substantial role in cracking down on illicit campaign finance.³⁰ Campaign finance regulations stipulated that candidates were not allowed to present, or promise to present, any gifts, donations, cash or in-kind assistance, directly or through others. Violations of this nature were punishable with imprisonment for a period of no less than three months and not more than one year and/or a fine of 200 to 500JD.

While most candidates used traditional campaign tactics permitted under the election law, the campaign period was tainted by reports of vote buying, which led to the perceptions among the public and campaigns themselves of an uneven competitive environment and damaged the relationship between candidate and voter. IRI's observer teams heard allegations of vote buying by candidates and their campaign teams throughout the campaign period, with one local observer group estimating that more than 50 percent of candidates used vote buying as a campaign tactic.³¹ In addition, most candidates interviewed by IRI observers said that they had received calls from voters asking if they would be willing to buy their vote. One such request over speakerphone was made in the presence of IRI's long-term observers; a voter asked a candidate to pay him 600JD for the votes of his entire family. IRI's post-election poll confirmed this perception, with more than 50 percent of respondents saying they believed vote buying influenced the outcome of the elections to a large or moderate degree.³²

Alleged prices for buying a vote fluctuated between 50JD and 400JD per vote depending on the governorate and reputation of the individual packaging the purchased votes to deliver on his side of the bargain. Curiously, many candidates interviewed considered only cash payments as vote buying. As such, in-kind payments – helping a family member of a voter with a job search or delivering food and clothing to poor families – were not considered as vote buying by most, even though they can be prosecuted as such under the law. This points to the need for more education for candidates and their campaigns on what constitutes vote buying and the associated penalties.

In the two weeks before the elections, heeding numerous calls from citizen observer groups, reports in the media and complaints from candidates, the IEC began to crackdown on vote buying. Acting on tips, the IEC alerted law enforcement officials to alleged violators. One potential candidate and four registered candidates were arrested before Election Day. The potential candidate was detained in the pre-registration period for allegedly illegally holding voter cards, and the other four candidates were arrested for reportedly engaging in vote buying.

Four of the five won seats in the elections.³³ The investigations of vote buying and subsequent arrests came late in the campaign period and did not appear to significantly deter other candidates

³⁰ While Article 68 of the election law gave the IEC law enforcement powers, its limited resources and primary mandate to administer elections made this impractical. Executive Instruction 11 was issued to permit the IEC to work through law enforcement bodies to actually enforce the law.

³¹ Interview with a representative from the Integrity Coalition for Election Observation. 21 January 2013.

³² International Republican Institute Poll. *Jordan Post-Election Public Opinion Survey*. 4-7 March 2013. p. 18.

³³ The five candidates arrested were Yehia Soud for Amman's fourth district (arrested for allegedly holding voter cards); Ghazi Ellyan for Amman's second district; Adnan Abu Rokbeh for Madaba's first district; Ahmad Safadi for Amman's third district; and Mohammad Khoshman, the leader of the national list Jordan National Union Party (all charged with

from continuing to bribe voters.³⁴ In addition, concerns were raised that those awaiting trial would still be able to serve as parliamentarians and that charges could be dropped in the future. This concern appears to be bearing out, as it is unlikely parliament will remove the immunity of these members in order for them to be prosecuted.

IRI's long-term observers concluded that vote buying pervaded the campaign period for two main reasons: the economic situation and financial hardship currently felt by families propelled them to seek out revenue in turn for their votes; and a lack of confidence on the part of citizens in the elections to produce any meaningful change. The second reason can be broken down into citizens' lack of trust in the institution of parliament and their perception of candidates as corrupt and self-interested individuals with little interest in carrying through on campaign promises. According to IRI observers, an area where these two reasons coincided in higher frequency was in and around Palestinian refugee camps, where residents were known to already be distanced from the election process and were generally less financially secure.

Widespread rumors about vote buying, eye-witness accounts by IRI observers³⁵ as well as the spate of arrests lead to the conclusion that for many in Jordan, elections have been corrupted to the extent that they are seen as a transactional event, where huge sums of money are wielded among impoverished citizens who want their piece of the pie. It appears a good number of voters are motivated by their desire to get what they can from the broken process by engaging candidates in a bidding war for their votes.

It was widely believed that vote buying reduced the integrity of the national list system as well. This was because some list representatives allegedly bribed influential figures within tribes in return for them exerting pressure to have their entire tribe or family vote in favor of a particular list. Candidates and citizens interviewed said that national lists, contrary to the aspiration that they would help usher forth issue-based and citizen-directed platforms, instead became vehicles for self-seeking personalities at the top of the lists. Thus, voters were more willing to sell their vote or adhere to tribal advice on who to choose for the national list system. Underscoring this tendency was voters' assumption that a candidate elected nationally could not assist them with local needs such as employment, infrastructure and the provision of social services, thus eroding their faith in the national list system.

vote-buying). All arrested candidate won seats, except for Ellyan. Soud's trial was stopped in March because of his parliamentary immunity.

³⁴ International Republican Institute Poll. *Jordan Post-Election Public Opinion Survey*. 4-7 March, 2013. p. 17.

³⁵ In one instance, IRI long-term observers were actually offered money for their votes. In a separate incident in Madaba, IRI observers visited a DEC the day before the election and witnessed the DEC chairman handing out large sums of money without any receipts or other accounting procedures to record the disbursements. Once the observers began to take pictures of the practice, the chairman stopped. While the motives are not confirmed as vote buying, the lack of accounting procedures is cause for concern.

ELECTION DAY

Turnout

Voter turnout on Election Day reached 57 percent of registered voters, a figure that was higher than the 52 to 53 percent turnout in 2010.³⁶ Turnout was higher in rural areas than urban centers, reaching 75 percent in the North Badia, but only 44 percent in Amman. Turnout was low in the early hours, but picked up considerably in the late afternoon. In a few cases, polling station staff refused to give information about the number of ballots cast, making it difficult for observers to gauge turnout.³⁷ By the end of the day though, this reaction had subsided, with observers able to get information on the number of ballots cast without any issues. Many losing candidates questioned the official turnout figures, but IRI's observers believe that IEC official figures are reflective of turnout across the country and consistent with the reports of citizen election monitoring organizations as well as survey research conducted in the pre-election and post-election period.³⁸

The boycott ultimately was not a factor in the election, losing momentum during the voter registration period and losing supporting parties as the elections drew near. While initially disputed by the IAF on Election Day, the IEC's turnout number seems to have eventually been accepted by the IAF. In the post-election period, the party has focused on turnout relative to eligible voters, which was a considerably lower, 36 to 40 percent, depending on which number of eligible voters was used.³⁹

Governorate	Number of Registered Voters	Number of Voters	Turnout Percentage
Amman	707,977	308,110	44
Irbid	451,360	268,284	59
Balqa	190,106	117,670	62
Karak	122,907	87,486	71
Ma'an	36,593	24,786	68
Zarqa	276,444	132,534	48
Mafrq	58,817	43,292	74
Tafileh	38,115	26,831	70
Madaba	71,731	50,112	70
Jerash	72,265	51,939	72

³⁶ Turnout numbers from previous elections must be treated with circumspection. Voter registers used then were regarded as being inaccurate and therefore unreliable. However, the 57 percent official turnout figure was close to parallel vote tabulations carried out by RASED and Integrity Coalition.

³⁷ Although polling staff had been giving numbers out to IRI observer teams earlier in the day, in some cases later in the afternoon they refused, saying they had been told by the IEC polling center representative to stop providing this information. When IRI observers talked to the IEC representative at one polling center, he said it was true that polling center heads had been instructed by the DEC commissioner to stop providing this information. He was unsure why this happened and thought it affected the overall transparency of the administration of elections.

³⁸ International Republican Institute Poll. *Jordan Post-Election Public Opinion Survey*. 4-7 March 2013. p. 22.

³⁹ If the IEC's number for eligible voters is used (3,242,857), then voter turnout based on eligible voters was 40 percent; if civil society numbers are used (3,565,139), then turnout was 36 percent.

Ajloun	71,048	50,418	71
Aqaba	31,641	19,723	62
Bedouin (North)	58,867	44,416	75
Bedouin (Center)	41,790	31,251	75
Bedouin (South)	42,521	31,191	73
Total	2,272,182	1,288,043	57

Source: IEC Jordan

Voting process

Overall, IRI observers concluded that election procedures were largely followed and polling staff acted in a professional manner. Polls opened at 7:00am and closed at 8:00pm after the IEC decided to extend voting by one hour toward the end of Election Day. The majority of polling stations observed at the opening were characterized as orderly and calm. Though technical glitches initially occurred with the electronic check-in system at a number of stations, polling staff worked quickly to resolve this issue. The environment outside polling centers and inside polling stations was also calm, particularly in the morning when voter turnout was low. At stations at which IRI short-term observer teams were present, polling staff matched up the necessary two forms of identification – national identification card and voter card – to voter lists unique to each polling station. After the voter’s name was manually recorded, the data entry employee marked the voter’s name off the electronic system list.

In accordance with IEC executive instructions, voters were given two pre-printed ballots, one for district level candidates with photos of the candidates and another for the national list with symbols and numbers denoting the specific lists. These changes served to reduce instances of “whisper voting,” where in past elections voters claiming to be illiterate shouted out their vote choice, ostensibly to inform the polling official who was helping them but in reality proving that they had voted the “right way” in order to garner some reward. According to IRI post-election polling, the new process proved popular with voters, particularly the option of putting a check next to the voter’s desired candidate (nearly 70 percent), rather than writing in the candidate’s name (32 percent).⁴⁰ Voters with disabilities who were unable to vote on their own received assistance from an escort of their choice. Voters uniformly cast two ballots, even if they only recorded a vote on one ballot.⁴¹ After each ballot was placed in its respective ballot box, voters had their left index finger dipped in indelible ink.

The sometimes casual placement of voting booths opened the potential for irregularities and did not always safeguard secrecy of voting. Voting booths composed of cardboard cutouts sometimes faced the open room and in several stations, polling staff were eager to help voters filling in or folding their ballots. Some voters also voluntarily voted in a public manner. This included filling in their ballots next to the voting booth on the open table, showing the ballot to candidate agents before folding it, or handing the ballot to the ballot box officer to get help folding it, thus raising suspicions

⁴⁰ International Republican Institute Poll. *Jordan Post-Election Public Opinion Survey*. 4-7 March 2013. p. 23.

⁴¹ According to IEC figures, blank ballots for the national list amounted to 12 percent of ballots cast; for district voting, blank ballots accounted for eight percent of votes cast.

on the part of IRI observers of a vote-buying scheme. While not all of these incidents had malicious intent, taken together with reports of vote buying, it does raise question about the integrity of voting procedures.

In addition, IRI observers noted many instances of large crowds gathered at the entrances to schools where voting was being conducted and of campaigning near and even inside most polling centers visited on Election Day. Among the crowds, in violation of the election law,⁴² candidate supporters were handing out campaign material with impunity, checking voters' names off lists, and in some more egregious cases working out of campaign tents set up right outside of polling centers. Though IRI observer teams witnessed no visible vote buying, many citizens interviewed by the teams believed that campaigning outside polling centers was being used to identify voters who had been paid a bribe and to remind them of their obligation to vote for a certain candidate. IRI observers heard numerous complaints from voters that they felt intimidated by candidate supporters loitering outside polling stations. In isolated instances, candidate agents inside polling stations were seen wearing photos of their candidates and making gestures to voters as they entered the polling station, leading to rumors that they were engaged in illicitly influencing voters. IRI observers noted that besides only being able to observe on Election Day, candidate and list agents were rarely educated on the election law. As well, IRI observers noted that campaign material was seen inside polling stations. More focused on maintaining order, police were ineffective in curtailing such campaigning, and they were not called upon by polling stations officials to do so.

Many candidates also hired buses and taxis to transport supporters to polling stations. Though not a violation, it was often stated to IRI observers that vote buying occurs on these buses. One suspicious case was witnessed outside a polling center in Zarqa, where a bus pulled up with approximately 50 voters. After voters began to file out, supporters of another candidate accused them all of having just received a payment while they were in the bus. These accusations, however, could not be independently verified by IRI observers.

Closing and Counting Process

Closing procedures were mostly followed at the polling stations observed. The counting process was transparent, although the national list tabulation was often drawn out and time consuming because of the number of lists and lack of space inside polling stations to sort 61 piles of list votes. In some cases, the number of ballots cast according to the electronic system did not match the total number of ballots physically counted, but in the incidents where this occurred the discrepancies were below two percent and therefore permissible by law. After counting, IRI observers in virtually all cases witnessed that the proper forms were signed by polling staff and candidate agents, ballots were sealed properly in the respective envelopes and a copy of the final voting results was posted on the door of the polling station in accordance with law. Observers, candidates and their agents were able to access all proceedings in the polling stations without obstruction. While candidate agents were seen at most polling stations visited by IRI observers, most did not seem to have a good understanding of the law and many often left as soon as the results were tallied, not waiting for closing procedures to finish. This indicates that more thorough training of candidate agents is necessary as is increasing understanding among candidates of the important role agents play inside polling stations.

⁴² The election law stipulates that campaigning must end the evening before Election Day.

While there were no major, systemic violations observed in the closing and counting processes, IRI's delegates did observe a number of shortcomings. In particular, there was a lack of uniformity in determining validity of the ballots. While national list ballots were considered invalid if more than one list was marked, district level ballots were still considered valid if more than one candidate was marked. In these cases, the IEC decided to give the vote to the candidate listed highest on the ballot, which created controversy among losing candidates who were placed lower on ballots. In addition, in isolated instances, ballot boxes were not properly handled, as one candidate provided convincing evidence that revealed boxes left opened outside one DEC in Balqa.

At a polling center in Karak's sixth district, supporters of one candidate took over the polling center and interfered with the voting and counting process in a case that was adjudicated through the courts. IRI observers received direct confirmation of these actions from the candidate himself who stated that his supporters had indeed interfered in the process by taking voter cards from voters lined up outside polling centers and delivered them to the appropriate polling station inside the polling center.

The candidate defended the actions of his supporters by saying it was only done to speed up the process. The local IEC representative, responsible for the oversight of the center, and a prominent civil society stakeholder, disagreed, stating to IRI observers that the interference went far beyond the taking of voter cards to expedite the voting process and included filling out ballots for voters and placing them in the ballot box while instructing the head of the polling station to sit in the corner until his signature was needed after the vote counting. The IEC coordinator and civil society stakeholder both said that police were called to the area by the governor but did not intervene because the previous week a student had died during a protest due to the tear gas used by the police.

In response to this incident, another candidate filed an official complaint with the Amman Court of Appeals that annulled the results due to the reported abuses and manipulations carried out on Election Day and called for the IEC to hold new elections in the district. This was the first time in Jordan's history official results had been nullified and a re-election called for. The court decision signaled that in Jordan there was now judicial redress for election malfeasance.

Security

While security services were able to maintain calm outside most polling centers, clashes occurred outside polling centers in Ajloun, Balqa, Jerash, Karak, Ma'an and Tafileh during the counting process as results began to be posted. Police forces, however, were able to restore calm, effectively intervening to disperse angry and violent protests, in some instances, by using tear gas. Small clashes between supporters of tribal candidates in Balqa, Irbid and Karak continued in the days after elections, but were eventually resolved through inter-tribal mediation.

POST-ELECTION DAY AND FINAL RESULTS

IRI polling shows that 55 percent of respondents believe the IEC was able to ensure free and fair elections. This number may well have been higher had it not been for mistakes in the immediate post-election period that seriously damaged the IEC's reputation. The audit of results in the post-election period was compromised by administrative mistakes and poor communication, raising doubts about the IEC's impartiality. Specifically, the miscalculation of national lists results caused confusion and was not handled in a transparent manner. These shortcomings show there is considerable work to be done by the IEC to improve its work in the results and auditing process.

The IEC initially did a good job of handling a contestation from the National Committee on Human Rights concerning vote totals from Balqa's first district. In the presence of citizen and international observers, on January 26 the IEC conducted a recount of both ballot boxes from polling station 137. The recount, which was conducted by polling station members themselves, uncovered inaccuracies in the recording of results, but the discrepancies were not enough to change the preliminary result that had been announced.

A complaint brought forward to the IEC regarding discrepancies in the national list results served as the catalyst for the main post-election controversy. During a partial audit of national list results on January 26, 2013, which was only done for two contested lists, a seat which was originally given to the Citizenship list was awarded to the Democratic Promotion list. The IEC explained to international observers, including IRI, that the reason for the switch was that IEC staffers inadvertently entered results incorrectly during data entry at the IEC level following the closing of polling stations on Election Day. The next day, January 27, 2013, however, the IEC conducted a full audit of the national list district-level results in order to identify additional discrepancies between written protocols and electronic results. For this count the IEC invited international and citizen observers but failed to invite all party agents. After the full district-level audit of all 61 lists, results were adjusted again because of discrepancies at a number of polling stations. This resulted in another change that awarded the seat back to the Citizenship list, and which contradicted the decision made the day before. As a result of this confusion, some citizen observation groups asked the IEC to conduct a recount of the national list ballots, but these requests were ignored. The case was ultimately referred to the courts, where a final decision by the Amman Court of Appeals based on recounts of 19 national list ballot boxes awarded the seat to Citizenship list.

Thus, with the media covering and both citizen and international groups observing, the last national seat to be awarded changed hands several times, with each successive change shining a spotlight on inefficiencies in the IEC's vote auditing procedures. If administering future elections, the IEC should conduct a thorough audit of data entry before announcing final election results.

While audits were taking place on January 26-27 at the IEC, candidates and their representatives were trying to file complaints with the commission after being unable to access DEC officials, where complaints were to be filed. The IEC was not prepared to accept these complaints, but said it would review each one on a case-by-case basis and make sure to forward those they thought were credible to the proper authorities. Candidates expressed doubt, however, that the overtaxed and understaffed IEC would be able to fairly address their concerns. During this critical period, IRI observers also experienced difficulty contacting DEC officials after Election Day to do exit interviews, even though the officials were to be available until January 31, 2013. Indeed, in IRI post-

election polling, respondents ranked the IEC lowest on the results announcement process, lagging behind its performance in voting and counting.⁴³

While the IEC's conduct in the post-election period highlighted problems, a positive change in the election law was that courts, not the parliament, handled adjudication of election result complaints. Candidates were given 15 days after Election Day to file appeals. The Court of Appeals then had 30 days to provide a legal decision that was considered to be final. Overall, 27 official appeals were filed, 20 in Amman and seven in Irbid, and the court returned decisions within the 30 day window. In their complaints to the courts, candidates typically requested that results be abolished and elections held again in their respective districts because of procedural errors or alleged interference of candidate supporters at polling centers.

Election Results

If the 2013 elections were designed to break new ground in Jordan, they made little progress. Out of 150 parliamentarians, nearly 40 percent were from previous parliaments. While 91 new candidates were elected, many of them hailed from tribal families that regularly dominate electoral politics. With the SNTV system accounting for more than 80 percent of seats, candidates with strong tribal affiliations accounted for more than one-third of the new parliament. IRI's observer team in Ma'an summed it up best when it reported on Election Day, "There is low optimism that anything can change through the ballot. The IEC is doing a good job, and the processes are different, but the outcome won't necessarily be better." When asked in IRI's post-election poll if there was one or more parliamentarians who will represent your needs and concerns in the new parliament, three out of five voters said there was not.⁴⁴

Given that they comprise 50 percent or more of the population, a positive development was that the percentage of candidates of Palestinian descent who won seats increased in the election. In 2010, Palestinian Jordanians won only 19 seats, making up about 15 percent of the parliament, while in 2013 they won 30 seats, giving them 20 percent of total seats. Palestinian Jordanians won nine national list seats. More than half of the seats for Palestinian Jordanian representatives came from Amman and Zarqa, urban areas heavily populated by Jordanians of Palestinian origin. The most prominent candidate was Khalil Attiyah, from Amman's first district, who won close to 20,000 votes, the highest number of any candidate in the Kingdom. In total, female candidates won 18 seats, three more than the quota requirement, with two women winning outright in their districts and one winning a seat as the head of a national list.

Twenty-two lists won seats, but none gained more than three seats in total, thus complicating the King's plan for parliamentary blocs to be the main driver behind the selection of a new prime minister and government. The winning list, *Al Wasat*, or Islamic Centrist Party List, won nine percent of the vote and three seats, but this, even with the addition of seats won in the districts, was hardly enough for the party to claim a mandate, or command a seat at the table, to form the government. As soon as elections were finished, lists and candidates began holding meetings to create parliamentary blocs, but it was clear from the blocs' instability under the strain of politics that these blocs were just post-election creations, with little to bind them together for substantive work

⁴³ International Republican Institute Poll. *Jordan Post-Election Public Opinion Survey*. 4-7 March 2013. p. 12-14.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 16.

in the new parliament. In the end, the blocs offered few capable fresh faces for a new prime minister, and King Abdullah reappointed Abdullah Ensour.

Nevertheless, IRI polling in the post-election period showed that the introduction of list voting is making voters more aware of platforms. When asked the main reason they gave their vote to a national list, 10 percent of voters cited election program. This compares with just five percent of voters citing election platform as a reason they gave their vote to their district candidate. This number, though small, presents an opportunity for growth should national list voting be expanded and should there be more targeted voter education. Unsurprisingly in Jordan, the number one reason voters cast their ballot in both categories was tribal or family relations.⁴⁵

List Name	Deputy	Number of Seats Won	Number of Votes Received
Al Wasat Party	Mohammad Al Haj	3	114,458
Stronger Jordan	Rula Hroub	2	100,159
The Homeland	Atef Tarawneh	2	94,682
National Union Party	Mohammad Khashman	2	68,149
National Current Party	Abdul Hadi Majali	1	48,970
Salvation	Ahmad Rqebat	1	37,208
Labour and Professionalism	Mazen Dalaeen	1	36,555
Cooperation	Mejhem Sqour	1	35,565
Dignity	Ali Zanzneh	1	33,858
Unified Front	Amjad Majali	1	32,840
National Unity	Mohammad Zboun	1	31,477
Construction	Hassan Obeidat	1	30,938
The People	Mustafa Shneikat	1	28,894
People of Determination	Raed Khalailah	1	24,115
Free Voice	Faisal Aawar	1	23,222
Voice of the Nation	Haitham Abbadi	1	20,290
National Labour	Abdul Hadi Maharmeh	1	19,806
Al Quds	Mohammad Amr	1	17,834
Al Bayareq	Hamzeh Akhu Rashideh	1	16,604
The Dawn	Saad Bluwi	1	16,313
Shabab Al Wifaq	Motaz Abu Rumman	1	14,620
Citizenship	Hazem Qashou	1	14,012
Totals		27	860,569

Source: IEC Jordan

⁴⁵International Republican Institute Poll. *Jordan Post-Election Public Opinion Survey*. 4-7 March 2013. p. 28-30

RECOMMENDATIONS

IRI makes the following recommendations to improve the electoral process and contribute to future debates over the election law.

Electoral Framework

Recommendation 1: *Consider replacing the SNTV system and districting structure.* Allow voters to cast more than one vote in districts and up to as many votes as there are seats. Ensure a vote has equal weight throughout the country by establishing uniform guidelines based on population and then conducting redistricting.

Recommendation 2: *Establish clear financial disclosure regulations and enforcement mechanisms.* Revisit campaign finance regulations and consider establishing a regulatory body within the IEC. Both candidates and lists should be required to publicly post all funds spent on campaigning as well as the origin of those funds. This regulatory body should be empowered with judicial authority to adjudicate violations on campaign spending.

Recommendation 3: *Empower candidate and list agents and support them with training.* Provide candidate and list agents with the right to monitor the whole election process, rather than just Election Day. For any future elections it manages, the IEC should consider partnering with local civil society organizations and international organizations to provide training for candidate and list agents on the election law and on proper conduct during the pre-election period as well as on Election Day.

Recommendation 4: *Enfranchise Jordanians living outside the country.* Provide out-of-country voting to Jordanian citizens of voting age. This group should be given the right to both register and vote even though they are not residing in Jordan. In addition, provide absentee voting to Jordanians inside the country.

Recommendation 5: *Restrict Election Day campaigning.* New procedures should be established that control Election Day campaigning in a way that curbs any undue influence on voters. Both polling center staff and police should be instructed to recognize and stop illegal electioneering on Election Day.

Recommendation 6: *Create consistent rules for invalid ballots:* Make rules consistent for any ballot marked more than once. For example, stipulate that any ballot with more than one mark, whether for district candidates or national lists, is invalid.

Recommendation 7: *Improve the voter registration process:* Set future election dates before voter registration begins. Consider ending the practice of family registration altogether. If this is not ended, better training should be provided for the CSPD in order to mitigate against illegal registration practices, such as group registration by an unauthorized individual.

Recommendation 8: *Utilize the national list system to support political parties:* Stimulate party development by restricting national list competition to parties and by increasing the number of seats in parliament elected by national proportional list.

Recommendation 9: *Promote more equitable gender representation:* Additional steps to increase female representation in parliament should be considered. Consider placing a female quota requirement on the national list. Ensure the representation of women on committees and councils tasked with further changes to the election law and other electoral regulations. If reauthorized to administer future elections, the IEC should hire more female election officials.

Electoral Administration Bodies

Recommendation 10: *Strengthen the IEC's mandate:* Build on the IEC's good start in election administration by making the institution more financially and administratively independent, with sufficient full-time staff to manage complaints and enforce the law. To this end, confer on the IEC the authority to manage and supervise elections at all levels.

Recommendation 11: *Improve transparency in the calculation of voter registration.* It should be clear how the numbers for eligible and registered voters are derived, and these calculations should be made public and explained.

Recommendation 12: *Increase transparency of the audit of results:* The IEC should do more to ensure observers, candidates and candidate/list agents are given full access to monitor the audit of results and to explain to them the stages of an audit or recount.

Recommendation 13: *Advance voter education.* When substantial changes are made to the election law, provide sufficient time for voter education efforts before the start of voter registration to ensure that voters clearly understand their rights and opportunities to participate fully in the election process. Before the next parliamentary elections, educate the public and media as well as candidates and list members and their campaigns on what constitutes vote buying and what the penalties are for engaging in such a crime. In addition, conduct a voter education campaign on what the national list is and why and how it is different from the district-based election system.

Formation of Government

Recommendation 14: *Consider holding elections for the Senate:* Seats in the Senate are currently appointed by the King, but for parliamentary governance to advance and become truly representative; elections should be held for this chamber as well.

Electoral Complaints Resolution

Recommendation 15: *Support stronger judicial and criminal enforcement mechanisms:* Electoral crimes, including vote buying, vote selling and coercion should more strictly be prosecuted in accordance with the election law. A judicial mechanism needs to be

established to adjudicate electoral crimes within a defined time period, before winning candidates assume their mandates.

IRI IN JORDAN

Since 2005, IRI's program in Jordan focuses on connecting citizens and government by promoting democratic governance and strong political parties. IRI grassroots-focused activities encourage democratic participation on the national and local levels by engaging civil society, particularly women and youth, and preparing political parties and candidates for elections.

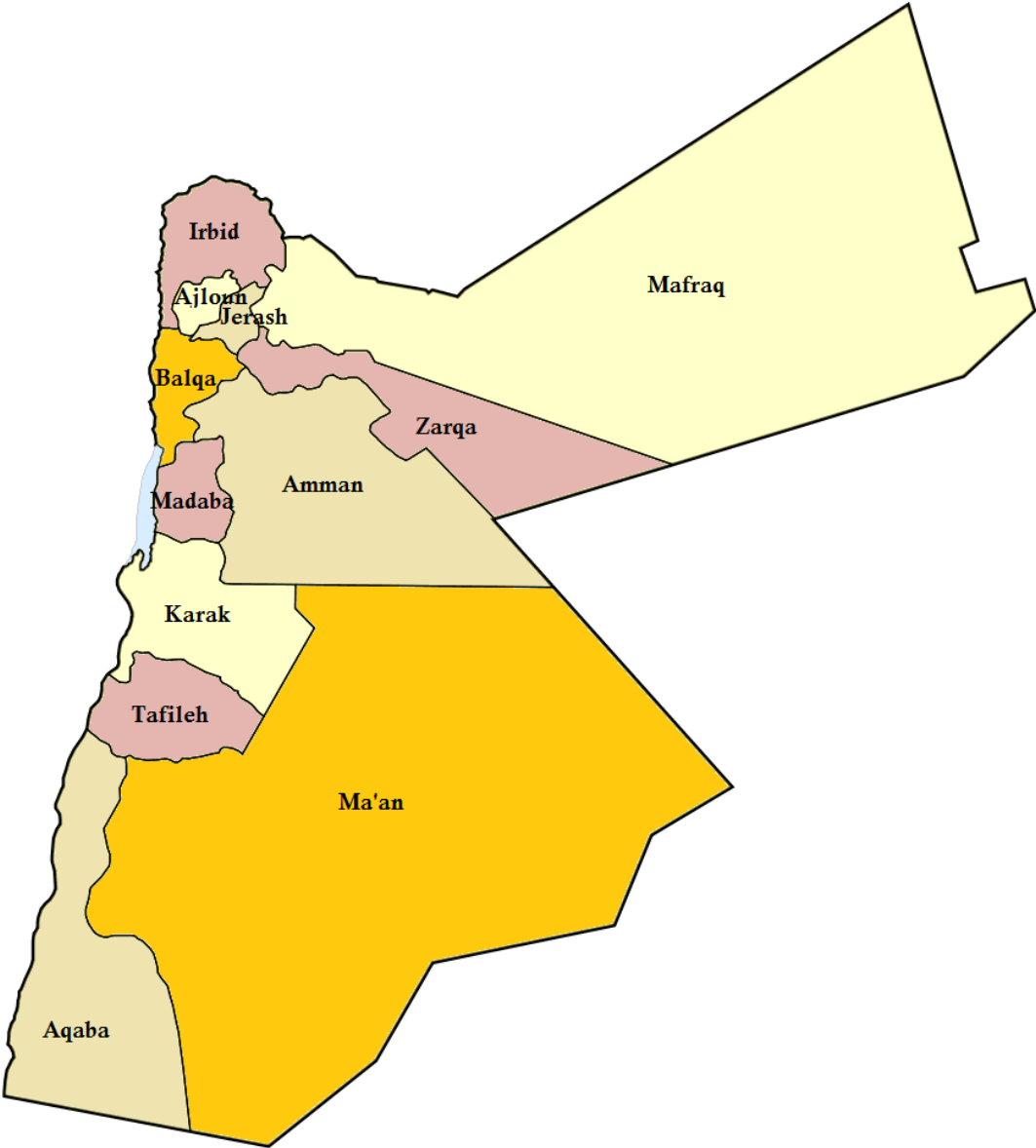
Through its democratic governance programs, IRI helps local civil society groups connect with their elected officials, involving them in decision-making processes and encouraging government bodies to be more responsive and accountable to constituencies. Program activities include civil society advocacy workshops, citizen sponsored issue forums, mayors' roundtable discussions and workshops for mayors and their staff on constituent relations and communications.

IRI also offers workshops to political parties and candidates to strengthen their skills and prepare them for elections. IRI workshops help parties and candidates develop more effective issue-based platforms, campaigns, political messages and internal communications plans.

IRI's work is informed and supported by regular public opinion research at the national and municipal level, helping focus government officials, key decision-makers and political parties on the issues that matter most to the Jordanian public.

APPENDIX

Map of Jordan's Governorates



IRI Pre-election Assessment Statement



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Changes in Election Law Are Missed Opportunity in Jordan

Amman, Jordan – An International Republican Institute (IRI) pre-election assessment in advance of Jordan’s upcoming parliamentary elections found that recent changes to the electoral framework offer limited progress and, despite some positive changes, are a missed opportunity for greater reform.

As the Kingdom prepares for parliamentary elections scheduled for January 23, 2013, fundamental challenges to political reform have not been addressed in the new election law, adopted in June 2012, resulting in a sense of disappointment among many stakeholders. Notable among these are:

- The continuance of Jordan’s single non-transferrable vote system ensures that a majority of parliamentarians will continue to be elected along tribal lines favoring independent candidates at the expense of political parties.
- The legal right for political movements and independent candidates to compete with political parties for the 27 national list seats does not encourage political party participation to the degree that a system restricted to parties might have done.
- The uneven number of votes per member of parliament, which varied in 2010 from one seat per 7,500 voters to one seat per 46,000 voters, has not been addressed, thereby failing to provide an equitable distribution of seat allocation.

Two changes should make a positive impact. First, a change to the constitution in 2011 provided for the establishment of the [Independent Election Commission](#) (IEC) for the first time in Jordan’s history. Second, the new election law allocates 27 seats based on a new proportional list elected on a national, rather than a district, basis which improves the potential for developing parliamentary blocs with national appeal.

Jordan’s citizens also have concerns about the upcoming elections. IRI’s [July 2012 public opinion poll](#) showed citizens were split on whether the new election law was an improvement over the previous one, and on the chances for the IEC to ensure fair and transparent elections. A successful

voter registration campaign, carried out from August to October in accordance with the new law and supervised by the IEC, was a vote of confidence for the IEC, with 2.28 million Jordanians registering. Much now will hinge on electoral preparation and turnout. Ultimately, the success of the IEC in carrying out its first election will depend in large part upon how determined the Government of Jordan is to prevent interference in the IEC's work and in the election process in general.

Assessment Team Findings

IRI's assessment team, which was in Jordan from October 17-21, 2012, found significant support for the way the IEC is handling the dual-track task of building up its own organization while conducting all aspects of electoral preparation. In meetings with civil society organizations and political parties, team members were told that the IEC is committed to transparency and that IEC staff, starting with the chairman, have been open and accessible.

The most often cited criticism of the IEC was how the institution handled issues of group registration. Specifically, the team heard several complaints about collective registration, which manifests in several ways. For example, the team heard numerous accounts of family members registering members of his or her family, a process that, while legal under Jordanian law, could easily lend itself to fraud or to individuals being registered against their will. They also heard allegations that candidates, through proxies, registered eligible voters in their community, and are holding the voter cards of individuals to use as leverage, either by paying voters to vote a certain way or destroying registration cards in the event the voter does not agree to support a specific candidate(s).

Although the IEC has to date earned credibility, the assessment team found that there is still concern over how the IEC relates to other state authorities, such as the police, judiciary or municipal authorities, and the IEC's inability to press for real action to resolve issues. The team was informed that there is a disinclination for these other state bodies to cooperate with the IEC because their sphere of influence is being reduced.

Given the relatively short time the IEC has had to prepare for elections, the commission was required to retain some staff from Jordan's Ministry of Interior, which formerly managed elections, to assist with the technical administration of the process. Although the IEC is to be commended for preparing in a short period of time, the commission's independence could be questioned if it becomes too reliant on Ministry of Interior staff.

Finally, regarding the IEC, the lack of training for staff is an area of concern; one civil society group engaged in domestic monitoring conducted a survey that showed up to 53 percent of the Civil Status and Passports Department staff engaged during the voter registration process had not received any training prior to the registration period. Nonetheless, the IEC should be commended for an ambitious goal to train 24,000 polling station workers in advance of the elections.

Regarding the election law, there is a vocal opposition that considers the recent changes to the electoral framework to fall short of needed reforms in Jordan. A number of political groupings, including most prominently the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated Islamic Action Front, have called for a boycott of the January 23 elections. They charge that the new electoral law perpetuates the status quo by ensuring most parliamentarians will continue to be elected along tribal lines. Specifically, the country's single non-transferrable vote system remains in place.

IRI's assessment mission notes the missed opportunity to reconsider a system that provides for an equal number of voters per seats in districts, which would result in a more representative parliament.

Another missed opportunity in the election law was the promotion of political parties, a cornerstone of King Abdullah's vision for a more democratic Jordan. Although the number of list-based seats was increased from 17 to 27, the legal right for political movements and independent candidates to compete with party-lists does not encourage political party participation to the degree that a system restricted to parties might have done. Additionally, if Jordan wants to encourage the election of a more representative parliament, the number of seats elected from national proportional lists should constitute a higher percentage of seats than the current 18 percent.

The assessment team was told that the new law on press and publications was an attempt by the government to stifle dissent, although it remains to be seen how the law might impact election coverage or campaigning. On a related note, state media in Jordan is required to provide equal air time for all candidates; however, there are no regulations stipulating when candidates' statements are to be aired. This leaves the process open to favoritism and could unfairly benefit candidates granted prime time coverage. The misuse of media may also have direct negative consequences. For example, one civil society group told the team that state media is employing a negative campaign aimed at those who are boycotting the election, and that private media is already running candidate advertisements in violation of the election law, which states that campaigning cannot begin until one month prior to the elections.

The 2012 election law, like its predecessors, fails to address campaign financing. Several stakeholders said that a lack of a maximum spending limit for electoral campaigns could create problems during the official campaign period.

In a final note, the team observed a noticeable difference of opinion among rural voters versus voters, analysts and political stakeholders in the capital. During a meeting with a citizen's committee in Ajloun, a city two hours north of Amman, the team heard a more positive experience from citizens planning to participate in the election who attested that they and their family members had all registered to vote by choice. However, some expressed concern that there was less accountability with a national list as opposed to the stronger voter-parliamentarian connection resulting from districts.

The team was able to interview a number of youth and was encouraged by those planning to vote and who were open to learning more about political parties. As young people constitute a growing segment of Jordan's population, the success of parties, candidates and the country's electoral institutions in mobilizing their participation is increasingly important to the success of Jordan's reforms.

IRI conducted the assessment at the invitation of the Jordan's IEC from October 17-21, 2012, to measure Jordan's progress on electoral and political reforms, and to provide a baseline from which to measure the transparency and credibility of the country's electoral process. During the mission, delegates interviewed a variety of stakeholders and reviewed both the technical and political aspects of forthcoming parliamentary elections.

Mission team members were Danya Greenfield, deputy director the [Rafik Hariri Center](#) at the [Atlantic Council](#); Reem Obeidat, an independent media and elections expert; and Gretchen Birkle, deputy director of the Middle East and North Africa division at IRI.

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IRI Election Observation Mission Announcement Press Release



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For Immediate Release
January 17, 2013
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IRI Announces Delegation to Observe Jordan’s Parliamentary Elections

Washington, DC – The International Republican Institute (IRI) today announced it will send a delegation to Jordan to observe the January 23, 2013 parliamentary elections. Delegates from Canada, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Poland and the United States will travel to Jordan to monitor voting and ballot counting throughout the country. Following the voting, IRI will issue a statement on the findings of the delegation.

The delegation will be led by Gahl Hodges Burt, Vice Chair of the [American Academy in Berlin](#) and a member of IRI’s Board of Directors; and Agnieszka Pomaska, member of the lower house of the Polish Parliament and chair of the European Affairs Committee.

Other members of the delegation are:

- Petr Bratský, member of the Czech Republic Senate;
- Christopher Carr, Vice President at J.P. Morgan;
- Darryl Gray, former member of the Canadian Parliament;
- James Hart, former member of the Canadian Parliament;
- Steve Heydemann, Senior Adviser for Middle East Initiatives at the [United States Institute of Peace](#);
- Tami Longaberger, Chief Executive Officer of the Longaberger Company, member of IRI’s Board of Directors and Chair of the [Arab Women’s Leadership Institute’s](#) Board of Directors;
- Matt Rhoades, former Chief of Staff to Governor Mitt Romney;
- David Schenker, Aufzien Fellow and Director of the Program on Arab Politics at the [Washington Institute for Near East Policy](#);
- Christopher Tuttle, Director of the Washington Program at the [Council on Foreign Relations](#); and

- David Vriesendorp, Member of the Board of Directors of the Eduardo Frei Foundation in the Netherlands.

Prior to the elections, delegates will be briefed by Jordan's [Independent Election Commission](#), Jordanian nongovernmental organizations and parliamentary candidates. Delegates will also be briefed on the rights and responsibilities of international observers, the Jordanian Code of Conduct for election observers and Jordanian election law. Delegates will then be deployed throughout the country where they will observe the polling process and identify strengths and weaknesses in Jordan's election system, including campaign regulations, drawing electoral district boundaries, the balloting process, vote tabulation and reporting.

IRI staff will also serve as observers and assist in the mission. IRI staff will be led by [Judy Van Rest](#), Executive Vice President of IRI; [Scott Mastic](#), Director of Middle East and North Africa programs; and Jeff Lilley, Resident Country Director for IRI in Jordan.

IRI also deployed three teams of long-term observers in November to monitor the elections throughout the Kingdom. Long-term observers are meeting with government officials, political campaign representatives, civil society activists and election stakeholders. They will also monitor voting and ballot counting on Election Day, and the adjudication processes and resolution of complaints following the elections.

Since 1983, IRI has monitored more than 150 elections in more than 46 countries, including Jordan's 2010 parliamentary elections.

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IRI Preliminary Statement on Jordan's Parliamentary Elections



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January 24, 2013
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**Electoral Administration, Environment Improve;
Electoral Framework Continues to Fall Short**

Amman, Jordan – On January 23, 2013, Jordanians went to the polls to choose a new parliament in an election that was an important step toward building Jordanian voters' trust in election administration. And while improved Election Day procedures, carried out under the supervision of Jordan's new [Independent Election Commission](#) (IEC), underscore a more transparent process, the electoral framework continues to fall short.

Elections are a process, which include the campaign period, Election Day, ballot counting, adjudication of complaints and acceptance of results. The electoral process cannot be separated from the political and legal framework within which it operates. For democracy to advance in Jordan, inequities in the election law must be addressed, such as districting that does not treat all votes equally. In [IRI's 2010 statement on Jordan's parliamentary elections](#), IRI noted "the system of districting does not ensure equitable representation for all Jordanians. The over-representation of rural districts is accentuated by the controversial single non-transferable vote system [SNTV], thus further diluting the representation of urban voters."

Reforms instituted under the new electoral law do not sufficiently address these inequalities. The addition of national list seats (27 out of 150 seats) elected by proportional representation did little to steer Jordan towards the development of national political parties founded on common platforms. Addressing such shortfalls is needed for a more empowered parliament built on political parties to come to fruition.

Despite this, Jordan's 2013 elections were a step forward from the country's 2010 elections due largely to the establishment of the IEC. The International Republican Institute's (IRI) delegation, which was deployed in all 12 governorates and observed at more than 175 polling stations, found election officials to be well-trained and knowledgeable about their roles, willing to engage with observers and accessible at all levels. The IEC took important steps toward establishing itself as an impartial election management body by improving the voters' list, carrying out efficient candidate

and national list registrations, issuing preprinted ballots, and administering a transparent Election Day process. The IEC should also be commended for hosting more than 150 international election observers in a manner consistent with the [United Nations Declaration on International Election Observation](#) and for facilitating their work and the of work of a robust contingent of citizen observers throughout the country.

As noted in [IRI's pre-election assessment](#) report, one area for improvement for the IEC to address is the voter registration process. While the registration process led to a more accurate voter list, group registration, allowed under the law, lends itself to fraud or to some individuals being registered against their will.

A positive attribute of the 2013 elections was a more open environment for campaigning and public discourse that helped remove previous taboos on being politically active and speaking one's mind. Throughout the election process, candidates and citizens were allowed the space to discuss aspects of government and public life that were previously off limits. IRI also commends the IEC for the provision of one-minute of free air time on national television to all registered candidates and lists. This provided candidates with greater opportunity to present themselves to voters.

Another important step taken by Jordanian authorities was improved enforcement of laws pertaining to alleged vote buying and other influence peddling around elections with notable arrests of candidates and agents accused of using money or gifts to illegally influence the process. Nonetheless, IRI's delegation heard numerous allegations of vote buying on Election Day that were not limited to one region. For Jordanians to recognize a sustained and impartial commitment to stopping the practice of vote buying, current cases must be fully adjudicated through a due process and laws must be enforced equally for all groups.

In addition, in future elections, Jordan should strengthen rules regulating the conduct of candidate agents inside and around polling centers. Enforcement of rules against Election Day campaigning outside polling centers must also be significantly improved upon, or the law amended, before the next election, as IRI's delegation witnessed campaigning in violation of the current law outside the majority of polling centers visited. An improved definition of campaigning under the current law may be another way to address this shortcoming. Improved candidate and party financial disclosure regulations would additionally contribute to building greater voter awareness in future elections.

With regard to the electoral framework – the dominant SNTV system – tribal allegiances continue to be the major factor in candidate selection and campaigning, with personality trumping platforms. The introduction of national proportional list seats may begin to address this challenge, but the number of seats elected by national list should be increased if a meaningful change in parliament's composition is to be realized. Likewise, national lists would have had a greater impact on encouraging political party participation if competition on lists had been limited to political parties. Notwithstanding a more free campaign environment, these factors, plus a rushed election schedule, left little time for voters to make informed choices and did not result in competition based on party or list platform.

With respect to women's representation, the new electoral law did not increase the percentage of women in the national parliament. In addition, Jordan's system of allocating seats to women re-enforces the same inequities between rural and urban districts seen in other areas of the electoral

law. To ensure that more women are elected and serve in parliament, Jordan needs to expand women's representation and institute an equitable method of allocating women's seats.

Currently, there is little connection between votes won and power conveyed to election winners due to parliament's weak mandate and limited governing authority. A long-term solution to improving the quality of electoral competition, and potentially lessening the practice of vote buying, would be to increase the powers of the national parliament, thus increasing the value voters place on their parliamentary vote.

IRI's delegation makes the following preliminary recommendations as a roadmap for improving future Jordanian elections. The recommendations will be further elaborated on in a full report IRI will issue in the coming months.

- Build on the IEC's good start in election administration by making the institution more independent, with its own full-time staff and direct access to investigative and policing bodies, and allow IEC leadership to serve out their full terms.
- Set future election dates before voter registration begins, and register lists and candidates at least six months before Election Day to ensure the public has time to fully consider their choices.
- If substantial changes are made to the election law, provide a minimum period of three months or more for voter education efforts before the start of voter registration to ensure that voters clearly understand their rights and opportunities to participate fully in the election process.
- Ensure a vote has equal weight throughout the country by establishing uniform guidelines based on population and then conducting redistricting.
- Stimulate party development by restricting national list competition to parties and by increasing the number of seats in parliament elected by national proportional list.
- Establish clear financial disclosure regulations and enforcement mechanisms for candidates and lists that require the public posting of all funds spent on campaigning and the origin of those funds.
- Support stronger judicial and criminal enforcement mechanisms for alleged electoral crimes, including vote buying, vote selling and coercion, financial or otherwise, to influence political support.

IRI's delegation included representatives from Canada, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Poland and the United States, and was led by Gahl Hodges Burt, Vice Chair of the [American Academy in Berlin](#) and a member of IRI's Board of Directors; and Agnieszka Pomaska, member of the lower house of the Polish Parliament and chair of the European Affairs Committee.

The 15 short-term observer teams built on the work which began with IRI's October 2012 pre-election assessment mission, and included three long-term observer teams that have been deployed in the country since November 2012. IRI's long-term observers met with government officials, political campaign representatives, civil society activists and election stakeholders. They also monitored voting and ballot counting on Election Day, and will observe the adjudication processes and resolution of complaints following the elections.

Other members of IRI's delegation were:

- Petr Bratský, member of the Czech Republic Senate;
- Christopher Carr, Vice President at J.P. Morgan;
- Darryl Gray, former member of the Canadian Parliament;
- James Hart, former member of the Canadian Parliament;
- Steve Heydemann, Senior Adviser for Middle East Initiatives at the [United States Institute of Peace](#);
- Tami Longaberger, Chief Executive Officer of the Longaberger Company, member of IRI's Board of Directors and Chair of the [Arab Women's Leadership Institute's](#) Board of Directors;
- Matt Rhoades, former Chief of Staff to Governor Mitt Romney;
- David Schenker, Aufzien Fellow and Director of the Program on Arab Politics at the [Washington Institute for Near East Policy](#);
- Christopher Tuttle, Director of the Washington Program at the [Council on Foreign Relations](#); and
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