



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE
الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض المتوسط

PAM High-level delegation in Cairo mission to observe the Presidential elections in Egypt

25-28 March 2018

Executive summary

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) deployed an Observer Mission to Egypt on the occasion of the presidential elections, which took place on 26-28 March 2018. This was the second election observation mission deployed by PAM to Egypt, as the first mission was deployed on the occasion of the parliamentary elections in 2015.

The mission was composed by PAM President Hon. Pedro Roque (Portugal), Hon. Alain Perea (French National Assembly) and Ms. Fatima Khachi, PAM Program Officer. The team was assisted by Mr. Mohamed Zaki, kindly put at the disposal of the PAM delegation by Hon. Abu El Enein, PAM President Emeritus and PAM Permanent Observer to the LAS in Cairo.

Upon arrival in Cairo, at its request, the PAM delegation met with and was briefed by the Honored Judge Lasheen, President of the National Elections Authority, and H.E. Hamdi Loza, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, responsible for the electoral process abroad.

PAM delegates, upon arrival, received the complete list of voting stations and prepared their own itinerary for the spot checks in the Cairo and the broader surrounding region. On site, they met with staff of the stations, representatives of candidates and citizens going to express their vote. They were warmly welcomed at all the stations visited.

PAM delegates, upon completion of the mission, expressed their great satisfaction in relation to the transparency of the electoral process and the free access granted to them at all polling stations visited, throughout the mission. They also noted, with sincere appreciation, the high rate in the participation of women and young people to the voting process, all taking place in a relaxed and joyful spirit.

PAM wishes to express its sincere congratulation both to the Egyptian people for these elections and to H.E. President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi for his reelection to a second term.

Draft Executive report

The electoral observation mission to Cairo

On Sunday 25 March 2018, the delegation was received in Cairo by the **H.E. Judge Lasheen Ibrahim, President of the National Elections Authority (NEA)**, who provided a detailed briefing to the PAM delegates on the rules and procedures of the electoral procedures.

H.E. the Judge pointed out that the presidential elections, which would last three consecutive days, would be conducted under full judicial supervision in all stages, which represents the major guarantee for the safety of the electoral process, as well as the security and peace of mind of the Egyptians towards the elections.

He then reviewed the competences of the National Elections Authority, the procedures, preparations and decisions taken in preparation for the presidential elections. In particular, he informed the PAM delegation that the National Election Authority, composed by ten judges, is an independent authority with a legal personality and is technically, financially and administratively independent.

The Authority is exclusively mandated to administer *referenda* and presidential, parliamentary and local council elections; to organize all the processes relevant to these elections; and to supervise these elections with complete independence and impartiality as regulated by this law.

The Authority is composed of the Board of Directors of the Authority and the permanent Executive Body of the Authority, and it is led by the most senior member from the Court of Cassation.

The Board consists of ten members equally from Vice-Presidents of the Court of Cassation, Presidents of the Courts of Appeal, Vice-Presidents of the State Council, Vice-Presidents of the State Litigation Authority, and Vice-Presidents of the Administrative Prosecution Authority.

The Executive Body is composed of an Executive Director and three deputies, and also includes a sufficient number of members and staff members who are selected from the members of judicial entities and authorities, state civil servants, and those with experience based on rules set by the Board.

Moreover, the NEA is also responsible of preparing the voter database based on data of the national identification number, as well as continuously updating, amending, cleaning and periodically reviewing it; setting the rules, procedures and mechanisms for conducting referenda and elections in a manner that ensures its safety, impartiality, integrity and transparency; setting out the rules that will regulate the procedures of the voting process for Egyptians who live abroad during referenda and elections; establishing and implementing a system for assigning candidates' symbols in the election.

He also informed the PAM delegation that each electoral committee would be chaired by a judge, as the major guarantee for the safety and security of the electoral process.

From his side, the PAM President presented the Assembly and the delegation accompanying him. He then expressed the support of the PAM Member countries as well as that of the President of the Portuguese Parliament and people to the presidential elections, stating that the parliaments are the best outcomes of democracy and that each election is a feast of democracy.

He also praised the attention paid to gender equality in the composition of the Executive Body of the Authority, as mentioned by the Judge himself, as well as the establishment of the Authority as a permanent body, with the Presidential decree.

On 26 March, which was the first day of the three-day electoral phase, PAM observers visited several polling stations in the area of Zamalek and Giza, allocated in Central Cairo. The process was conducted very smoothly with tight monitoring and security measures noted. In particular, the PAM delegates noted with appreciation the calmness at the polling stations, the good measure of filtering the access of voters, for security purposes. They also noted the high rate in women and young people's participation in the voting process, as well as the spirit of joy and feast in all polling stations.

On the second day, the delegation moved to the districts of El Shalel, Shobra, Imbaba, where they visited the following schools being used as voting stations: Ammar Ibn Yassir (Shobra/El Sahel), Ensaf Sary Preparatory School For Girls (Shobra /El Sahel), El Sayeda Khadeka Common Primary School (Shobra / El Sahel), Health Technical Insitute (imbaba), The Martyr Mohamed Gamal School, Ahmed Lotfi Al Sayyed School, Technical School for Girls.

In the afternoon, the PAM delegation also met with **Ambassador Hamdi Loza, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, responsible for the electoral process abroad**, with whom they discussed the mandate and activities of PAM in relation to the electoral monitoring missions. The Deputy Foreign Minister reviewed the role played by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs calling for the vote of Egyptians abroad, and coordination with regional and international organizations that have been keen to send their observers to follow up the elections. During this meeting, Mediterranean affairs were also discussed in depth. The threat of terrorism facing the region and the need to have a common position were highlighted.

For his part, PAM President praised the good organization of the electoral process, as witnessed during the visit of the PAM delegation to the electoral committees in many neighbourhoods, and the spirit of joy, security and safety. He also stressed in this context the centrality of the Egyptian role and its implications for the security and stability of the region in general, and recalled the key role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in representing Egypt at PAM meetings when there was no parliament in the country.

On the third day, the PAM delegation visited more electoral stations in the South particularly in Mit Rahina. The delegation chose carefully the districts to visit to cover areas, in Cairo, with different economical, educational and wealth levels.

Outcome and main observation

At the end of the mission, PAM observers held an internal briefing on the outcome of the visit. The PAM delegation appreciated transparency of the process and the full access granted to the polling stations throughout the mission in Egypt. It was also noted with great satisfaction the smooth environment and the very positive atmosphere that surrounded the whole process of the presidential elections.

All electoral committees visited by the mission were organized to facilitate the entry of voters and allow their smooth flow. Moreover, the presence of Egyptian Judges in all electoral station, along with national and international observers in most of the polling stations visited by the delegation,

was positively remarked. They appreciated the security measures undertaken, in order to allow all citizens to vote as well as to avoid any attempt of terroristic attack, as well as the high rate in the participation of women and young people to the voting process, always in a spirit of happiness and feast.

The delegation did not detect the existence of any manipulation or fraud in the polling stations visited.

The sole remark that the delegation would like to make is a point related to the orientation of the polling booths in a few stations, which, although at a sufficient distance from other people, should be positioned differently to ensure a better separation of the voter in a corner of the room.

PAM HIGH-LEVEL MISSION TO OBSERVE THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN EGYPT

25-28 March 2018

Program

Friday 23 - Saturday 24 March 2018

Arrival of members of the delegation - accommodation at Marriott Hotel

Sunday 25 March 2018:

- 10:00** Preparatory meeting at the hotel
- 12:00** Meeting with H.E. Judge Lasheen Ibrahim, President of the National Elections Authority
Meeting with officials of the National Elections Authority / NEA to receive a briefing on the procedures related to the election process
Venue: National Elections Authority HQ
- 15:00** Internal debriefing of the PAM delegation and preparatory meeting at the hotel
- 21:00** *Dinner offered by Hon. Mohamed Abou Eleinein, PAM Emeritus President in honour of the PAM delegation*

Monday 26 March 2018

- 9:30** Leaving the hotel to electoral polling stations in Cairo and neighborhood
- 13:00 – 14:30** *lunch offered by Hon. Mohamed Abou Eleinein, PAM Emeritus President in honour of the PAM delegation*
- 15:00** Resuming observations in different polling stations
- 21:30** *Free evening*

Tuesday 27 March 2018

- 9:30** Leaving the hotel to electoral polling stations in Cairo and neighborhood
- 13:00 – 13:30** Meeting with Ambassador Hamdi Loza, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs responsible for the electoral process abroad
- 13:30 – 14:30** *Lunch break*
- 15:00** Resuming observations in different polling stations
- 21:30** *Free evening*

Wednesday 28 March 2018

- 8:30** Leaving the hotel to electoral polling stations in Cairo and neighborhood
- 13:00 – 14:30** *Lunch break*
- 15:00** Resuming observations in different polling stations
- 20:00** Internal debriefing of the PAM delegation at the hotel
- 21:00** *End of mission and departure of delegates*