

RASED for Election Monitoring Statement on the Executive Instructions issued by the Independent Elections Commission (IEC) July 16, 2016

The IEC responded inconsistently to monitoring authorities regarding questions about the Executive Instructions.

The IEC did not publish the Executive Instructions in their entirety. This goes against standards of electoral processes.

In its weekly report on the electoral process, RASED criticized the IEC for not responding in general to the recommendations made by monitoring authorities and especially to those made by RASED. Although the IEC may have verbally approved the recommendations, they failed to include them in the publication of the Executive Instructions in the official newsletter.

RASED was surprised by the IEC's committing of monitoring authorities to inform the IEC about any errors before publishing their findings. The report recommended that monitoring authorities should inform the IEC of violations throughout the coming electoral process prior to publication. RASED had reservations on one article in particular that was published in a preliminary draft of the Executive Instructions: the requirement that local observers be approved by the IEC included in paragraph (f) of Article IX goes against the freedoms of monitoring authorities. It is also contradictory to the Universal Declaration for Election Monitoring that ensures monitoring authorities' freedom to publish what they want as long as it does not conflict with national security interests or the conduct of the electoral process.

RASED called for joint cooperation with the IEC to see to the overall success of the electoral process. RASED also expressed its appreciation for the IEC's efforts to regularly communicate with monitoring authorities and respond to questions and inquiries.

The following includes the full text of the report.

RASSED for Monitoring Elections

Amman 072016/16/

In the context of Jordan's electoral development, there are unifying efforts to strengthen and reform both the electoral and political process in Jordan. RASSED carefully tracks the work of the electoral administration to reach parliamentary election fits the best practices and to reach political forces aspiration.

RASSED's reviewed the Executive Instructions published under No. 5402 in the official newsletter and concerned with the preparation of the voter list, the formation of committees, the accreditation of local and international observers, and the accreditation of journalists and reporters in the media. However, upon its review to the IEC, RASSED noted that special instructions for journalists, reporters, and media workers in the media institutions had not been published. RASSED hopes that this mistake was unintentional, because international standards for transparency require the IEC to publish all Executive Instructions in their official newsletter at the time as they publish it on their website, especially during the electoral process.

Similarly, the IEC was responsible for publishing the Executive Instructions about the electoral process system, especially considering the need to raise more awareness on conducting electoral lists, candidacy terms, and calculation mechanisms. The delay in publishing the Executive Instructions was against the standards of electoral processes. If published on time, the publication has a positive effect on participation rates as it raises the population's awareness.

As for the process of preparing and creating the Executive Instructions, RASSED commented on the participatory principle which RASSED had requested in a previous statement that the IEC implement. The IEC only invited the monitoring authorities to sit with them once. Therefore, it

is important that the IEC starts to involve monitoring authorities in making decisions, especially as these authorities have experience in working on improving and developing the electoral process.

RASED commended the IEC President earlier for defining limits on campaign spending. RASED looks forward to further adjustments based on clear and specific standards that will ensure monitoring of campaign mechanisms during the election period, especially the monitoring any mechanisms that would jeopardize the prospect of a fair parliamentary election. RASED thus recommends that IEC familiarize itself with Arab and international experiences in this regard. RASED is ready to provide all that is needed in order to support the IEC.

RASED had previously made a number of recommendations to the IEC regarding the instructions published in the official newsletter, including an extension of the recommendation period. Although the IEC has responded to some of these recommendations, they have only done so verbally without publishing any changes to the Executive Instructions.

Part 1: Special Operation Instructions to Accreditate Local Observers

1. RASED recommended the IEC give monitoring authorities the opportunity to submit monitoring certification requests via e-mail or electronic application. The current system requires applicants to apply by hand. The IEC did not respond to this recommendation as it was made clear by Article F of the Executive Instructions for Local Monitoring Authorities that only international monitoring authorities had the capability to electronically submit accreditation requests.

1. RASED was disappointed that the IEC required monitoring authorities to first inform them of any violation that might occur over the course of the electoral process. RASED had reservations about this particular article when it was published in the preliminary drafts for the Executive Instructions. The article had included this condition in the clause (9/Q) until

it was later deleted and replaced by the clause (9/F) that reads: “Thereafter, the [monitoring authorities] have the right to publish [regarding violations] in a manner deemed appropriate.” Here, the intention is for the commitment of monitoring authorities to send reports on any IEC violations that directly undermine the independence of monitoring authorities. So, RASSED has recommended that the IEC completely delete this clause as it is contradictory to the Universal Declaration for Election Monitoring that ensures monitoring authorities’ freedom to publish what they want as long as it does not conflict with national security interests or the conduct of the electoral process.

Part 2: Special Instructions to Form Committees

1. A lack of special instructions for forming a committee, regardless of the text, goes against the principle of transparency in electoral administration work. Therefore, this undermines the credibility of the electoral administration and its respective regulations, and could ultimately affect its impartiality and general transparency.
2. Included in the special Executive Instructions for Committee Formation is the Article (5/B), the use of which can only be deemed appropriate by a special committee. RASSED emphasized in a past report to the IEC that the Commission should have clear and specific requirements so as to avoid hiring people who lack the appropriate expertise according to a certain basis.