

27/8/2016

- RASED deplores the IEC's violation of the Election Law and demands that it withdraw its decision on Badia voters
- A letter by the IEC's chairman contradicted information in the final voter lists
- RASED demands that the IEC be more accurate in displaying electoral information
- RASED demands that the IEC show more transparency in its performance

RASED has been carefully following the statements released by the Independent Election Commission (IEC) during and after the candidacy application timeframe. Recently, the IEC called on Bedouin voters registered in non-Badia districts to refer to the Civil Status and Passports Department (CSPD) in order to change their districts. This is a clear violation of the Election Law, since voter lists have already been finalized. Paragraph A of Article 6 of the Election Law provides that "Once the Board adopts the voter lists sent from the Department in accordance with Article 5 of this law, such lists shall be deemed to be final voter lists and shall not be amended under any circumstances and the parliamentary elections shall be conducted on the basis of those lists." Therefore, RASED demands that the IEC to withdraw its call and refrains from making any changes to the final voter lists, and to commit to the legal framework of the electoral process.

RASED also calls on the IEC to be more transparent. RASED's team has documented significant indicators of a step-back in transparency, namely the lack of timely provision of information and the lack of accuracy in information provided based on voter requests, as well as in the IEC's media statements during the candidacy period. RASED's comments and subsequent recommendations are detailed as follows:

First: Commitment to Legal Timeframes

During the drafting of this statement, the IEC had still not released a list of candidacy applicants and its decision on either its website or in local daily newspapers. This is a violation of Article 14 of the Executive Instructions on Candidacy, which provides that "the IEC shall display the list of district's accepted candidacy applications on its website, governorates centers and the office of the Election Committee." It also provides that "the IEC shall display these lists in two local daily newspapers." Given that the deadline for making decisions on candidacy applications was the 25th of August 2016, the IEC



has violated the provisions. Therefore, RASED demands that the IEC commit to the display tools and timing provided by the legal frameworks, in line with electoral transparency measures. This is in order to inform voters who are then enabled to hold the IEC accountable for its performance, particularly on candidacy issues.

Second: The Lack of Accuracy in Information Provided to Voters

RASED's team received several complaints from voters and candidacy applicants regarding irregularities in the electoral information as provided by the IEC. One example is of a female candidate applicant from Ma'an, who requested that the IEC inform her of her registered district and assigned polling center. The IEC's written letter provided that she was registered in Ma'an district, at Um Hakam school: station 45. However, the displayed final voter list provided that she was registered in the South Badia district, at Al-Husseiniya School: station 126. This contradiction could be attributed to one of two options: either the IEC's information is not accurate and do not match the final list it displayed, or the final voter lists have been manipulated after being displayed to public.

It should also be noted that there remains an unresolved debate on the right of Bedouin voters registered in non-Badia districts to vote or run as candidates in other districts. Clause 2 of paragraph D of Article 3 of the Executive Instructions on Candidacy states that in order to be able to run in a Badia district, one must be registered there as a voter. However, it does not restrict Badia voters from running as candidates in other districts. This issue has caused further confusion, with the IEC rejecting the candidacy application of a voter registered in the 3rd district of Amman who belongs to a bedouin tribe. This decision had no explicit legal basis, and when the applicant requested the legal provision behind the IEC's decision the IEC replied with the fact that there is none, but they follow "tradition". It should be noted that the IEC has already accepted a candidacy application by one bedouin voter registered in southern Badia as a candidate in Ma'an district.

Therefore, RASED calls on the IEC to commit to the legal candidacy restrictions, and to review all information provided to voters based on individual requests. RASED also demands that the IEC investigate any changes in the final voter lists that occurred following display to public and make whomever is responsible accountable for this manipulation, if proven.



Third: the IEC's Conflicting Statements on Candidacy.

Conflicting figures were issued by the IEC on the number of lists and individuals applying for candidacy. The spokesman of the IEC declared that "the IEC's Council of Commissioners decided on the meeting held on 232016/8/, based on the provisions of Article 151//h of the Election Law number 6 for the year 2016 and its amendments, to approve candidacy applications for 228 lists out of 230 lists that applied for candidacy." Later, on August 25th 2016, the IEC announced that a number of candidates and lists were rejected after they had been previously approved. This has caused a state of confusion among applicants and their voter bases. The IEC's statistics continued to contradict previous official statements, where they announced recieving 1293 applications but then released an incomplete table addressing only 12 districts out of 23 (http://goo.gl/W6umQ3). The IEC then published an infograph indicating that they received 1292 applications.

Therefore, RASED emphasises its recommendation that the IEC practice transparency and review the accuracy of its press releases, as well as publishing complete lists of all candidacy applicants and its decision on each list. This should be done in line with the relevant legal framework, and should contribute to clearing the confusion that resulted from the lack of transparency so far.



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