



ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION FINAL REPORT

Organization of
American States

GENERAL ELECTIONS IN THE BAHAMAS

MAY 7, 2012

Secretariat for Political Affairs
Department for Electoral Cooperation and Observation

Electoral Observation Missions (EOMs)
Organization of American States (OAS)



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**General Secretariat
Organization of American States**

José Miguel Insulza

Secretary General

Albert R. Ramdin

Assistant Secretary General

Kevin Casas-Zamora

Secretary for Political Affairs

Pablo Gutiérrez

Director

Department for Electoral Cooperation and Observation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On April 3, 2012 the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (GS/OAS) received a request from the government of The Bahamas to observe the General Elections, which were due to be held in May of 2012. This request represented the first time that The Bahamas had invited the OAS to carry out an Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) as well as the first occasion in which observers of any kind would monitor the conduct of an electoral process in the country. In order to permit the presence of international electoral observers, the Bahamian parliament amended the Parliamentary Registration Act in February 2012, exempting accredited observers from provisions that prohibit admission to polling places. On April 4, 2012, the OAS Secretary General accepted the invitation to deploy an EOM to The Bahamas. A few days later on April 10, Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham dissolved the parliament and set May 7, 2012 as the date for the General Elections.

The Secretary General appointed Ambassador Alfonso Quiñónez, Secretary for External Relations of the Organization of American States, to lead the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in The Bahamas. Ana María Díaz, DECO Specialist, was designated as Deputy Chief of Mission. The Mission, which was composed of 12 international observers from 10 countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Guatemala, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Switzerland and the United States), arrived in the country on May 2, 2012 and concluded its activities on May 8, 2012.

OAS observers and experts observed the voting process in 30 out of the 38 constituencies in The Bahamas and conducted extensive interviews with key stakeholders, such as the Parliamentary Registration Department, government actors, political parties, the Royal Bahamas Police, the Registrar General Department and members of civil society organizations, among others.¹

The final results of the elections gave 29 seats in the House of Assembly to the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP), and the remaining nine seats to the incumbent Free National Movement (FNM). Overall results showed that the PLP received 48.62% of the vote, the FNM 42.09% and Democratic National Alliance (DNA) 8.48% of the votes.

The Bahamas Constitution Party (BCP) captured 0.06% of the vote while independent candidates collectively won 0.75%. On May 8th, the Honorable Perry Christie, leader of the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) was sworn in as Prime Minister of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

The OAS Electoral Observation Mission wishes to thank the government of The Bahamas, the local authorities, candidates, party delegates, media, and members of civil society for the openness with which they received the Mission and to express its gratitude to the Governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Serbia and South Korea, as well as Mission Leadership Quebec and Université Laval of Canada whose support made the Mission possible.

The Electoral Observation Mission would also want to recognize the excellent support and cooperation provided by the OAS Office in The Bahamas and thank its Representative, Juliet Mallet Phillip.

1. Governor General; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs; Perry Christie, Leader PPL; Errol Bethel, Chairman FNM; Branville McCartney, Leader DNA; Sheila McKintosh, Leader BCP; National Youth Council; Bahamas Human Rights Network; Chamber of Commerce; The Bahamas Broadcasting Corporation; Bureau of Women's Affairs; Office of the Prime Minister; Bahamas Christian Council

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

The Electoral Observation Missions of the Organization of American States (OAS/EOMs) have become a key instrument for the promotion and defense of democracy in the Americas. They help guarantee the integrity, impartiality, and accountability of numerous electoral processes and strengthen the credibility of democratic institutions in Member States.

The presence of an OAS/EOM represents the solidarity and support of the Inter-American community towards the efforts undertaken by democratic institutions in states that organize and administer their own electoral processes. OAS Missions promote the recognition of political rights, particularly the right to suffrage, as the legitimate expression of the opportunity of every citizen to elect representatives and to be elected in an inclusive and free manner.

Since 1962, the OAS has observed more than 190 electoral processes in the Hemisphere, although the greatest advance in these initiatives has taken place in the last 15 years. In that timespan, the OAS has observed many different types of elections - general, presidential, parliamentary, and municipal elections, referenda, signature validation and collection processes, as well as primary elections within political parties – always at the request of the Member State.

On April 3, 2012 the OAS received a request from the Government of The Bahamas to observe the General Elections that took place on Monday May 7th, 2012. Not only did this invitation represent the first time that The Bahamas had invited the OAS to carry out an Electoral Observation Mission, it also constituted the first occasion in which electoral observation of any kind was permitted in the country. Three months prior to the election, the government of The Bahamas amended its electoral code, the Parliamentary Registration Act, to permit the presence of observers within polling stations. On April 4, 2012, the OAS Secretary General accepted the invitation to deploy a Mission and set in motion preparations for the EOM.

The Secretary General appointed Ambassador Alfonso Quiñónez, Secretary for External Relations of the Organization of American States, to lead the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in The Bahamas. He was assisted by Ana María Díaz, DECO Specialist, as Deputy Chief of Mission. The Mission comprised 12 international observers from nine OAS Member States (Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Guatemala, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and the United States) and one Observer Country (Switzerland). The Mission began its

work with the arrival of the Core Group on May 2, 2012 and concluded on May 8, 2012. Regarding the gender composition of this OAS/EOM, 42 percent of the observers were women, and 58 percent were men.

The main purpose of the OAS/EOM was to observe the Bahamian electoral process and to verify its compliance with internationally recognized principles and standards and to ensure the organization of “free and fair elections,” as established in the Inter-American Democratic Charter.² Specifically, the objectives of this Mission were:

- To verify compliance with the election laws and regulations in place in The Bahamas; to analyze the organization of the electoral process in the context of standards adopted by the OAS Member States; and to make note of what was observed and inform the Secretary General and the Permanent Council.
- To work with the Bahamian governmental and electoral authorities, and with Bahamians in general, to ensure the impartiality, transparency, and reliability of the electoral process.
- To help create an atmosphere of public trust and to encourage citizen participation.
- To serve as a channel to seek and build consensus in situations of conflict among the different participants in the electoral process, as requested.
- To make recommendations in order to help improve the Bahamian electoral system.
- To demonstrate international support and Inter-American solidarity for the realization of an electoral process that is impartial, transparent, and reliable.

This report is organized in four chapters. The next chapter presents a general overview of the political system and electoral organization in The Commonwealth of The Bahamas. The third chapter describes the activities of the OAS/EOM as well as its observations from the three key stages of the electoral process: the pre-electoral period, Election Day, and the post-electoral stage. The final chapter presents the general conclusions of the Mission, including recommendations to further strengthen electoral processes in The Bahamas.

² “Inter-American Democratic Charter”, Chapter V, Article 23.

CHAPTER II. POLITICAL SYSTEM AND ELECTORAL ORGANIZATION

A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Population and Demographics

The Bahamas is an archipelago that spans 5,358 sq. miles (13,878 sq. km.), consisting of 700 islands and 2,400 cays, although only thirty of these islands are inhabited. As of the 2010 census the population of The Bahamas totaled 353,658, of which approximately 84% live in urban areas. Nearly 90% of the Bahamian population is clustered on one of the three major islands: New Providence accounts for 69.9% of the population, while Grand Bahama and Abaco account for 15.5% between them. The rest of the population is scattered on the remaining islands and cays.

The Bahamas is one of the wealthiest Caribbean countries with an economy heavily dependent on tourism and offshore banking. According to the World Bank, in terms of GDP per capita it is the 3rd richest OAS Member State (behind the United States and Canada) and the 33rd richest country in the world. Tourism together with tourism-driven construction and manufacturing accounts for approximately 60% of GDP and directly or indirectly employs half of the archipelago's labor force.³

This map displays the location of the various islands that make up the archipelago of The Bahamas:



Source: Nations Online Project⁴

3. The World Bank, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?order=wbapi_data_value_2011+wbapi_data_value+wbapi_data_value-last&sort=asc

4. http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/bahamas_map.htm

Political Background

Bahamian politics have traditionally been characterized by a two-party system dominated by the centre-left Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) and the centre-right Free National Movement (FNM). In the context of the 2012 elections, the newly-created Democratic National Alliance (DNA) emerged as a third force in the lead-up to polling day, presenting candidates in all constituencies. A handful of smaller parties, notably The Bahamas Constitution Party and Bahamas Democratic Movement, the Coalition for Democratic Reform and the Bahamian Nationalist Party, are active but have to date not gained representation in parliament.

The PLP, which led the country to political independence from Great Britain in July 1973, dominated national politics from independence until the 1990s under the stewardship of Lynden Pindling, who is widely considered the father of the nation. The party won every election until 1992, at which point it was defeated by the FNM, led by Hubert Ingraham. The FNM successfully won re-election in 1997 but power was ceded back to the PLP in 2002, ushering in a government under Prime Minister Perry Christie. In the elections of May 2007, the FNM once again won a majority under Ingraham, securing 23 seats in the 41-seat parliament. Over 92.1% of the country's 150,684 registered voters turned out at the polls on that occasion.

The main issues in the 2007 electoral process were the economy, foreign investment and immigration policy. The 2007 elections turned out once again to be a contest between the two major parties. At stake were the 41 seats in the House of Assembly, which included one newly-created seat. PLP Prime Minister Perry Christie, seeking a second consecutive term in office, called on voters to support his government's economic record, which he claimed had attracted 20 billion dollars of foreign investment. On the other hand, the FNM argued that the government had been overly accommodating of investors, and insisted the country's land should be leased rather than sold to foreign investors. Against this background, both parties pledged to deal squarely with migration and to take steps to stem illegal immigration to the country. Though voting is not compulsory in The Bahamas, voter participation has been notably high in the last two electoral processes.⁵

5. The Government of The Bahamas, <http://www.bahamas.gov.bs>

B. POLITICAL SYSTEM

The Commonwealth of The Bahamas is a parliamentary democracy that operates on the Westminster model.

1. Executive Branch

As a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, the constitutional head of The Bahamian state is Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom who is represented in The Bahamas by the Governor-General. The head of government is the Prime Minister. Following legislative elections, the leader of the majority party or majority coalition is appointed Prime Minister by the Governor-General.

2. Legislative Branch

The Bahamas has a bicameral parliament, though the lower house - the House of Assembly - carries out all major legislative functions. As currently constituted, the House of Assembly has 38 members each of whom is directly elected in a single-member constituency by a plurality of votes cast (first-past-the-post) vote. Members serve terms not to exceed five years.

The upper house, or Senate, consists of 16 members, who are technically appointed by the Governor General. In practice, the Prime Minister designates nine senators, while the Leader of the Opposition names four. The Governor-General appoints the remaining three on the advice of the Prime Minister, after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.

3. Judicial Branch

The basis of the Bahamian Law and legal system is the English Common Law tradition. Justices of the Supreme Court, Registrars and Magistrates are appointed by The Governor-General acting on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission. The Judicial and Legal Service Commission comprises five persons with the Chief Justice as Chairman. The Chief Justice and the Justices of the Court of Appeal, including the President, are appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.⁶

6. The Government of The Bahamas, <http://www.bahamas.gov.bs>

4. Political Parties

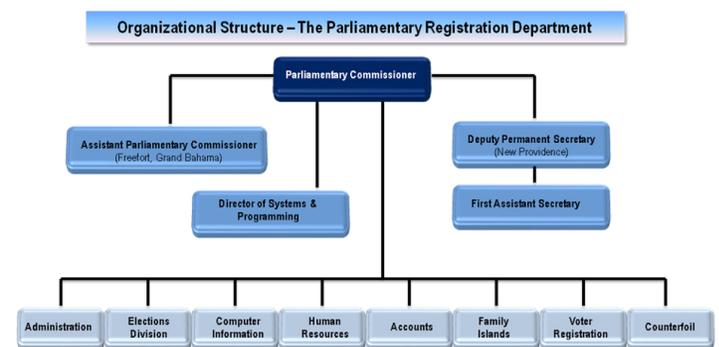
Each political party in The Bahamas, of which four were active in the 2012 process, nominates one candidate for each constituency. Independent candidates may also stand for elections. The party that wins the most constituencies is asked by the Governor General to form the Government and the leader of that party is appointed Prime Minister. The party that has the second highest number of seats in the House of Assembly is referred to as the Official Opposition. Any citizen of The Bahamas who is 21 years of age or older and has ordinarily resided in The Bahamas for a period of at least one year immediately before the date of his or her nomination for election is eligible for election to the House of Assembly. In total 133 candidates, including 14 independents and the representatives of four political parties competed in the 2012 general elections in The Bahamas. The following parties put forth candidates for the 38 seats in the National Assembly:

Party	Party Leader	Number of Candidates
Free National Movement (FNM)	Hubert Ingraham	38
Progressive Liberal Party (PLP)	Perry Christie	38
Democratic National Alliance (DNA)	Granville McCartney	38
Bahamas Constitution Party (BCP)	Sharell Ali McKintosh	5

C. ELECTORAL LEGISLATION

The Bahamas instituted universal suffrage in 1967 and attained formal independence from the United Kingdom in 1973. Provisions governing the conduct and procedure of national elections are principally found in the Parliamentary Elections Act, 1992, which provides guidelines for the registration of voters, the conduct of elections, election-day procedures, electoral offenses, the counting of votes, ascertainment of electoral results and procedures for the contesting of elections.

The principal electoral management body in The Bahamas is the Parliamentary Registration Department. The department is headed by a Parliamentary Commissioner, who is a public officer appointed by the Governor-General in accordance with the advice of the Public Service Commission. Duties of the Parliamentary Commissioner include keeping the register and carrying out the requirements of the Parliamentary Elections Act regarding the registration of voters and the holding of elections. The Parliamentary Commissioner is represented by returning officers in each constituency. The following chart summarizes the organizational structure of the Parliamentary Registration Department:



Source: Parliamentary Registration Department

According to Article 8 of the Parliamentary Elections Act, all persons who have reached the age of 18 or over, hold Bahamian citizenship, have not been subject to any legal incapacity and who have been ordinarily resident for a minimum of three months prior to their registration in the constituency in which they intend to vote are entitled to register on the list of electors. Exceptions to the requirement of ordinary residence are made for persons who are absent for reason of employment and intend to resume “actual residence” within six months of giving up such residence and for students who intend to resume actual residence within six months of the completion of such course of study.

The Electoral Code calls for a complete re-registration of voters every five years. Specifically, the register ceases to have effect “at the end of each succeeding period of five years next following the date of its coming into force,” or upon a date determined by Governor-General, with thirty days notice. Once the register expires, all voter’s cards and counterfoils previously issued are considered void. The Parliamentary Elections Act assigns the Parliamentary Commissioner responsibility for the preparation of a new register. Revising officers are required to be in attendance in the office of the Parliamentary Commissioner’s office in New Providence during regular government hours and at a place in each constituency on at least one day in every six months for the purpose of hearing and determining registration applications. Furthermore, the Parliamentary Commission may, at any time after the coming into force of the register and prior to its closing for a general election, appoint two scrutineers in each polling division in order to ascertain the accuracy of the register.

Any person wishing to be registered as a voter must apply for registration in the polling division in which he or she is ordinarily resident. Under the supervision of the revising officer, a potential voter must produce such reasonable evidence as the revising officer shall consider necessary to prove that he or she is qualified to be registered, take an oath and have two identical copies of a photograph taken. The revising officer then prepares voter’s card and counterfoil for that person. Before issuing a voter’s card, the revising officer shall require the person to whom it is issued to sign that card and counterfoil and also sign the counterfoil for him or herself. As specified in Form C of the Parliamentary Elections Act, a voter’s card shall contain the following particulars:

FORM C (Section 19(3)) Form of Voter's Card	
The Format and arrangement of this form as set out below need not be strictly adhered to, provided that the particulars set out therein are not omitted	
Page 1. VOTER'S CARD. THE BAHAMAS.	
Name.....	
Date of Birth.....	
Signature.....	
Particulares of Issue	Space for Photograph
Polling Division No.....	
Constituency.....	
Space for date stamp and signature of Revising Officer	

Source: Parliamentary Elections Act

As per the Parliamentary Elections Act, the Parliamentary Commissioner must at all times keep a copy of the register that is open for inspection. In the case of any change, the Commissioner must have ready for public inspection the amended register within seven days in New Providence and within 14 days in the Family Islands.

Additionally, a certified copy of the register for the entire nation must be published every three years. The Commissioner is required to keep the several parts of the register under continuous review for the purpose of ensuring that no person is named more than once in the electoral list or registered by virtue of a qualification which he or she does not hold. If at any time the Commissioner has reasonable cause to believe that any person on the register is not entitled to be registered, he or she must send notice to the person in question to the addresses as shown on the register stating that objection is made to the inclusion of that person’s and giving notice of the day on which that objection shall be heard, which shall be held not less than seven days after the sending of the notice. Every six months, the Commissioner must publish, whether on a public notice board or at the office of the Commissioner in that constituency, the names and particulars of those persons whom he or she has reasonable cause to believe should seek a transfer to another part of the register. Objections are public hearings where the onus proof is on the appellant. If any party fails to appear at the hearing, the revising officer may on good cause adjourn the hearing for not more than three days. The revising officer shall cause the register to be altered as may be required to give effect to his or her decision. Where a general election is held, the Parliamentary Commissioner must publish the register at the office of the Parliamentary Commissioner within fourteen days of the issue of the writ of the election and copy of the parts of the register relating to any constituency in the Family Islands at the office of the administrator.

As regards to electoral boundaries and polling divisions, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas establishes that the country will be divided into thirty-eight constituencies or such greater number as may be provided for by an order made by the Governor-General. Each constituency is represented by one member in the House or Assembly. At intervals of no more than five years, a Constituencies Commission must review the number and boundaries of constituencies and submit a report to the Governor-General either recommending certain changes or determining that no change is necessary.

The Commission is comprised of five members: the Speaker of the Assembly⁷ as Chairman, a Justice of the Supreme Court who is Deputy Chairman and three members of the House of Assembly who are appointed by the Governor-General: two in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister and one in accordance with the advice of the Leader of the Opposition. The Parliamentary Registration Act grants the Governor-General the prerogative to further divide constituencies into polling divisions, stipulating that, so far as it is practicable, the boundaries of polling divisions shall be drawn so that they do not encompass more than approximately four hundred registered voters.

For the 2012 electoral process, The Bahamas was divided into the following 38 constituencies:

CONSTITUENCY	ISLANDS(S)	CONSTITUENCY	ISLANDS(S)
1. Bains Town & Grants Town	New Providence	24. Central Grand Bahama	Grand Bahama
2. Bamboo Town		25. East Grand Bahama	
3. Carmichael		26. Marco City	
4. Centreville		27. Pineridge	
5. Elizabeth		28. West Grand Bahama & Bimini	Grand Bahama/Bimini
6. Englerston		29. Central & South Abaco	Abaco
7. Fort Charlotte		30. North Abaco	
8. Fox Hill		31. Mangrove Cay & South Andros	Andros, Mangrove Cay
9. Garden Hills		32. North Andros & The Berry Islands	Andros, Berry Islands
10. Golden Gates		33. Cat Island, Rum Cay & San Salvador	Cat Island, Rum Cay & San Salvador
11. Golden Isles		34. Central & South Eleuthera	Eleuthera, Harbour Island, Spanish Wells
12. Killarney		35. North Eleuthera	
13. Marathon		36. The Exumas & Ragged Island	Exuma, Black Point, Ragged Island
14. Montagu		37. Long Island	Long Island
15. Mount Moriah		38. MICAL	Mayaguana, Inagua, Crooked Island, Acklins & Green Turtle Cay
16. Nassau Village			
17. Pinewood			
18. Saint Anne's			
19. Sea Breeze			
20. South Beach			
21. Southern Shores			
22. Tall Pines			
23. Yamacraw			

Source: Prepared by OAS/DECO with Information from Parliamentary Registration Department

D. VOTING PROCEDURE

Each polling station in The Bahamas is managed by a presiding officer. Presiding officers are directly appointed by the Parliamentary Commissioner and are typically public officers. Responsible for keeping order within the polling place, presiding officers are assisted by a number

of polling clerks that is determined by the Parliamentary Commissioner. The electoral code stipulates that such clerks should be public officers if practicable. As regards to the 2012 electoral process, polling places were manned by six polling officials: a presiding officer, assistant presiding officer, information clerk, stamp clerk, register clerk and a counterfoil clerk. Floor clerks and police officers are also present at most polling stations. Additionally, candidates are permitted to designate election agents as their representation within the polling stations. No more than three election agents per candidate are allowed to be present at any given time within a polling place.

In preparation for polling day, the returning officer in each constituency provides every presiding officer with a locked ballot box or the number of ballot boxes as the returning officer shall consider necessary. These ballot boxes, one of which contains the necessary number of ballots (as determined by the returning officer) are delivered to every polling place before the beginning of the voting along with the following materials: such number of compartments (booths) so that at least one booth is provided for each 150 persons registered in that particular constituency; election ink; indelible pencils; a copy of the electoral register in abbreviated form and a copy of the part of the register for the polling division and a standard notice giving directions for the guidance of voters. These voter instructions must be displayed outside every polling place and in every compartment within the polling place.

At 7:30 am, the presiding officer, in the presence of all polling officials, election agents and observers, is responsible for discharging the following duties: unlocking the ballot box; removing the ballot papers; displaying the empty ballot box to each person so that they may verify that it is empty; placing in the box the ballot papers which may have been delivered in respect of an advance poll; locking and sealing the ballot box and placing the box in his/her view for the receipt of ballots. The presiding officer is also charged with filling out a standardized form that registers the number of ballots which he or she received.

Polls are open in The Bahamas from 8:00 am until 6:00 pm. Any elector admitted to the polling place is required to produce a voter's card or other sufficient means of identification⁸ to the information clerk, who checks to see whether the voter has already voted by inspecting the voter's card and thumb for indelible ink and determines whether that elector is entitled to vote in that polling division. If it is determined that the elector is not entitled to vote in that polling division but in some other division or constituency, it is the role of the information clerk to direct that person to the appropriate polling place if possible.

7. According to Article 50 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, the House elects the Speaker of the Assembly from among the members who are not Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries.

8. Other sufficient means of identification recognized in the Election Guide for Elections Officials distributed by the Parliamentary Registration Department include a passport, birth certificate or driver's license.

Once satisfied with the eligibility of the voter, the information clerk refers the elector to the counterfoil clerk, who examines the voter's card to see if it is defective in any way: if the signature of the voter or the revising officer is missing or if the photograph is not affixed by an impression seal, for example. Any defects to the voter's card are to be brought to the attention of the presiding officer, who makes the final determination as to the identity of and the right of the voter. In instances where the voter is identified by a means other than a voter's card, the counterfoil clerk is also responsible for ensuring that the photograph on the counterfoil matches the appearance of the voter.

After the counterfoil clerk confirms the identity of the voter, the voter proceeds to the register clerk to determine whether the entry in the registry relating to the given elector is correct or alternatively whether the voter has a voter's card but his or her name does not appear in the register for the relevant constituency or polling division. If the voter is eligible to vote in that polling division, the stamp clerk stamps the second page of the voter card. The voter is returned his or her voter's card after the presiding officer has allowed the elector to vote.

Before an elector is allowed to vote, the presiding officer is responsible for carrying out the following duties: signing his or her name on the back of the ballot, marking the number of the voter's card on the counterfoil; calling out the number, full name and description of the voter as stated in the register and marking the thumb of the voter by dipping the thumb of his or her right hand in ink. The presiding officer then proceeds to give the following directions: that the elector should enter one of the compartments of the polling place; use the pencil provided to mark one cross in the space opposite the name of the desired candidate; fold the ballot paper so as to conceal his or her vote after marking the ballot; show the back of the folded ballot to the presiding officer so that the officer can see his or her own signature; drop the ballot paper into the ballot box without showing the front of the ballot paper to anyone and leave the polling place without delay.

As regards to the procedures to facilitate the voting of incapacitated electors, the friend of any incapacitated voter is allowed to accompany the voter into one of the compartments to make the vote for him or her. Both the voter and the friend must subscribe to an oath, affirming that the friend will keep secret the name of the candidate for whom the cross is made and that he or she has not already acted as a friend for another voter. The presiding officer is required to keep a list of incapacitated persons that contains the name of every such voter as well as the reason why the ballot paper was marked by a friend. Though the Parliamentary Elections Act describes these procedures for incapacitated voters, it does not clearly define incapacitated. The provision refers to "any voter who is incapacitated by blindness or any other physical cause from voting in the

manner prescribed by this Act".

At the close of the poll, the presiding officer opens the ballot box, counts the regular and protest ballots and declares the result of the count in the presence of the candidates or their election agents as well as observers. The presiding officer then prepares a statement of polls and places one copy in the ballot box and prepares another for the returning officer. After preparing the statement, the officer makes a number of sealed packets containing: unused and spoiled papers; rejected ballot papers; counted ballot papers; counterfoils of the sued, spoiled and rejected ballot papers placed together; the marked copy of the part of the register for the polling division and the list of incapacitated voters. These packets are then placed in the ballot box and the ballot box is locked and delivered to the returning officer along with the completed statement of polls. One agent from each candidate is permitted to accompany the person delivering the box to the returning officer. Election agents are entitled to copies of the statement of polls, which cost \$1.50 each.

Following this "preliminary count" at the polling stations on the day of the election, all the votes in a given constituency are recounted the following day by the returning officer, in the presence of candidates and elections agents at a location that is determined and announced before the close of the poll. The official declaration of result in each constituency is then published.

In the case of the 2012 General Elections, an advance voting process was carried out on May 1st, six days before Election Day, both within the Commonwealth of The Bahamas in the case of The Royal Bahamas Defense Force and in Bahamian Embassies and Consulates, for those voters who lived overseas. Ballots from the advance poll were placed in the ballot boxes in appropriate constituencies prior to the opening of the polls and counted along with the ballots cast on Election Day.

E. POLITICAL FINANCING

As is the case with most other states in the Commonwealth Caribbean, The Bahamas does not have a tradition of public funding for political parties or candidates or any specific legislation governing campaign contributions or expenditures. The principal electoral law in The Bahamas, the Parliamentary Elections Act of 1992, contains no provisions covering campaign contributions. No other act authorizes public funds for campaigns or political parties. Nor are there legal regulations on the origin of the private resources that enter campaigns; The Bahamas does not even prohibit financing from foreign and/or anonymous sources. There are no regulations that limit total expenditure by political parties on campaigns. Nor are there restrictions on the most costly aspects of a

campaign, known as triggers of expenditure. While not specifically covering elections, the Public Disclosure Act of 1977 ostensibly entails a modicum of disclosure and accountability regarding access to the media for candidates of the Lower House and the Senate and other non-elected public officials. The Act also requires candidates for elective office to provide a declaration of income and assets. However, the financing of political campaigns in The Bahamas is generally considered an entirely private affair between party candidates and their contributors.

In terms of accountability, the legal framework in The Bahamas does not require political parties to register the flows of campaign funds, or regulate the administration of said resources. The current legal framework does not grant supervisory functions to the electoral management body in terms of campaign finance, nor does it delegate these functions to other public entities. Indeed, there is currently no state-run control mechanism directed at political parties in terms of the financing of electoral campaigns.

The Mission considers that the current system, in which campaign finance is entirely of private origin and essentially unregulated, has the potential to affect the equity of electoral competition. Such a system also exposes the country to the possible infiltration of illicit funds into politics. The lack of reporting requirements for political parties combined with the fact that the legal framework does not endow the electoral authority with supervisory functions in the area of political financing or delegate this function to another organism leads to a deficit of accountability in the area of political financing. Lastly, the Mission notes with concern that the absence of guaranteed access to information on campaign spending leads to a lack of transparency that has a potentially negative impact on the ability of voters to make informed decisions.

CHAPTER III. MISSION ACTIVITIES AND OBSERVATIONS

A. PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

On April 10, 2012, Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham announced that he would be proroguing the parliament and that General Elections would be held on May 7, 2012. Prior to the announcement of the election date, which was constitutionally due by May of 2012, the House of Assembly passed the Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2012 which not only allowed access to polling stations for observers but also clarified provisions relating to the registration and enrollment of overseas voters. The 2012 process was the first time in which overseas voting was carried out in The Bahamas. Overseas voting was conducted on the 1st of May, coinciding with the advance voting for The Royal Bahamas Defence and Police Forces. Both advance and overseas ballots were placed into the ballot boxes at designated polling stations prior to the official opening of the polls.

Thirty-eight seats were contested in this election, following the ruling of the constitutionally mandated Constituencies Commission which in 2011 reduced the number of seats from 41, the number of seats in existence in the 2007 general election. As a result, several candidates were competing in newly drawn districts.

Nomination Day was set for April 17, 2012. On that day a total of 133 Bahamians were officially nominated as candidates. The Free National Movement, the Progressive Liberal Party and the Democratic National Alliance (DNA) each presented full slates of candidates, with representation in each of the 38 constituencies within The Bahamas. Additionally, five candidates were nominated from The Bahamas Constitution Party (BCP) as well as 14 independents.

Although the election date was announced in April, campaign season had been in full swing since late January 2012, with some indicating it had started even before then. The PLP, the FNM and the DNA had informally launched their candidates for each of the 38 constituencies, though there were some minor changes in candidate slates in the weeks and months leading up to nomination day, after which no further changes could be made. As of February 2, 2012 official statistics put the total number of registered voters at 153,531. By the time the final list was published on April 20, 2012, the voter's roll had grown to 172,130. Of registered voters, 118,144 (69%) were on the island of New Providence, and 26,991 (16%) on Grand Bahama while the remaining 26,995 (15%) were scattered over the Family Islands.

High unemployment, rising debt levels, problems in the local housing market in particular and a recent spike in crime were the main substantive issues over which the election campaign was fought. There were 127 murders in 2011, the most recorded in any single year in the country. Other issues included opposition to the government's program of privatization and foreign investment in telecommunications, tourism and other sectors. High unemployment, estimated at 13.7% by the Department of Statistics of The Bahamas, as well as rising public debt levels weighed on the incumbent FNM's popularity rating.

1. Campaign and Rallies:

Some political tension was noted between the two main parties during the campaign. According to different stakeholders, the tension was based on accusations that the governing party had been engaging in practices that gave it an unfair advantage in the process. This included suggestions of jobs and contracts being awarded in the weeks and days leading up to the May 7 poll and the use of state resources for the campaigns. Based on the various meetings, the OAS Mission noted preoccupation regarding the large number of persons who were naturalized and became Bahamian citizens in certain constituencies in the period immediate to the elections. Further, the two major political parties traded accusations at each other about the level of campaign financing expenditure by each party, evident by the substantial costs of the preparations for and props distributed at political rallies, and the lack of information about the sources of funding of these campaign expenditures.

In terms of party rallies, the OAS/EOM observers that attended them observed that they were carried out in a lively and calm manner. There were no reported cases of electoral violence.

2. Registry and the Electoral Boundaries Commission

The OAS Electoral Observation Mission noted the significant efforts made by the Parliamentary Registration Department to educate voters on the voting process and to carry out the work needed for a well conducted electoral process. The Mission recognizes as a positive step forward the amendments to the Electoral Law passed by the government which allowed overseas voting for the first time in Bahamian history, and the efforts by authorities to

ensure that this new process was implemented efficiently. The Parliamentary Registration Department deserves praise for providing timely information about polling station locations and returning officers, as exemplified by the government notices published in newspapers on April 27, 2012, ten days before Election Day.

The Mission was pleased to note that The Bahamas undertakes a complete re-registration of voters every five years. This positive effort guarantees that the electoral register accurately reflects the current voting population, and deserves recognition as an effective mechanism to maintain a continually up to date voter's list.

The Bahamas also redraws its constituency boundaries on a regular basis, a process that is implemented by the constitutionally-mandated Constituencies Commission. The Mission also observed that the constituency boundaries were redrawn immediately before the elections. Although legal procedures were respected, the Mission considered that citizen ownership or buy-in of the process would have benefited from a slower procedure. While the Mission recognizes the periodic re-drawing of boundaries as a necessary process to ensure that constituencies keep pace with the changing demographics of the nation, it observed that the political nature of the commission's composition has the potential to affect the perception of independence in the process and may generate the idea that it favors the governing party since three out of its five members are designated by the majority party. The incorporation of mechanisms to enhance the impartiality and autonomy of the boundary drawing process, such as allowing all parties and other actors to have access to the process for instance, would contribute towards generating even more independence and transparency

3. Political Financing

As noted above, The Bahamas does not operate with a legal framework that governs the financing of political parties and campaigns. The Mission noted as a positive feature of the process that candidates seeking elective office are required by law to make a declaration of income and assets. Each of these declarations, along with the nomination forms, were published by the Parliamentary Registration Department in the media in the weeks leading up to the election. On the other hand, there is no such disclosure requirement for the financing of their campaigns. Based on concerns raised by a wide variety of stakeholders, the OAS Mission noted the importance of and need for campaign financing regulations, although the parties appeared less concerned about this issue than other stakeholders. The Mission documented at least two concerns coming from various actors: one, related to large donations coming into the campaigns from foreign actors and the second one related to the use of state resources in the

campaign. Complaints of this kind need to be reported to the corresponding authorities to prevent future occurrence.

The absence of regulation has the potential to impact the accountability, transparency and equity of the democratic process. On the issue of campaign financing, the Mission would like to emphasize three key points:

- **Sources of financing:** in the absence of legislation and tracking mechanisms, the sources of campaign funds cannot be determined. There is no prohibition on contributions from anonymous or foreign sources, a situation that is not consistent with general practices around the region and the world.
- **Accountability:** because there are no institutions charged with the supervision of campaign spending, The Bahamas lacks any mechanisms to regulate the flow of campaign donations or expenditures. Such mechanisms would promote more responsibility for the parties.
- **Transparency:** the Mission noted that the information on campaign contributions and expenditures is not made public.

4. The Participation of Women

Regarding the participation of men and women in Bahamian politics, the Mission observed that women are under-represented in elected positions in The Bahamas. The 2012 electoral process coincided with the 50th anniversary of women's suffrage in the country. Women were able to vote for the first time on November 26, 1962, making The Bahamas one of the last countries in the region to grant this fundamental right. Women represent the majority of the total population (52.8%) and an even higher percentage of registered voters, 55.4% of the electoral registry. Out of 172,128 voters registered for this election, there were 18,574 more women registered than men. Nonetheless, the Mission noted with concern that high levels of female participation as registered voters has not translated into a high presence of women in political office or on the lists of candidates presented to voters. Prior to the 2012 elections only 5 out of the 41 Lower House members were women, 12.2 % of the total. As regards to the upper house, 5 out of 15 senators were female, representing 33.3%. Of the 133 candidates who ran in the 2012 elections, only 22 were women (16.5%) and of this number only 5 were elected (22.7%). Female members now constitute 13.16% of the National Assembly, a slight increase from the 12.2% represented prior to the 2012 elections⁹.

9. 19 women ran for the 2007 elections and only 5 were elected. (4 sat on the Opposition bench and 1 became Minister of State) Source: Parliamentary Registration Department

5. Media

The media in The Bahamas, which in recent years has gone through a significant transformation, is robust. There are daily newspapers available in print and electronic format and the country has two television stations which are operated by the government-owned, commercially run Broadcasting Corporation of The Bahamas (BCB or ZNS). Multi-channel cable TV subscription service is also available. There are a handful of private radio stations. About 15 radio stations that are part of the BCB operate a multi-channel radio broadcasting network alongside privately-owned radio stations.

In terms of regulation of the media, the Parliamentary Elections Act calls for a three-member Electoral Broadcasting Council, appointed by the Governor-General and acting on the recommendations and consultations of the Prime Minister along with the Leader of the Opposition. The Council is charged with monitoring the electoral campaign coverage of The Broadcasting Corporation of The Bahamas for the purpose of ensuring that there is accuracy and fairness in the reporting of the campaign. It also acts as a board of review to hear any complaints made by a political party or candidate at an election with respect of the breach of rules relating to political broadcasts or advertisements. The law specifically states that “the Council shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority.”

The Mission considers it important to note that telecommunications in The Bahamas have expanded significantly since 1992 and were liberalized in 2000 with the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1999. This development has provided political parties with greater opportunities to access media outlets during the campaign. However, only the state owned Broadcasting Corporation that operates under a new Communications Act “ComsAct” and under the Regulatory Regime: Utilities Regulation & Competition Authority (URCA) has the capacity, mainly by means of radio transmission, to provide extensive service to all of the islands within the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. However, the Mission noted that alternative outlets should be promoted to provide electors with more information to exercise an informed vote.

It would therefore be of great importance to guarantee access to all political parties and candidates and to stimulate political debate among them through this medium.

B. Election Day

On Election Day, the team of OAS international observers was deployed to New Providence, Grand Bahama, Abaco and Andros, covering 30 out of the 38 constituencies

in the country. Throughout the day, observers visited numerous polling stations within their constituencies, to observe the opening, the voting process, the closing of polls and the counting process. Observers monitored the opening and closing of the polls at the same polling station. In all, observers were able to visit 61 of 187 voting centers (32.6%) and 189 out of 435 polling stations, covering 43.4% of the total throughout the islands of The Bahamas.

In terms of the opening of the voting process, all designated presiding officers and poll clerks were present prior to the opening of the polls and all polling stations observed had the required material. Voting started on time at 8:00 am in all polling stations observed. Observers noted that most of the presiding officers and other poll workers as well as party agents were women. Of poll clerks, present in the stations observed, about 15% were men and 85% women. Among presiding officers, about 38% were men while 62% were women. In all observed polling stations throughout the day, party agents from the FNM and PLP were present. Representatives from the DNA were also observed in over 80% of the polling stations visited by the Mission. Of party agents observed, about 30% were men and 70% were women.

The Mission observed that the voting was conducted in a fluid, transparent and peaceful manner demonstrating the prevailing respect of the Bahamian people for the democratic process. Voters voluntarily relinquished their cell phones and hats prior to entering the polling places, as required by law, and deserve praise for their cooperation with election officials. Poll workers discharged their responsibilities in a serious and meticulous fashion, ensuring that voters were able to exercise their franchise quickly and efficiently without delay. The Mission also noted the extensive police presence in the voting centers. Observers reported that voters invariably had adequate information about the location of their polling station. Efforts to educate voters were in evidence as the Mission noted that voters were very familiar with the voting process. Observers commended the fact that the voting process was standardized and uniform in all observed locations. In all observed cases police were present and helpful to ensure a peaceful atmosphere on Election Day with no violent incidents or acts of intimidation observed. All observers reported that the voting centers were fit for the purpose. Infrastructure for senior citizens and persons with disabilities was installed and they were assisted by various poll workers and the police, in order to ensure easy access to the polling stations.

Even though the number of people registered for the 2012 general elections represented a significant increase from 2007, voter participation on Election Day declined slightly compared to the previous process. According to data provided by the Parliamentary Registration

Department, whereas in the 2007 elections, out of a total of 150,684 registered voters, 138,800 people voted (92.1% voter turnout), in the 2012 elections, out of a total of 172,128 registered voters a total of 155,948 Bahamians cast their vote (90.4% voter turnout). The Mission commends such a high rate of participation especially in light of the fact that voting is not compulsory in The Bahamas.

Polling stations closed on time at 6:00 pm in all observed polling stations and there were no reports of voters left in line at the time who were not able to vote. In general, the Mission considered that the closing process was well-organized and conducted according to legal procedures. Observers noted that disputes regarding the count were resolved in a civil manner and that a collegial atmosphere prevailed among the representatives of the various parties.

C. POST-ELECTORAL PROCESS

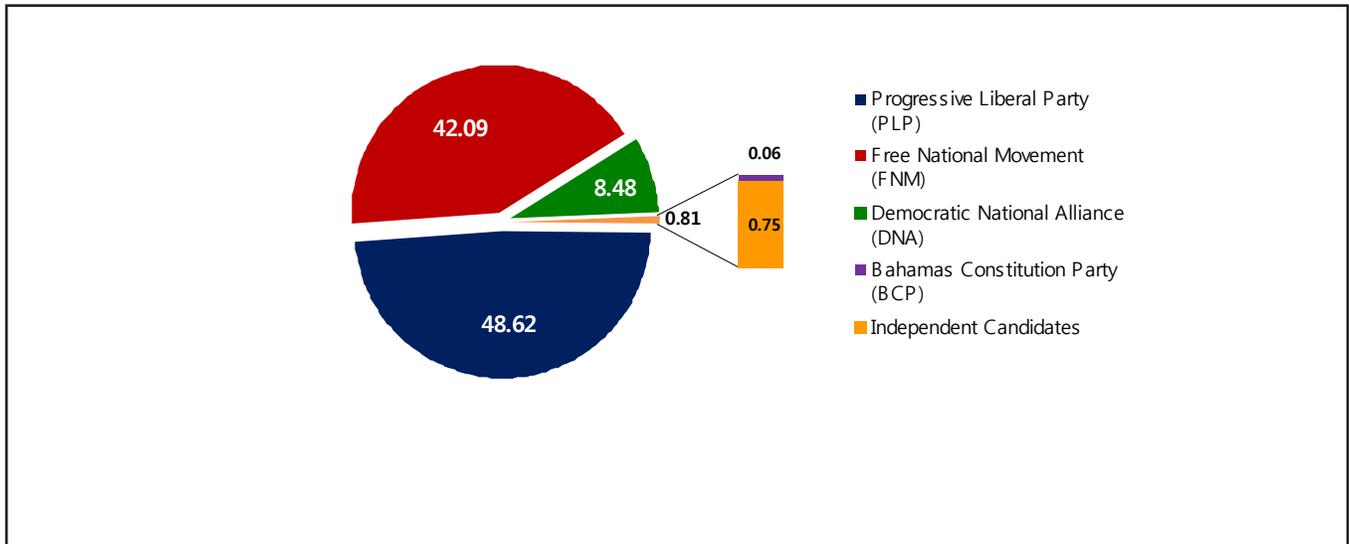
Results were updated periodically following the count of each box and made available to the public through television stations on the night of election. The transparency and efficiency with which results were disseminated contributed to a peaceful atmosphere in the country. On the evening of May 7th, once it became clear that the incumbent FNM would lose its majority, Prime

Minister Hubert Ingraham conceded the elections and publicly announced his retirement from politics.

In accordance with the law, a recount was carried out on May 8th. Election results became official after the recount was finalized in two constituencies, North Andros and South Eluthera, in which the results were particularly close. The final results of the elections gave 29 seats in the House of Assembly to the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP), and nine seats to the incumbent Free National Movement (FNM). Overall results showed that the PLP received 48.62% of the votes, the FNM obtained 42.09% of the votes and Democratic National Alliance (DNA) had 8.48% of the votes. The BCP captured 0.06% of the vote while independent candidates collectively won 0.75%. Of the 22 women candidates competing in the 2012 electoral process, only 5 won their seats (22.5%) Female members now constitute 13.7% of the National Assembly, a slight increase from the 12.2% represented prior to the 2012 elections. On May 8th, the Honorable Perry Christie, leader of the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) was sworn in as Prime Minister of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas. Elected candidates sat for the first session of the new parliament on May 24, 2012.

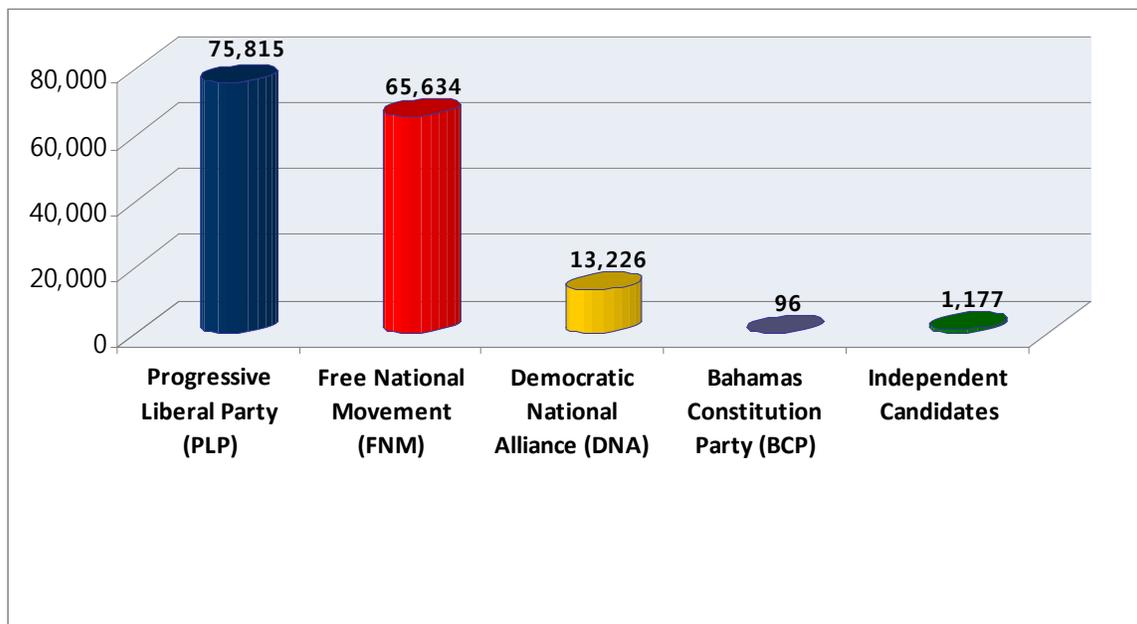
ELECTION RESULTS ARE SUMMARIZED IN THE FOLLOWING FIGURES:

**FIGURE 1: VOTER DISTRIBUTION (PERCENTAGE OF VOTES PER POLITICAL PARTY)
BAHAMAS GENERAL ELECTIONS 2012**



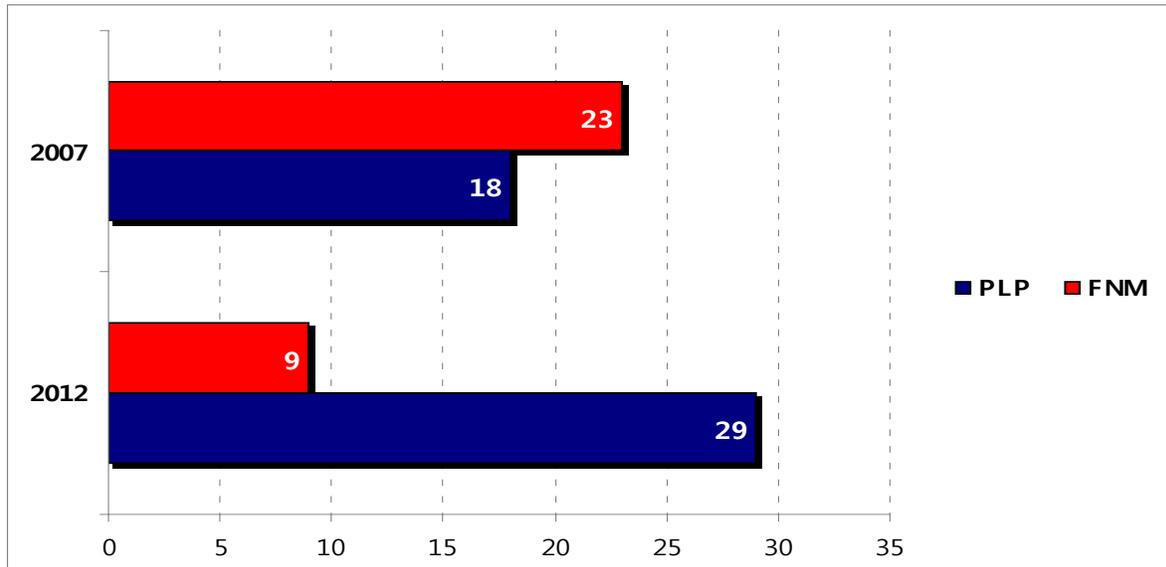
Source: Prepared by OAS/DECO for this report with data from the Parliamentary Registration Department

FIGURE 2: VOTER DISTRIBUTION: BAHAMAS GENERAL ELECTIONS 2012



Source: Prepared by OAS/DECO for this report with data from the Parliamentary Registration Department

FIGURE 3: SEATS IN PARLIAMENT 2007 v 2012



Source: Prepared by OAS/DECO for this report with data from the Parliamentary Registration Department

FIGURE 4: SEATS IN PARLIAMENT: VARIATION 2007 v 2012

Parties	Total Seats		Variation	Received Votes (%)
	2007	2012		
Progressive Liberal Party (PLP)	18	29	11	75,815 (48.62%)
Free National Movement (FNM)	23	9	14	65,634 (42.09%)
Total (PLP + FNM)	41	38		141,449 (90.71%)
Total No. of Registered Voters	172,128			
Total No. of Votes Cast	155,948 (90.6%)			

Source: Prepared by OAS/DECO for this report with data from the Parliamentary Registration Department

CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With the purpose of strengthening the electoral system in The Bahamas, and based on the observations and information gathered both in the pre-electoral period and on Election Day, the OAS Electoral Observation Mission would like to offer the following recommendations:

1. To consider adopting a legal framework on the financing of political parties and campaigns, specifically rules that limit campaign spending, that prohibit anonymous and foreign contributions and the establishment of mechanisms to oversee the money coming in and out of campaigns. The Mission also recommends that wider access to public information be provided to citizens regarding the use of campaign funds and the enactment of requirements for parties to disclose such information. In particular, the OAS/EOM would recommend,
 - To establish legal prohibitions for anonymous and foreign donations, as well as limits to private donations and norms to control in-kind donations from the media.
 - Through adequate norms, to require political parties to establish mechanisms to register the resources/funds coming in and out of the campaign and to produce consolidated reports.
 - To delegate functions of control and supervision of the financing of party campaigns to public organisms such as the Electoral Department and the Director of Audit, and to endow them with the necessary financial and human resources to do this task.
 - To establish norms to improve the supply and demand of access to information regarding the financing of political party campaigns.
2. To encourage political parties to incorporate more women in both leadership positions within party structures and as candidates for the National Assembly. In particular, the Mission recommends that serious consideration be given to legal mechanisms to guarantee more gender balance within political parties leadership and within the candidate lists presented to voters, including the consideration of positive discrimination mechanisms as well as others to promote female leadership within the parties.
3. To consider the incorporation of mechanisms to enhance the impartiality and independence of the Boundary Drawing Process, such as the potential introduction of standardized technical criteria in the drawing of constituencies and the inclusion of uniform criteria in the selection of Boundary Commissioners. The Mission also recommends to consider allowing more time to carry out the drawing process to promote buy-in from electoral actors and to give access to party representatives to be able to observe the above described process.
4. To urge continued and broader access to the State Broadcasting Corporation for all political parties and candidates, continued updating of the broadcasting regulatory framework and stimulation of the public debate through the media among the parties and civil society organizations.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INVITATION



GOVERNMENT HOUSE
NASSAU, BAHAMAS

3rd April, 2012

Dr. José Miquel Insulza
Secretary General
Organization of American States
Organization of American States Building
17th St. and Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20006
U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Insulza,

General Elections are due to be held in The Bahamas in May, 2012. Already there is heightened political activity in the country as political parties prepare themselves for participation in the process.

In preparation for the Elections, the Parliamentary Registration Department (The Bahamas' Elections Department) has been engaged in the necessary steps to ensure the full participation of all eligible voters.

The Government of The Bahamas is most anxious to ensure that the country adheres to the best electoral practices and in this regard, I invite the Organization of American States to appoint a team to observe the General Elections. You will of course be advised of the precise date of elections, when it is announced.

In addition to the Organization of American States, the Government of The Bahamas also proposes to invite the Caricom Secretariat and the American Embassy. Observation activities will be coordinated by the Parliamentary Registration Department.

Sincerely,

Sir Arthur Foulkes
Governor-General

APPENDIX II: LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE



17th St. & Constitution Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
United States of America

Organization of American States

P. 202.458.3000
www.oas.org

Antigua and Barbuda
Argentina
The Bahamas
Barbados
Belize
Bolivia
Brazil
Canada
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Cuba
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
El Salvador
Grenada
Guatemala
Guyana
Haiti
Honduras
Jamaica
Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Suriname
Trinidad and Tobago
United States of America
Uruguay
Venezuela

April 4, 2012

His Excellency
Sir Arthur Foulkes
Governor-General
Government House
Nassau, Bahamas

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated April 3rd, 2012 in which the Government of The Bahamas requests the Organization of American States (OAS) observe the General Elections that are due to be held in May of 2012.

Through its observation and technical assistance efforts, the OAS remains committed to strengthening electoral processes in the Americas. I am pleased to respond positively to this request and honored to deploy the first ever OAS electoral observation mission to The Commonwealth of the Bahamas. The request is also significant as it comes during the 50th anniversary year of the OAS conducting electoral observations missions.

I have instructed the Department for Electoral Cooperation and Observation (DECO) of the OAS Secretariat of Political Affairs to prepare a proposal and budget that contemplates the observation of the different facets of this important exercise and maximizes coverage of the polling stations on the date of the elections. As is customary, the size and scope of this mission will ultimately depend on the voluntary contributions received from the OAS Member and Observer States.

Should the Parliamentary Registration Department have any questions regarding the preparation of this mission, it should not hesitate to contact Ms. Ana Maria Diaz, DECO Specialist, who has been tasked with preparation of this mission.

Sincerely,

José Miguel Insulza
Secretary General

APPENDIX III: AGREEMENT ON PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS
AND
THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
REGARDING
THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF THE OAS
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION
FOR THE 2012 GENERAL ELECTIONS**

The Parties to this Agreement, the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (hereinafter referred to as the “GS/OAS” or the “Organization”) and the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas (hereinafter referred to as the “Government”),

WHEREAS:

On April 3rd, 2012 the Governor-General of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas (hereinafter referred to as the “Governor-General”) invited GS/OAS to observe the General Elections in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas to be held May X, 2012 (hereinafter referred to as the “General Elections”).

The Secretary General of the OAS, in a letter dated April 4th, 2012, informed the Governor-General that he accepted the invitation to establish an Observer Mission (hereinafter referred to as the “OAS Mission” or the “Mission”) for the General Elections subject to obtaining the necessary resources to finance the establishment of the OAS Observer Mission;

The OAS Observer Mission will be comprised of officials of the GS/OAS and other persons contracted at GS/OAS headquarters, as well as any other international observers specifically under contract to the GS/OAS for the OAS Observer Mission

(hereinafter referred to as the “Members of the OAS Observer Mission” or the “Members”); and

The basic privileges and immunities enjoyed by the OAS, the GS/OAS, and its staff in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas are set out in the Charter of the Organization of American States, and in the Agreement between the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on the Functioning of the Office of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and Recognition of its Privileges and Immunities, signed by the Parties on May 29th, 1997.

NOW, THEREFORE THE PARTIES HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

CHAPTER I

PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF THE OAS OBSERVER MISSION

ARTICLE I

The privileges and immunities of the OAS Observer Mission shall be those accorded to the OAS, to its organs, and to its Staff pursuant to this agreement, which shall be interpreted in accordance with Articles 133, 134, 135 and 136 of the Charter of the Organization of American States, which was signed and ratified by the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on March 3rd, 1982; the Agreement between the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on the Functioning of the Office of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and Recognition of its Privileges and Immunities, signed by the Parties on May 29th, 1997; and in accordance with concepts of international law.

ARTICLE II

2.1. The property and effects of the OAS Observer Mission, located in any part of the territory of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and in possession of any person, shall enjoy immunity against any type of judicial proceeding; save in those specific cases for which said immunity is expressly waived in writing by the Secretary General of the OAS.

2.2 However, it is understood that said waiver of immunity by the Secretary General of the OAS shall not have the effect of subjecting any such property and effects to any type of measure of execution.

ARTICLE III

3.1 The premises occupied by the OAS Observer Mission shall be inviolable.

3.2 Moreover, the property and effects of the OAS Observer Mission, in any part of the territory of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and in possession of any person or entity, shall enjoy immunity against search and seizure, confiscation, expropriation and against any form of intervention, be it executive, administrative, judicial or legislative.

ARTICLE IV

The files of the OAS Observer Mission and all of the documents pertaining thereto or in the possession of any person or entity shall be inviolable wherever they are located.

ARTICLE V

5.1 The OAS Observer Mission shall be:

a) exempt from any internal taxation, it being understood, however, that it may not claim any type of tax exemption that is in fact remuneration for public services;

b) exempt from any type of customs duty, prohibition and restriction in respect of articles and publications that it may import or export for its official use. It is understood, however, that any articles imported duty-free may be sold within the Commonwealth of the Bahamas only in accordance with conditions expressly agreed upon by the Parties; and

c) exempt from ordinances, regulations or moratoria of any kind. Moreover, it may have currency of any type, carry accounts in any foreign currency and transfer funds in foreign currency.

ARTICLE VI

The OAS Observer Mission may establish and operate in the territory of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas an independent radio communication system to provide an on-going communications link between the Members and the vehicles used by the Members with Mission offices and regional headquarters, such as the central office in Nassau and between the latter and the headquarters of the GS/OAS in Washington, D.C., United States of America. The Government shall provide all the technical and administrative support necessary for this to be achieved.

CHAPTER II

MEMBERS OF THE OAS OBSERVER MISSION

ARTICLE VII

The Members of the OAS Observer Mission shall be those persons who have been designated by the GS/OAS and accredited with the Bahamian authorities.

ARTICLE VIII

8.1 For the period during which the Members of the OAS Observer Mission exercise their functions and during their trips to and from the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, they shall enjoy the following privileges and immunities:

- a) Immunity from personal detention or arrest as well as immunity from any type of legal proceeding in respect of their actions and statements be they oral or written, done in the performance of their functions;
- b) The inviolability of all papers and documents;
- c) The right to communicate with the GS/OAS via radio, telephone, telegraph, email, satellite or other means, and to receive documents and correspondence through messengers or in sealed pouches, enjoying for that purpose the same privileges and immunities accorded to diplomatic mail, messages, and pouches;
- d) The right to utilize for their movements throughout the national territory, any means of transportation, be it by air, by water or over land;
- e) Exemption in respect of their persons and that of their spouses and children, from any type of immigration restriction and registration of aliens and any type of national service in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.
- f) The same privileges accorded to the representatives of foreign governments on official mission in respect to foreign-currency restrictions;
- g) The same immunities and privileges in respect of their personal baggage as are accorded to diplomatic envoys; and
- h) Such other privileges, immunities and facilities as are compatible with the foregoing, and enjoyed by diplomatic envoys, with the exception that they shall not enjoy any exemption from customs duties on imported merchandise (that is not part of their personal effects) or sales taxes or consumer taxes.

ARTICLE IX

The provisions contained in the preceding Article do not apply to nationals of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas working as local contract staff in the OAS Observer Mission, except in respect of official acts performed or statements issued in the exercise of their functions.

CHAPTER III

COOPERATION WITH THE AUTHORITIES

ARTICLE X

The OAS Observer Mission shall cooperate with the relevant authorities of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas to prevent any occurrence of abuse in respect of the specified privileges and immunities. Similarly, the relevant authorities shall do whatever is possible to provide the cooperation requested of them by the OAS Observer Mission.

ARTICLE XI

Without prejudice to the immunities and privileges accorded, the Members of the OAS Observer Mission shall respect the laws and regulations existing in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

ARTICLE XII

12.1 The Parties shall take any measures necessary to procure an amicable arrangement in the proper settlement of:

- a) Any disputes that may arise in contracts or other questions of private law; and
- b) Any disputes to which the OAS Observer Mission and/or any of its Members may be parties with respect to matters in which they enjoy immunity.

CHAPTER IV
NATURE OF PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

ARTICLE XIII

13.1 The privileges and immunities are granted to the Members of the OAS Observer Mission in order to safeguard their independence in the exercise of their functions of observing the General Elections, and not for personal gain or to perform activities of a political nature within the territory of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

13.2 The Secretary General of the OAS may waive the privileges and immunities of any of the Members of the OAS Observer Mission in the event that he determines, in his sole discretion, that the exercise of those privileges and immunities may obstruct the course of justice and so long as the Secretary General determines that such waiver does not prejudice the interests of the OAS or of the GS/OAS.

CHAPTER V
GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE XIV

14.1 The Government recognizes the "Official Travel Document" issued by the GS/OAS as a valid and sufficient document for purposes of travel by the Members of the OAS Observer Mission who possess this document.

14.2 The Government shall issue to each Member of the OAS Observer Mission a visa to enter the country and to remain therein until the end of the OAS Observer Mission.

ARTICLE XV

The Government agrees to extend the privileges and immunities of the present Agreement to Members of the OAS Observer Mission designated by the GS/OAS, who have been accredited by the Bahamian authorities.

ARTICLE XVI

This Agreement may be amended by mutual consent in writing by the duly authorized representatives of the Parties.

ARTICLE XVII

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature and shall cease to have effect once the Members of the OAS Observer Mission have completed their mission, in accordance with the terms of the request made by the Government.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, duly authorized, do hereby sign this Agreement, in duplicate, on the date and locations indicated below.

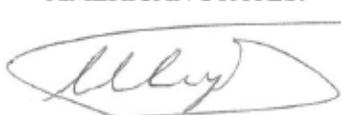
FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE COMMONWEALTH OF
THE BAHAMAS:



Freddie Cleveland Tucker
Counselor/Alternate Representative
Permanent Mission of the Bahamas
to the Organization of American States
Place: Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Date: April 26, 2012

FOR THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF
AMERICAN STATES:



José Miguel Insulza
Secretary General
General Secretariat of the
Organization of American States
Place: Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Date: April 26, 2012

APPENDIX IV: AGREEMENT ON OBSERVATION PROCEDURES

**AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
AND
THE BAHAMAS PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT
ON THE ELECTORAL OBSERVATION PROCESS OF THE
2011 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN
THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS**

The Parties, the Bahamas Parliamentary Registration Department (hereinafter referred to as the "Registration Department") and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (hereinafter referred to as the "General Secretariat");

CONSIDERING:

THAT on the 3rd day of April 2012, the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas (hereinafter referred to as "the Government"), through its Governor-General, invited the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary General") to send an Electoral Observation Mission (hereinafter referred to as "the Mission") to the Commonwealth of the Bahamas for the purpose of witnessing the General Election to be held May 7, 2012 (hereinafter referred to as the "General Election");

THAT in Resolution AG/RES. 991 (XIX-O/89), the General Assembly of the Organization of American States recommended to the Secretary General that "when a member state so requests in the exercise of its sovereignty, missions should be organized and sent to said state to monitor the development, if possible at all stages, of each of its electoral processes;"

THAT Article 24 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter states in pertinent part as follows:

The electoral observation missions shall be carried out at the request of the member state concerned. To that end, the government of that state and the Secretary General shall enter into an agreement establishing the scope and coverage of the electoral observation mission in question. The member state shall guarantee conditions of security, free access to information, and full cooperation with the electoral observation mission.

Electoral observation missions shall be carried out in accordance with the principles and norms of the OAS. The Organization shall ensure that these missions are effective and independent and shall provide them with the necessary resources for that purpose. They shall be conducted in an objective, impartial, and transparent manner and with the appropriate technical expertise; and

THAT the Secretary General responded affirmatively to the Government's request to send the Mission with the objective of observing the General Election;

WHEREFORE, THE PARTIES AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

First: Guarantees

- a) The Parliamentary Registration Department guarantees the Mission access to all facilities for the adequate fulfillment of the observation of the election in 2012 until conclusion of the General Election process, in conformity with the laws and standards of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and the terms of this Agreement.
- b) The Parliamentary Registration Department, on the day of and after the day of the election, shall guarantee the Mission access to all polling stations and other locations and facilities related to the election until the official count is tabulated nationally and the General Election process is concluded.
- c) The Parliamentary Registration Department shall guarantee the Mission complete access to the locations in which the process of counting and tabulating votes will take place both before and during this process.
- d) The Parliamentary Registration Department shall guarantee the Mission access to all electoral bodies responsible for vote counting and tabulation. Similarly, the Registration Department shall permit the Mission to conduct any evaluations deemed necessary by the Mission of the voting system and of the communications utilized to

transmit electoral results. At the same time, the Registration Department shall guarantee the Mission complete access to the complaints process and quality controls that occur before and after the electoral process that are of interest to the Mission.

e) The Parliamentary Registration Department further guarantees the Mission access to all polling stations throughout the territory of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. Upon request of the Mission, the Parliamentary Registration Department shall make available by the end of the voting process, copies of all documents printed electronically.

Second: Information

a) The Parliamentary Registration Department will furnish the Mission with all information referring to the organization, direction and supervision of the electoral process. The Mission may request of the Registration Department such additional information as is necessary for the exercise of the Mission's functions, and the Parliamentary Registration Department shall promptly furnish all such information.

b) The Mission may inform the Parliamentary Registration Department about any irregularities and/or interference, which the Mission might observe or of which the Mission might learn. Similarly, the Mission may request that the Parliamentary Registration Department provide any information regarding the measures which the Registration Department will take in relation to such irregularities, and the Parliamentary Registration Department shall promptly furnish all such information.

c) The Parliamentary Registration Department shall provide the Mission with information related to the electoral list and other electoral data referring to the same. Similarly, the Parliamentary Registration Department shall provide all other information relative to the computer systems used on Election Day, and shall offer demonstrations of the systems' operation to the Mission.

Third: General Provisions

a) The Secretary General will designate a Chief of Mission, to represent the Mission and its members before the Parliamentary Registration Department and before The Bahamas Government.

b) The General Secretariat will communicate to the Parliamentary Commissioner of the Parliamentary Registration Department the names of the persons who will comprise the Mission, who will be duly identified.

c) The Mission will act impartially, objectively and independently in the fulfillment of its mandate.

d) The General Secretariat will send to the leadership of the Parliamentary Registration Department a copy of the final report of the Electoral Observation Mission following the General Election.

e) The Parliamentary Registration Department will make known and disseminate the contents of this Agreement among all electoral bodies and among all personnel involved in the electoral process.

Fourth: Privileges and Immunities

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as an express or implied waiver of the privileges and immunities of the Organization of American States, its Organs, its personnel and its assets under the Charter of the Organization; under the Agreement between the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on the Functioning of the Office of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and Recognition of its Privileges and Immunities, signed by the Parties on May 29th, 1997; and under the Agreement between the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States regarding the Privileges and Immunities of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission for the 2012 General Election; or under international law.

Fifth: Resolution of controversies

The Parties shall attempt to resolve through direct negotiations any disputes arising in relation to the interpretation and/or implementation of this Agreement. If the negotiations do not result in the resolution of the dispute, the matter shall be submitted to a dispute resolution procedure mutually agreed to by the duly authorized representatives of the Parties.

Sixth: Amendments

Amendments to this Agreement shall be made in writing and signed by the duly authorized representatives of the Parties and attached hereto.

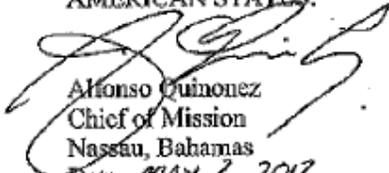
Seventh: Entry into Force and Termination

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date and upon the signature of then duly authorized representatives of the Parties. This Agreement shall remain in force until the Mission has concluded its observation mission of the General Election.

This Agreement may be terminated by either Party with or without cause. Termination must be effected by means of no less than five days' written notice to the other Party.

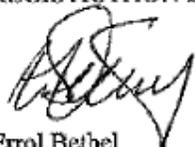
IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized, have signed this Agreement in duplicate on the date and locations indicated below.

THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF
AMERICAN STATES:



Alfonso Quinonez
Chief of Mission
Nassau, Bahamas
Date: *MAY 2nd 2012*

THE BAHAMAS PARLIAMENTARY
REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT:



Errol Bethel
Parliamentary Commissioner
Parliamentary Registration Department
Nassau, Bahamas
Date: *2nd May 2012*

APPENDIX V: LIST OF OBSERVERS



Organization of
American States

Electoral Observation Mission - The Bahamas 2012 General Elections

	Name	Nationality	Sex	Position
CORE GROUP				
1	Alfonso Quiñonez	Guatemala	M	Chief of Mission
2	Ana Maria Diaz	Colombia	F	Deputy Chief
3	Paul Spencer	Antigua & Barbuda	M	Political Analyst
4	Tyler Finn	USA	M	General Coordinator
New Providence				
5	Ginelle Bell	Grenada	F	Observer
6	Alexander Gray	Canada	M	Observer
7	Sheena Phillip	St. Lucia	F	Observer
8	Laurent Spohr	Switzerland	M	Observer
9	Errol Miller	Jamaica	M	Observer
Grand Bahama				
10	Philippe-Olivier Giroux	Canada	M	Observer
Abaco				
11	Rébecca Morency	Canada	F	Observer
North Andros				
12	Maria Fernanda Sarmiento	Argentina	F	Observer

APPENDIX VI: PRESS RELEASES

Press Release



Organization of
American States

Department of Press | 17th & Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20006 | Ph. (202) 458-3379 | Fax. (202) 458-6421 | www.oas.org

Nassau, May 3, 2012

OAS and the Bahamas sign Agreement of Privileges and Immunities for Electoral Mission in May

The Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), José Miguel Insulza, and the Alternate Representative of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas to the OAS, Freddie Tucker, today signed the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities for the Electoral Observation Mission that the OAS will deploy for the general elections on Monday, May 7, in a ceremony called "historic" by both sides, held in the main building of the hemispheric organization in Washington DC.

"We are very happy to share this opportunity and to share this historic moment in which for the first time there will be an international electoral observation in the Bahamas," said Secretary General Insulza. The chief representative of the OAS added, "We value very much that those countries that have a tradition of transparent and normal elections receive OAS Election Observation Mission, because that encourages other countries to see that this is not a watchdog exercise, but rather a way to share and improve the benefits of democracy throughout the region."

On Monday, May 7, the people of the Bahamas will elect the 38 members of the National Assembly of the Bahamas. Three parties, the Free National Movement, the Progressive Liberal Party and the Democratic National Alliance have fielded candidates to fill the 38 seats in the National Assembly. Secretary General Insulza reported that the Chief of Mission will be OAS Secretary of External Relations Alfonso Quiñonez, and that the mission will arrive May 1st.

For his part Representative Tucker, who also holds office in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Foreign Ministry of his country, said "it is an historic moment for us, because this is the first time that we will be allowing observers to come to our country and observe an electoral process." "The Bahamas have a strong tradition of democracy and transparency," he added, pointing out that the people of the Bahamas "wait every five years to exercise the vote."

Present at the signing ceremony were the Chair of the Permanent Council and Representative of Honduras to the OAS, Leónidas Rosa Bautista, the Assistant Secretary General of the OAS, Ambassador Albert Ramdín, the Chief of Staff of the Secretary General Hugo de Zela, and Ambassador Quiñonez, among others.

Press Release



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Nassau, May 3, 2012

Organization of American States Electoral Observation Mission Arrives In The Bahamas

The Organization of American States Electoral Observation Mission to The Bahamas (OAS/EOM) arrived in Nassau ahead of the May 7 General Elections. The team is led by Chief of Mission Ambassador Alfonso Quiñonez, a former member of the Guatemalan Foreign Service and the current Secretary for External Relations of the OAS.

The OAS/EOM is observing these elections following a formal invitation from the Government of The Bahamas. The team will begin meeting with various stakeholders following the signing of an electoral observation agreement between the OAS and the Parliamentary Registration Department. At the signing ceremony, joined by Parliamentary Commissioner Errol Bethel, the OAS Mission noted the historic nature of the first-ever electoral observation mission to The Bahamas and expressed its gratitude for the invitation from the Bahamian Government.

In the days leading up to the election, the OAS/EOM will meet with representatives of political parties and government officials, as well as members of the media and social organizations, to discuss perspectives on the electoral process and to promote the impartiality, transparency and reliability of the elections. On Election Day, observers will be present from the opening of the polls to the counting and dissemination of the results. The day after the election, the OAS/EOM will present its findings in a press conference and will subsequently present a report to the organization's Permanent Council in Washington, D.C.

Press Release



Organization of
American States

Department of Press | 17th & Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20006 | Ph. (202) 458-3379 | Fax. (202) 458-6421 | www.oas.org

OAS Electoral Observation Mission to The Bahamas Preliminary Statement

At the invitation of the Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, the Organization of American States (OAS) deployed an Electoral Observation Mission (EOM), composed of 12 international observers. This was the first time that the OAS had been invited to observe General Elections in The Bahamas. The OAS/EOM monitored the process in 30 Constituencies and Observers were also present in the country several days before the election.

The OAS would like to congratulate the people of The Bahamas for the peaceful manner in which they exercised their constitutional rights and civic responsibility, which has served to continue strengthening the country's democratic institutions. The OAS also wishes to offer its congratulations to the new government and looks forward to working with the incoming authorities.

OAS international observers visited 189 polling stations throughout Election Day. Voting started on time at 8:00 am in all polling stations observed. Presiding officers, and all poll clerks were present prior to the opening of the polls and all polling stations observed had the required material for the functioning of the process. In all observed cases police were present and helped to ensure a peaceful atmosphere. Voter participation was high and estimated at 88%.

Observers noted that most of the presiding officers and other poll workers as well as party agents were women. The Mission was pleased that senior citizens and persons with disabilities were assisted by various poll workers and the police, in order to ensure easy access to polling stations. The Parliamentary Registration Department deserves praise for organizing a smooth and successful process.

With the purpose of strengthening the electoral system in The Bahamas, and based on the observations and information gathered both in the pre-electoral period and on Election Day, the OAS Electoral Observation Mission would like to offer the following preliminary recommendations:

1) First, it is a positive feature of the process that candidates are required by law to make a declaration of income and assets in order to be nominated. However, there is no such disclosure requirement for the financing of their campaigns. The Mission recommends the adoption of a legal framework on the financing of political parties and campaigns in order to enhance the accountability, transparency and equity of the democratic process.

2) Second, 2012 marks the 50th anniversary of female suffrage in The Bahamas. For this election there were 18,574 more women than men registered as voters. However, the increased participation of women as voters has not yet translated into other key areas of political participation. Only 22 out of 133 candidates for this

election were women, representing 16.5%. The Mission encourages political parties to incorporate more women in leadership positions and as candidates.

3) Third, the Mission notes that The Bahamas undertakes a complete re-registration of voters every five years. This positive effort guarantees that the electoral register accurately reflects the current voting population. The Bahamas also redraws its constituency boundaries on a regular basis. This important process should always be independent and the membership of the Boundaries Commission should reflect this.

4) In terms of media access, only the state-owned broadcasting corporation (the radio transmission in particular) has the capacity to provide extensive service to all of the islands within The Commonwealth of The Bahamas. The Mission encourages the State Broadcasting Corporation to continue to provide access to all political parties and candidates in a free, fair and independent manner.

The OAS/EOM would like to thank the governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Serbia, and South Korea as well as Mission Leadership and Université Laval (Canada) for their contributions, which made this Mission possible. It would also like to thank once again the Government of The Bahamas and the Parliamentary Registration Department in particular for its support and many courtesies.

Ambassador Alfonso Quiñonez, who led the Mission, will present shortly to the OAS Permanent Council a detailed Verbal Report that will be made available at the OAS Website.

APPENDIX VII: OFFICIAL RESULTS

<u>Elections Results by Constituency</u>			
<u>Bahamas General Elections 2012</u>			
		Votes	%
<i>Bains Town & Grants Town</i>			
Dr. Bernard Nottage	PLP	2,856	57.56%
John Bostwick II	FNM	1,754	35.35%
Rodney Moncur	DNA	333	6.71%
Mario V. Clarke	IND	19	0.38%
<i>Bamboo Town</i>			
Renward Wells	PLP	1,940	39.18%
Cassius Stuart	FNM	1,661	33.54%
Branville McCartney	DNA	1,022	20.64%
Craig Butler	IND	329	66.40%
<i>Carmichael</i>			
Dr. Daniel Johnson	PLP	2,157	45.23%
Darron Cash	FNM	2,063	43.26%
Theofanis Cochinamogulos	DNA	527	11.05%
Glen Phillip Rolle	IND	22	0.46%
<i>Centreville</i>			
Perry Christie	PLP	2,950	60.79%
Ella Lewis	FNM	1,601	32.99%
Celi Moss	DNA	302	6.22%
<i>Elizabeth</i>			
Ryan Pinder	PLP	2,049	46.87%
Dr. Duane Sands	FNM	1,925	44.03%

Charlene Paul	DNA	385	8.81%
Jay Ambrister	IND	13	0.30%
<i>Englerston</i>			
Glenys Hanna-Martin	PLP	2,962	61.63%
Caron Shepherd	FNM	1,576	32.79%
Nicholas Jacques	DNA	219	4.56%
Sharell Ali McKintosh	BCP	18	0.37%
Calieel Rashad Amahad	IND	7	0.15%
Alexander Morley	IND	19	0.40%
Paul Rolle	IND	5	0.10%
<i>Fort Charlotte</i>			
Dr. Andre Rollins	PLP	2,126	46.02%
Zhivargo Liang	FNM	1,975	42.75%
Mark Humes	DNA	519	11.23%
<i>Fox Hill</i>			
Frederick Mitchell	PLP	2,448	56.02%
Shonell Ferguson	FNM	1,571	35.95%
Kendal Smith	DNA	351	8.03%
<i>Garden Hills</i>			
Dr. Kendal VO Major	PLP	2,181	48.34%
Brensil Rolle	FNM	1,913	42.40%
Kelphene Cunningham	DNA	382	8.47%
Paul David Moss	IND	36	0.80%

<i>Golden Gates</i>			
D. Shane Gibson	PLP	2,831	58.71%
Winsome Miller	FNM	1,556	32.27%
Allsworth Pickstock	DNA	435	9.02%
<i>Golden Isles</i>			
Michael Halkitis	PLP	2,220	48.11%
Charles Maynard	FNM	1,813	39.29%
Farrell Goff	DNA	581	12.59%
<i>Killarney</i>			
Jerome Gomez	PLP	1,642	35.71%
Dr. Hubert Minnis	FNM	2,434	52.94%
Prodesta Moore	DNA	522	11.35%
<i>Marathon</i>			
Jerome Fitzgerald	PLP	2,164	49.09%
Heather Hunt	FNM	1,907	43.26%
Karen Davis	DNA	337	7.65%
<i>Montagu</i>			
Frank Smith	PLP	1,999	42.08%
Richard Lightbourne	FNM	2,227	46.88%
Benjamin Albury	DNA	514	10.82%
Graham Ian Weatherford	IND	10	0.21%

<i>Mount Moriah</i>			
Arnold Forbes	PLP	2,262	47.66%
O. A. T. 'Tommy' Turnquest	FNM	2,013	42.41%
Wayne Munroe	DNA	471	9.92%
<i>Nassau Village</i>			
Dion Smith	PLP	2,308	49.19%
Basil Moss	FNM	1,518	32.35%
Christopher Mortimer	DNA	834	17.77%
Simon Smith	BCP	32	0.68%
<i>Pinewood</i>			
Khaalis Rolle	PLP	2,231	48.94%
Byran Woodside	FNM	1,763	38.67%
Wellington Woods	DNA	549	12.04%
Elkin B. Sutherland	IND	16	0.35%
<i>Saint Anne's</i>			
Gregory Burrows	PLP	1,532	35.32%
Hubert Chipman	FNM	2,348	54.14%
Prince Smith	DNA	457	10.54%
<i>Sea Breeze</i>			
Hope Strachan	PLP	2,095	45.98%
Carl Bethel	FNM	1,897	41.64%
Alfred Poitier	DNA	543	11.92%
Brenda Harris	BCP	21	0.46%

<i>South Beach</i>			
Cleola Hamilton	PLP	2,029	45.60%
Monique Gomez	FNM	1,785	40.11%
Wallace Rolle	DNA	619	13.91%
James Williams	BCP	17	0.38%
<i>Southern Shores</i>			
Kenred Dorsett	PLP	2,080	47.90%
Kenyatta Gibson	FNM	1,762	40.58%
Dr. Madlene Sawyer	DNA	500	11.52%
<i>Tall Pines</i>			
Leslie Miller	PLP	2,516	56.53%
Karen Butler	FNM	1,549	34.80%
Dario Terrilli	DNA	386	8.67%
<i>Yamacraw</i>			
Melanie Griffin	PLP	2,292	50.69%
Dion Foulkes	FNM	1,856	41.04%
Maurice Smith	DNA	374	8.27%
<i>Central Grand Bahama</i>			
Julian Russell	PLP	2,354	45.25%
Neko Grant	FNM	2,505	48.15%
Howard Grant Jr.	DNA	343	6.59%

<i>East Grand Bahama</i>			
Tanisha Tynes	PLP	2,060	43.30%
Peter Turnquest	FNM	2,239	47.06%
Ferline Bridgewater-Thomas	DNA	402	8.45%
Phillip Thomas	IND	57	1.20%
<i>Marco City</i>			
Gregory Moss	PLP	2,528	49.26%
Norris Bain	FNM	2,287	44.56%
Tolonus Sands	DNA	304	5.92%
Leslie Minus	IND	13	0.25%
<i>Pineridge</i>			
Dr. Michael Darville	PLP	2,635	56.83%
Kwasi Thompson	FNM	1,808	38.99%
Osman Johnson	DNA	194	4.18%
<i>West Grand Bahama & Bimini</i>			
Obediah H. Wilchcombe	PLP	2,877	55.42%
Pakesia Parker Edgecombe	FNM	2,233	43.02%
Roger Rolle	DNA	81	1.56%
<i>Central & South Abaco</i>			
Gary Sawyer	PLP	1,235	41.62%
Edison Key	FNM	1,490	50.22%
Roscoe Thompson	DNA	242	8.16%

<i>North Abaco</i>			
Renardo Curry	PLP	1,856	44.94%
Hubert Ingraham	FNM	2,235	54.12%
Sonith Lockheart	DNA	39	0.94%
<i>Mangrove Cay & South Andros</i>			
Picewell Forbes	PLP	794	38.98%
Ronald Bostfield	FNM	532	26.12%
Wayde Forbes Ferguson	DNA	85	4.17%
R. Whitney Bastian	IND	626	30.73%
<i>North Andros & The Berry Islands</i>			
Dr. Perry Gomez	PLP	1,192	48.75%
Desmond Bannister	FNM	1,168	47.77%
Randy Butler	DNA	85	3.48%
<i>Cat Island, Rum Cay & San Salvador</i>			
Philip 'Brave' Davis	PLP	778	52.57%
Michael Pintard	FNM	693	46.82%
Shawn Francis	DNA	9	0.61%
<i>Central & South Eleuthera</i>			
Damian Gomez	PLP	1,392	50.16%
Howard Johnson	FNM	1,326	47.78%
William Hunt	DNA	57	2.05%

<i>North Eleuthera</i>			
Clay Sweeting	PLP	1,686	47.90%
Theo Neilly	FNM	1,787	50.77%
George Taylor	DNA	47	1.34%
<i>The Exumas & Ragged Island</i>			
Anthony Moss	PLP	1,355	50.24%
Phenton Neymour	FNM	1,235	45.79%
Floyd Armbrister	DNA	94	3.49%
Colin G. Miller	BCP	8	0.30%
Reginald Smith	IND	5	0.19%
<i>Long Island</i>			
H. Alexander Storr	PLP	537	30.95%
Loretta Butler-Turner	FNM	979	56.43%
Mario Cartwright	DNA	219	12.62%
<i>MICAL</i>			
V. Alfred Grey	PLP	672	50.72%
Sidney Collie	FNM	650	49.06%
Jamarl Chea	DNA	3	0.23%



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17th Street & Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
USA