

Annual Report

**Organization of Arab
Electoral Management
Bodies** (ArabEMBs)

**2015
2016**

Annual Report Content

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“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”

Lao Tzu, Chinese Philosopher, Old Chinese Proverb

The idea to gather several Arab Election management bodies under one umbrella did not stem from a vacuum, it was the product of a number of intense meetings, discussions, and proposals that took place at international conferences and forums. A number of participating delegates from Arab states had expressed their enthusiasm and support for the creation of a regional network that would facilitate communication among Arab electoral management bodies and promote international practices for election management in the Arab world.

The idea behind the establishment of the organization was not to replicate other experiences, but rather to respond to the needs of the Arab region as it witnesses various changes and undergoes developments at different levels. The organization is based on the strong and deeply rooted belief of its founders in the positive impact it will have by providing democratic institutions that would enable decision makers to work in an environment that reflects the aspirations and choices of the people.

This report, presented to you today, captures this reality. It illustrates the achievements of the organization throughout its first year, where a number of activities and events were implemented, reaffirming the important role the organization plays in enriching democracy in general and the electoral process in particular. The organization’s future successes will be seen in the impact it aims to have on the performance of its member electoral bodies. Expressed interest made by a number of international organizations in the field of elections, leaves us with a positive outlook towards further enhancing cooperation with other regions, and the international community.

Indeed the journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. Therefore, allow me to express my gratitude and appreciation to those who took the initial step, and to those who will continue the journey, a journey of generosity and vision, extending my best wishes for continued success.

Dr. Emad Alshadly Alsayah

President/ArabEMBs

Chapter One

Roadmap Towards....

The Establishment of the Organization
of Arab Electoral Management Bodies
(ArabEMBs)



Introduction

The Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs) was officially launched on 8th June, 2015 in Beirut, Lebanon. ArabEMBs is an independent non-political organization aimed at enhancing regional cooperation among Arab Electoral Management Bodies in the region and raising up their performance, through the creation of a platform that facilitates networking for the exchange of information, technical expertise, lessons learned and best practices

The organization is the first of its kind in the Arab world, created through the signing of its charter by the official representatives of electoral management bodies from Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen. This declared its official estab-

lishment as a mechanism for coordination and networking among Arab electoral management bodies, thus, joining similar regional organizations around the world that were created in the past thirty years. (Figure (1) examples of similar associations and regional networks around the world).

The creation of the ArabEMBs was the result of an intense and detailed preparation along a roadmap that began in April 2014, which took place over a year and a half. It was also made possible with the continuous support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the Regional Electoral Support Project for MENA region under the Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS), funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

The support varied from conceptualizing the idea, emphasizing the urgency for regional coordination among the electoral management bodies in the Arab states, to the technical and operational support in bringing the organization into existence, along with supporting the organization's first-year activities.

- The Inter American Union of Electoral Institutions (UNIORE) 1991
- The Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO) 1991
- The Election Commission Forum (ECF) of the South African Development Community (SADEC) 1996
- The Association of African Electoral Authorities (AAEA) 1998
- The Forum of Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSa) 2010

Figure (1) Examples of Similar Associations and Regional Networks Around the World

Needs and Justifications

The idea behind providing coordination efforts among the electoral authorities in the Arab world has been around for some time. However, the absence of adequate conditions delayed any steps being taken towards realizing this goal.

Today, the democratic development and transitions and the attempts for political reform in the

Arab states are leading to an increasing momentum for improving the electoral process. Accordingly, the willing have grown to activate regional cooperation among electoral authorities in the region who share similar challenges, common cultural, linguistic and economic factors, as well as comparable experiences within their democratic practices.

Despite the differences in the respective electoral experiences in the Arab states and differences in the types of institutions entrusted with election administration, they all share common objectives and challenges in terms of the need to enhance the credibility of the electoral process and to regain citizen's confidence in its results. The need to bridge and promote technical cooperation is an important step towards realizing this common goal.

Steps towards Establishing ArabEMBs

■ The Initial Idea for Creating ArabEMBs

The idea was initially proposed during the EC-UNDP Joint Task Group on Electoral Assistance Annual Global Conference, which was held at the Dead Sea in April 2014. Parallel to the conference, a meeting was held to discuss and address regional concerns of Arab electoral management bodies, where the participants confirmed their mutual agreement on the need to create a regional mechanism for cooperation and networking among EMBs in the Arab world.

■ Formation of the Preparatory Committee

In June 2014, the first meeting was held to discuss the practical steps for the creation of the organization. The participants agreed on the formation of the Preparatory Committee made up of representatives of electoral management bodies from Jordan, Tunisia, Sudan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt. The committee was responsible for maintaining cooperation and facilitating the preparations for launching the organization within one year of the meeting. The Independent Election Commission of Jordan (IEC) was assigned as the coordinating focal point of the Preparatory Committee.

■ Exposure to Similar Experiences

Members of the Preparatory Committee participated in the General Assembly of the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO) which was held in Bucharest/Romania in September 2015. The Assembly provided an opportunity for members to learn from and get familiar with the organization's



ACEEEO Secretary General, Sharing the Organization's Experience with Preparatory Committee

experience, from its creation to challenges it faced and the mechanisms it adopted. Furthermore, members were introduced to the organization's structure and membership categories and terms. The experience provided the Preparatory Committee with exposure to the benefits and advantages that such regional networks and platforms offer.



Representative of (ECF of SADEC), Sharing the Organization's Experience with Preparatory Committee

Also Both, Mr. Zsolt Szolonki, the Secretary General of (ACEEEO), and Ms. Joyce Laetitia Kazembe representing the Election Commission Forum (ECF) of the South African Development Community (SADEC), were invited to attend the second Preparatory Committee meeting, where they shared their organization's experiences, allowing the Preparatory Committee to benefit from the experiences prior to drafting the Charter and by-laws for the organization.

■ Drafting of the Charter and Selection of the Secretariat Headquarters

The Preparatory Committee met in Beirut, Lebanon in January 2015 to draft the charter of the organiza-

tion, in addition to selecting the name and emblem of the organization that best reflects its nature and objectives. The meeting concluded that the name of the organization would be “Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)”; and through voting, selected Jordan as the host country for the headquarters of the Secretariat .

Thirteen participants representing electoral management bodies from seven Arab States, namely, Jordan, Tunisia, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt and Yemen, attended the meeting. women record-

ing a high level of participation (46%), a noticeable representation in a field that is normally dominated by men.

■ Finalizing the Charter and Drafting By-Laws

This task was completed during the preparatory meeting held at the Dead Sea /Jordan during the period of (10-12) March 2015. The meeting was attended by two representatives from each electoral management bodies from Jordan, Palestine, Iraq,



Second Meeting of the Preparatory Committee: Discussing ArabEMBs Draft Charter and Selecting the Secretariat Hosting Country

Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen. Women participation was around (35%).

The final draft of the Charter was reviewed, incorporating comments from member electoral bodies, and finalized during the meeting. The committee also drafted the executive by-laws which containing logistical, financial, administrative procedures of General assembly, Executive Board and Secretariat. During the meeting, the group agreed on general provisions that would govern ArabEMBs during the transitional period, as well as the date for the official launch of the organization.



Third Meeting of the Preparatory Committee:
Finalizing ArabEMBs Charter and Internal By-Laws

■ Participation in the 12th European Conference of Electoral Management Bodies

Members of the Preparatory Committee participated in the 12th European Conference for EMs, which was held during the period of 29-31 March 2015 in

Belgium with the support of the Venice Commission. On the sidelines of the conference, a meeting of Arab electoral management bodies was held where participating representatives of ArabEMBs presented the organization and discussed modalities and mechanisms of possible support that could be offered by the Venice Commission.

■ Final Preparations for the Launch of ArabEMBs

Final preparations for the official launch of the organization were completed during the 4th Preparatory Committee meeting held in Amman in April 2015. The meeting resulted in the signature, by first initial, of representatives on the Charter, confirmation



Fourth meeting of the Preparatory Committee:
Final Preparation for ArabEMBs Launching Ceremony

of the date and place for the launch, and agreed on the agenda and timetable for the ceremony. In addition, the group adopted the organization's logo, and reviewed executive and transitional by-laws of the organization.

■ The Official Launching of ArabEMBs

The official launch of ArabEMBs took place in Beirut on the 8th of June 2015 under the patronage of H.E Mr. Nehad Al Mashnoq, Lebanon's Minister of Interior. Attendees included around 100 public figures from Lebanon, delegates of participating electoral management bodies, Ambassadors of Arab States to Lebanon, League of Arab States, Secretary Generals of similar international and regional organizations, regional representatives of organizations supporting elections in the Arab world, the resident representatives of UNDP country offices who address relevant issues, representatives of civil

society organizations working in the field of elections, democracy and human rights, regional and local media representatives, and senior UNDP project officers providing support in areas relevant to elections, democracy and governance in the Arab states.

During the launch ceremony, the charter was signed by official representatives of electoral management bodies (founding members) from Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya and Yemen. Furthermore, parallel to the ceremony, the first General Assembly meeting and the interim Executive Board meeting were held. The meetings concluded an agreement on the transitional period of (6-12) months from the date of the launch. The transitional period was an important decision for the facilitation of the transfer of authorities and responsibilities of the Preparatory Committee to the different organizational organ to be formed as stipulated in the Charter and executives by-Laws.



Official Launching of ArabEMBs in June 2015

Chapter Two

The Institutional Framework

of the Organization of Arab Electoral
Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)

“A regional, independent, non-political Arab organization that incorporates the Arab election management bodies, holding a legal status, seeks to enhance the capacity of Arab electoral management bodies and improve their performance.... ..”

Article (1) of ArabEMBs Charter

Characteristics of ArabEMBs

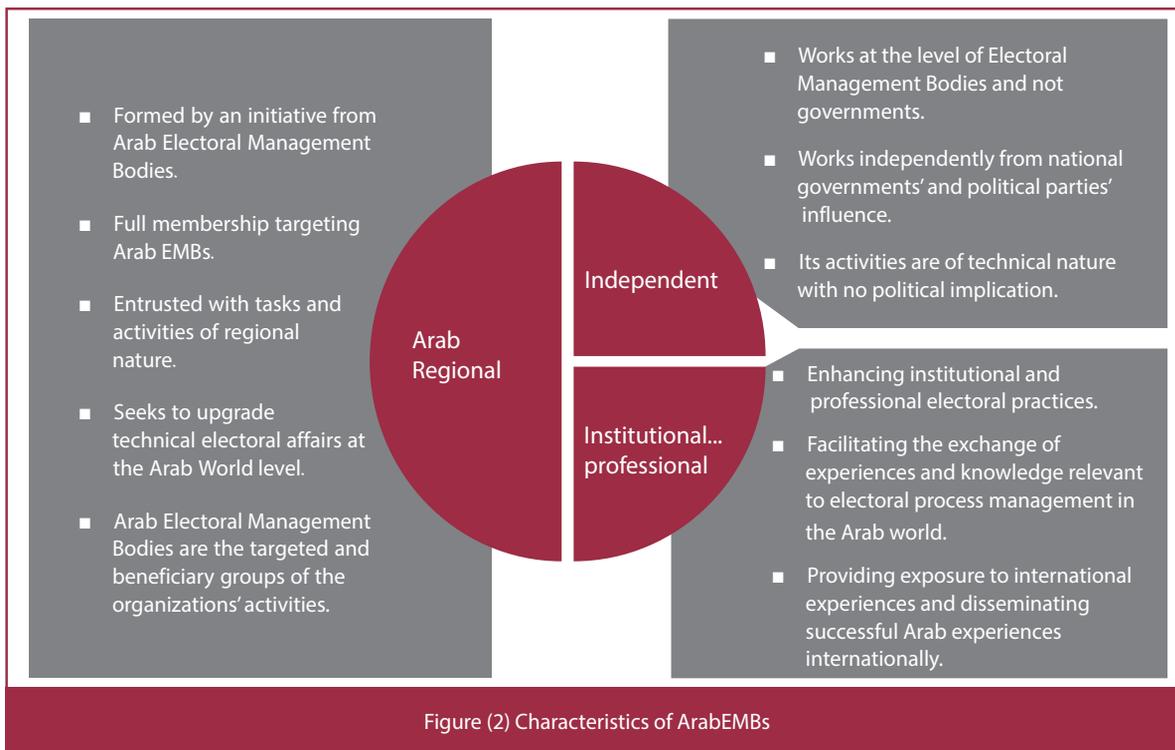
The ArabEMBs is established as the first cooperation and coordination mechanism in the field of elections in the Arab world, with its main goal being to reinforce regional coordination among Arab electoral management bodies, to provide a platform to facilitate networking exchange of information and technical expertise, and to improve its performance through the application of regional and international best practices related to the field of elections.

ArabEMBs, **is a regional Arab organization**, created by Arab Electoral Management Bodies (founding members) targeting in its membership¹ the Arab Electoral Management Bodies responsible for managing and/or supervising general elections, irrespective of the type of these bodies (independent/governmental/mixed), their framework (per

manent/temporary) or scope of work (presidential/parliamentary/municipal elections). The organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies will assume responsibilities and tasks of a regional nature aiming at improving the technical aspects of electoral affairs at the level of the Arab World. Electoral Management Bodies in Arab states are the targeted and beneficiary groups of the Organization's activities.

The organization is an independent non-political organization working at level of authorities entrusted with election management in the Arab states (Arab Electoral Management Bodies) and not governments. ArabEMBs is committed to taking required measures to ensure independence from any influence of national governments and political parties. The organization seeks to enhance democracy and good governance in the Arab world through developing the capacities and specialized technical expertise of the various Arab electoral management bodies without interference or practicing political influence on the governments of its members' states.

(1) Full membership refers to members within the “permanent member” category, it allows participation in the process of decision making and voting on resolutions issued by the GA. The president and members of the Executive Board are selected from these members, noting that the organization allows membership to other international, regional and similar electoral management bodies concerned with electoral affairs to join through the “partner member” category. (refer to details on membership categories).



The organization is a **professional entity** seeking to enhance institutional and professional electoral practices in the Arab region through providing opportunities for sharing experiences and knowledge relevant to the management of the electoral process within and outside the Arab world, exposing members to international experiences and disseminating successful Arab experiences internationally. The organization seeks to achieve its goals through organizing conferences, seminars and regional training programs and study tours; as well as organizing regional programs for visiting electoral functions, conducting research studies, issuance of professional periodic newsletters, and activate technical expertise forums.

The organization holds a legal status with financial and administrative autonomy; all affairs are regu-

lated through a comprehensive legal framework that includes provisions governing the organizational structure, membership, and detailed procedures.

Legal framework

■ The Charter

The organization of the Arab Electoral Management Bodies was created based on its Charter signed by the Electoral Management Bodies (founding members)² on the 8th of June 2015. The Charter is the general constitution consisting of

(2) Electoral Management Bodies in Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen

the basic principles that govern the organization. The general Charter's provisions regulate the following matters:

1. Introducing the organization, its objectives and means to achieving its objectives;
2. Membership categories, the terms, rights and obligations of each category;
3. Main organizational organs and its level, the responsibilities and tasks of each organ, mandate and selection modality of organs members and its term, in addition to mechanism of convening meetings and decision making;
4. Financial and administrative affairs, including sources of funding, areas of expected expenditure, preparation of budget, and financial management;
5. The Charter's entry into force and the required provisions and by-laws to accommodate amendments.

■ **Executive By-Laws**

The executive by-laws adopted by the General Assembly³ incorporated detailed procedures of the general provisions reflected in the Charter. The by-laws specified instructions, procedures, and regulatory and administrative mechanisms pertaining to the functions of the General Assembly, the Executive Board and Secretariat. This included: receiving and reviewing membership applications including withdrawals, suspensions and appeals; allocat-

ing membership fees, selecting the President and members of the Executive Board, organizing meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Board, and establishing a mechanism for voting on decisions as well as delegating tasks for the Secretariat.

■ **Transitional By-Law**

The General Assembly agreed to consider a period of (6-12) months from the launch date as the transitional phase to facilitate the transfer of authorities and tasks from the Preparatory Committee to the organizational organs and units that have been formed based on the charter and the executive by-laws.

The organization adopted interim by-laws that embodied regulatory, financial and administrative mechanisms to govern the organization's work during the transitional phase, including the selection of the President, members of the Executive Board and the Secretariat, as well as define the scope of work and tasks of the Executive Board and the General Secretariat during the transitional period.

■ **Financial By-Laws**

The First General Assembly also adopted the financial regulations which included financial instructions and procedures for the work of the organization.

(3) General Assembly Resolution # (GA/D/Q/1/2) dated 9/6/2015

Strategic Principles and Guidelines

Our Vision

“Professional Arab Electoral Management Bodies.....Ensuring credible elections.....Towards enhancing the democratic process”

Our Mission

“The Organization is a professional non-political entity in the Arab region that seeks to enhance joint cooperation between electoral management bodies, develop experiences and knowledge of the electoral culture towards improving the performance of the electoral process according to international standards, and empower partners in the electoral process to actively and fully participate in the democratic process”

Our Values

- Neutrality in the provision of services to all members and partners and ensuring equality without discrimination;
- Autonomy in decision making without any influence or intervention;
- Accountability, transparency and integrity to gain confidence of members and partners;
- Professionalism in facilitating the work of the organization in an efficient, effective, professional and responsive manner;
- Respect diversity and differences;
- Excel and innovate in knowledge management.

Our Objectives

1. Enhance joint cooperation, communication and exchange of technical expertise among members and partners;
2. Enhance in-house capacities of Arab EMBs and improve their performance;
3. Enlarge and institutionalize active membership and strategic partnerships;
4. Promote the principles of autonomy and neutrality of electoral management bodies;
5. Produce and disseminate electoral knowledge;
6. Strengthen and sustain the organization’s resource base.

Membership Categories

Membership in the organization exists in three categories as stipulated under its Charter⁴ , namely, Permanent member, Associate member, and Partner member.

Arab electoral management bodies that are managing general elections, whether independent, governmental, mixed, permanent, or temporary, can hold permanent or associate status; provided they are responsible for the managing , implement, or supervision of any of the general elections as stated in the members’ states legislations, and they commit to the provisions of the Charter and its by-laws; and comply with the decisions of the General Assembly and the Executive Board.

(4) Articles (4), (5), (6), (7),(8), & (9) of the Charter

Regional and international organizations can join under the third category, partner member, as specified in the Charter. (Figure (3) Membership categories, Terms, Rights and Responsibilities

■ **Permanent Members**

Permanent members are EMBs responsible for the general elections in any Arab state as stipulated in its national legislation. Permanent members have the right to participate in decision making and voting on resolutions issued by the General Assembly, including the selecting of the president of the General Assembly and electing the president and members of the Executive Board. Permanent members also have the right to chair the General Assembly and stand for Executive Board, and to participate in all of the activities of the organization, and to benefit from all programs and services offered.

As of the release of this report, the organization has ten permanent members. (figure (4) Members of the Organization as per membership categories)

■ **Associate Members**

Associate members can be any of the following electoral management bodies:

1. EMBs who are responsible for general elections in any Arab State who do not wish to obtain permanent membership status but wish to benefit from the organization's programs.
2. EMBs who are responsible for conducting local elections in Arab States that have a permanent membership representation.

The associate member has the right to participate in General Assembly meetings, and benefit from all activities, programs, and services provided by the organization. However, these EMBs do not have the right to vote on General Assembly resolutions, nor have the right to chair the General Assembly or stand for Executive Board .

■ **Partner Members**

International and regional organizations can be members of the organization through this category provided they are professional, independent, and accredited internationally. Furthermore, these organizations must be working in the following fields: elections, enhancing democracy, governance, human rights or any other area that falls within the scope of the organization as outlined by the General Assembly.

Who can become a member of ArabEMBs ?

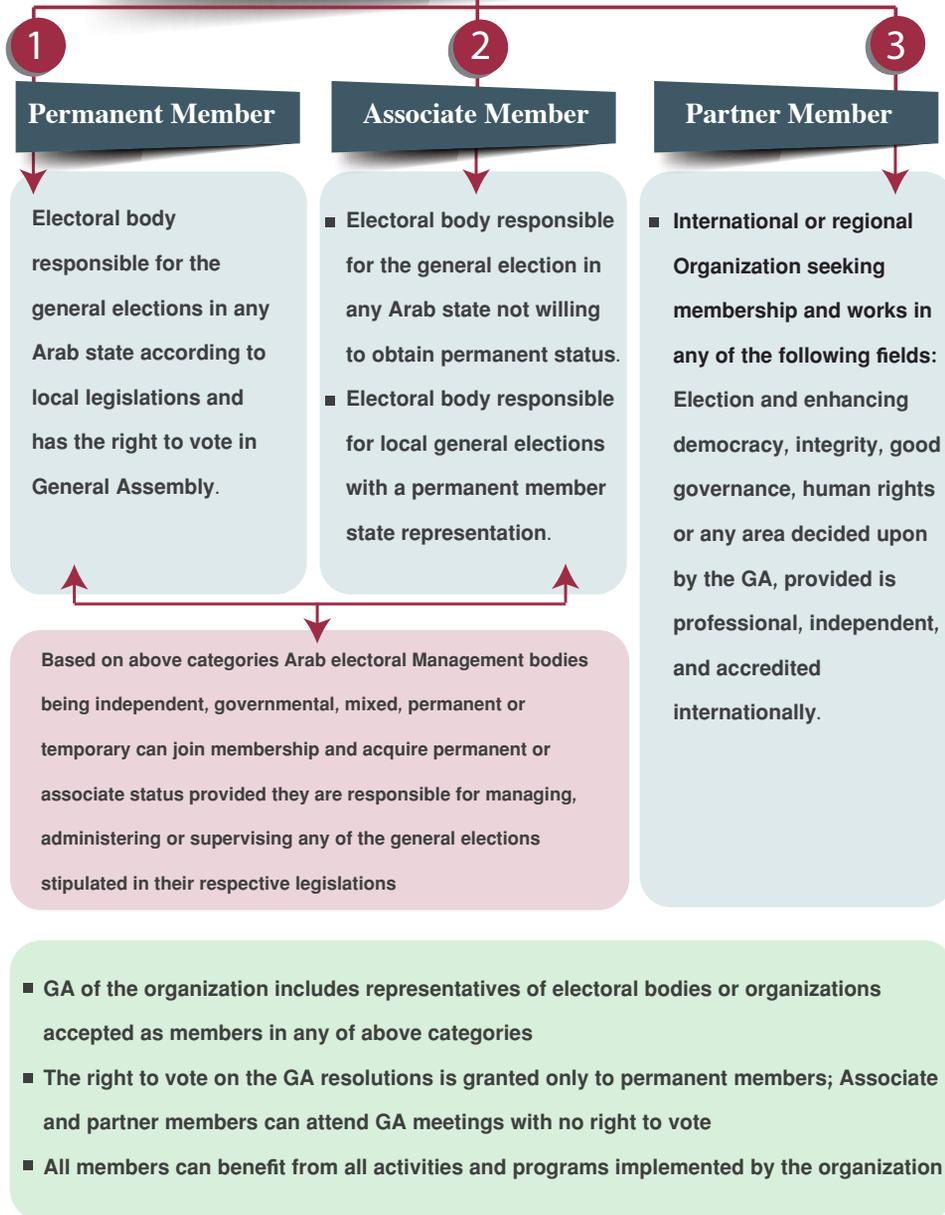


Figure (3) Membership Categories, Terms, Rights and Responsibilities

Who are the current members?

1

Permanent Members: The organization has (10) Arab Electoral Management Bodies under this category, namely:

	Independent Election Commission (IEC) (Jordan)	
	Independent High Elections Commission (ISIE) (Tunisia)	
	National Elections Commission (NEC) (Sudan)	
	National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) (Somalia)	
	The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) (Iraq)	
	Central Elections Commission (CEC) (Palestine)	
	Directorate of Political and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of Interior (Lebanon)	
	High National Elections Commission (HNEC) (Lybia)	
	Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (Yemen)	
	National Independent Electoral Commission (Mauritania)	

2

Associate members:

none so far

3

Partner members:

none so far

Figure (4) Members of the Organization as per Membership Categories

Organs of the Organization

The organizational structure, based on the Charter is composed of three levels:

- General Assembly
- Executive Board
- General Secretariat

■ The General Assembly (GA)

The General Assembly is the highest regulatory and supervisory authority in the Organization. It is composed of representatives of the members of the organization as stipulated in the Charter and by-laws. The General Assembly is entrusted with outlining the general policies, by-laws, plans, and budgets required to achieve the organization's

goals. The GA is also responsible for approving the proposed amendments to the Charter and internal by-laws, approving membership applications and withdrawals, and ratifying agreements entered with regional and international election commissions and similar institutions.

The composition of the GA is updated annually to allow the addition of new joining members, or replacement of any member representative, based on the official request of the electoral management body or organizations members

During the annual meeting of the GA, a consensus should be reached on the selection of the President (Chair of organization) from representatives of permanent members. In cases where a consensus is not reached, the selection is based on major-

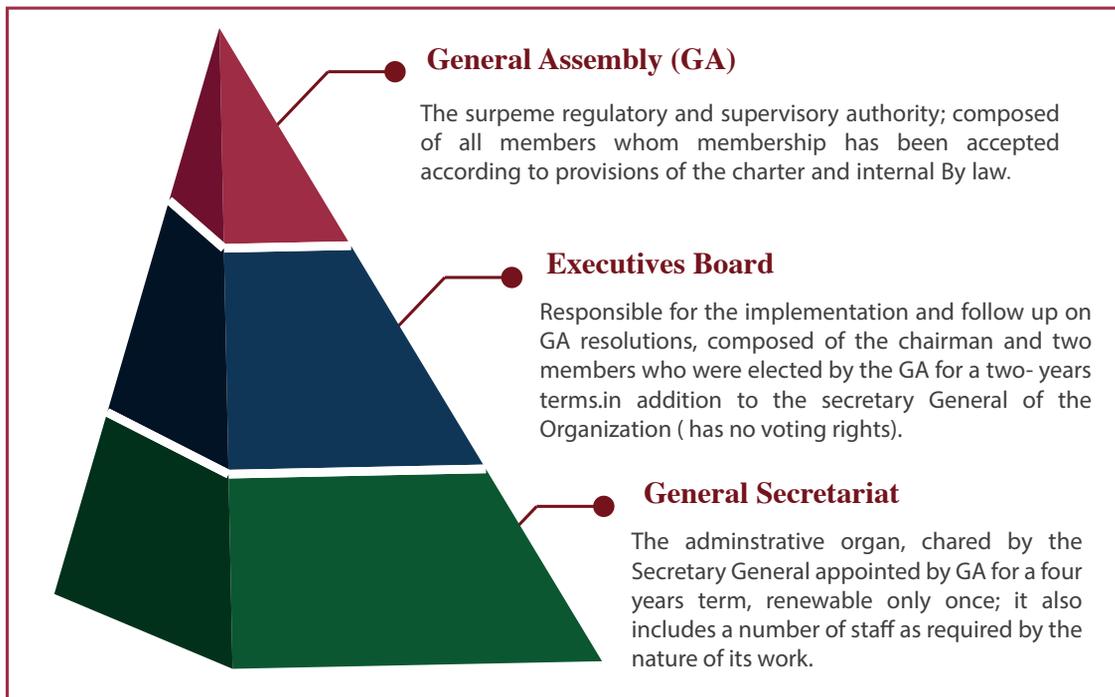


Figure (5) ArabEMBs Organs

ity through a secret vote by permanent members.

The first GA meeting was attended by representatives of the six electoral management bodies (founding members) in Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya and Yemen. The president of the GA was selected as stipulated in the adopted Transitional By-Law (Figure (6) First General Assembly Members)

■ Executive Board

The Executive Board is responsible for the implementation and follow up of GA resolutions, preparation of plans, measures, and provisional budgets to ensure achieving the objectives of the organization. In addition, the executive board is responsible for proposing internal regulatory and administrative by-laws, recommending membership applica-

tions, and/ or advising withdrawal requests.

The Board is composed of a Chairman, two of the permanent members elected by the GA for a two-year term, and the Secretary General (who does not hold the right to vote).

The Executive Board meets on a bi-annual basis upon the call of its chair, yet can hold emergency meetings if members collectively agree. The Executive Board assembles with the presence of the majority of members and the Chair, decisions are taken collectively or by voting if a collective agreement is not reached.

The first Executive Board was composed of members of the Preparatory Committee as per article (4/a) of the adopted Transitional By-Law (Figure (7) Chair and Members of the Interim Executive Board)



Dr. Emad Al Sayah

Chairman of First General Assembly (President)
Chairman of The High National Elections Commission (Libya)



Mr. Riyadh El Shaka'a

Member of First General Assembly
Former Chairman of the Independent Election Commission (Jordan)



Mr. Serbest Amidi

Member of the First General Assembly
Chairman of the Independent High Electoral Commission (Iraq)



Dr. Hanna Nasir

Member of First General Assembly
Chairman of Central Elections Commission (Palestine)



Ms. Faten Younes

Member of First General Assembly
General Directorate of Political and Refugee Affairs
Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (Lebanon)



Judge Mohammed Al Hakmee

Member of First General Assembly
Chairman of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (Yemen)

Figure (6) First General Assembly Members

**Mr. Safa`a Jasim**

Chairman of Arab EMBs Interim Executive Board
 Commissioner
 Independent High Electoral Commission (Iraq) (IHEC)

**Mr. Hisham Kuhail**

Member of Arab EMBs Interim Executive Board
 Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)
 Central Elections Commission (Palestine) (CEC)

**Mr. Abdelhakim Belkhair**

Member of Arab EMBs Interim Executive Board
 Commissioner
 High National Elections Commission (HNEC) (Lybia)

**Ms. Badrieh Bilbisi**

ArabEMBs Interim Secretary General
 (does not hold the right to vote)

Figure (7) Chair and Members of the Interim Executive Board

■ Secretariat

The Secretariat, the organization's administrative body, is chaired by the Secretary-General who is appointed by the General Assembly for a four-year term, to be renewed once. The Secretariat is composed of a number of personnel according to the requirements of work. In accordance with article (4/b) of the Transitional By-Law; Ms. Badrieh Al Belbisi was appointed as an acting Secretary General during the transitional phase.

First General Assembly Meeting

The first GA meeting was held in Beirut, Lebanon on 9 June 2015, chaired by Dr. Emad Al-Saieh,

President of the organization, and attended by representatives of members of the electoral management bodies (founding members): Mr. Riyadh Al Shaka'a, Chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission (Jordan), Mr. Sarbest Amidi, Chairman of the Independent Higher Electoral Commission (Iraq), Dr. Hanna Nasser, Chair, Central Elections Commission (Palestine), Ms. Faten Younis, Minister of Interior and Municipalities (Lebanon), Judge Khamis Al Dinin, Deputy Chair, The Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum (Yemen). In addition, the meeting was attended by representatives of the League of Arab States who were there as observers, representatives from similar regional organizations, representatives of organizations that support elections in the Arab world, and representatives of the civil society working at the regional level in areas of election, democracy and human rights.

The following topics were discussed and agreed upon during the first meeting:

- Mechanism for selecting the president after the transitional phase;
- Adoption of Executive, Financial, and Transitional By-Law;
- Setting the date and place for the next Secretariat meeting.

Interim Executive Board Meetings

The Interim Executive Board held a total of ten extensive meetings during the transitional phase, six

of which were in-person, while the rest were held virtually over Skype. (See figure (8) meetings of the first The Interim Executive Board).

The first meeting of The Interim Executive Board was held on the 9th of June 2015, on the sidelines of the organization’s official launch ceremony. The meeting resulted in setting objectives for the transitional phase, namely:

- Finalizing the infrastructure to establish the organization;
- Promoting organization and expanding its membership base;
- Sustaining the relationship with partners and securing funding;
- Conducting a number of specialized activities towards achieving the goals of the organization.

All decisions of the Transitional The Interim Executive Board were taken during the first ten meetings and were geared towards achieving the goals of the transitional period. This annual report illustrates the success in achieving the set goals with the exception of the first goal which refers to the finalization of the infrastructure and institutional set up of the headquarters of the organization.

The Secretariat ensured the documentation of all meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Board and its resolutions. To that effect, a mechanism was developed for the purpose of preparing, documenting and coding all records. In addition, the Secretariat maintains an archive of hard and electronic copies.

Meetings	No. (Ref) of Meeting	Date of Meeting	Location
First Meeting	(EF/1/1/2015)	(9) June 2015	Beirut, Lebanon
Second Meeting	(EF/1/2/2015)	(12-13) August 2015	Amman, Jordan
Third Meeting	(EF/1/3/2015)	(8-9) December 2015	Amman, Jordan
Fourth Meeting	(EF/1/4/2016)	(11) February 2016	Aqaba, Jordan
Fifth Meeting	(EF/1/5/2016)	(20) April 2016	Dead Sea, Jordan
Sixth Meeting	(EF/1/6/2016)	(18) May 2016	Via Skype
Seventh Meeting	(EF/1/7/2016)	(26) May 2016	Via Skype
Eight Meeting	(EF/1/8/2016)	(14) August 2016	Via Skype
Ninth Meeting	(EF/1/9/2016)	(5 & 7) September 2013	Via Skype
Tenth Meeting	(EF/1/10/2016)	(12-13) October 2016	Amman, Jordan

Figure (8) Meetings of the Interim Executive Board

Establishment of the Secretariat of ArabEMBs

Hosting ArabEMBs headquarters, finalizing the required infrastructure and procedures, and activating the operational framework is considered one of the four objectives of the ArabEMBs transitional period. However, due to an unforeseen delay, the progress in achieving this planned objective was affected.

Hosting the HQ of the ArabEMBs Secretariat

As stipulated under article (1) of the Charter, the permanent headquarter of the secretariat was agreed to be hosted in Amman, Jordan. This decision, concluded by a voting procedure, was based on an offer presented by independent election commission(IEC) Jordan to host the HQ, during the Preparatory Committee Meeting that was held in Lebanon in January 2015.

However, the process for hosting the HQ of ArabEMBs faced with a number of legal challenges pertaining the (IEC) Jordan to grant the organization the legal status. Based on the assurance of (IEC/Jordan) that such delays are merely procedural matters, ArabEMBs agreed to give additional time to Jordan to resolve the legal matters with the concerned parties in order to proceed with signing of the hosting agreement with the Government of Jordan.

Limitations on the Function of the Secretariat

The delay in signing hosting arrangement affected the ability of ArabEMBs to finalize the procedures

for establishing and institutionalizing its operational framework. The absence of a legal status affected the progress of the following establishment procedures:

A. Head Quarter premises, furniture, equipment and electronic systems required to operate were delayed. Accordingly, the Secretariat operated from within the UNDP office during the transitional period.

B. Recruitment of permanent human resources and capacities required to perform tasks was also delayed ; thus staffing was limited to the Secretary General.

C. Financial management procedures and systems were also delayed, thus preventing the organization from obtaining a bank account and therefore collecting membership fees. The organization depended on UNDP's support in this regard which imposed some restrictions on access to financial resources to implement some of the planned activities.

In spite of the above limitations, the ArabEMBs Secretariat managed to achieve various objectives set for the transitional period mentioned in page (25) of this report through the following mechanisms:

1. Support provided by the President of the organization and its Executive Board;
2. Extensive meetings of the Executive Board since the formal launch of the organization. As of the publication of this report, the Executive

Board held a total of ten meetings three in person and virtually over Skype.

3. Technical, financial, and logistical support provided by UNDP's (RESP).
4. Support provided by the member Electoral Management Bodies who allocated some of their staff to support the organization on various occasions, namely:
 - The Independent Election Commission (Jordan) endorsed the appointment of Ms. Badrieh El Belbisi as Secretary General, on a part-time basis during the interim period;
 - The Central Election Commission (Palestine) endorsed the appointment of Ms. Suhair Abdeen to provide technical support in preparing and organizing a workshop on the role of electoral management bodies in enhancing Arab women participation in the election process;
 - Electoral Management Bodies in Iraq, Palestine, Tunisia, Lebanon, Libya, Yemen and Mauritania endorsed the decision to establish a working group on voter registration and to follow up on outcomes of the voter registration workshop.

Building the Institutional Capacities of the Secretariat

Adopting ArabEMBs Communication Strategy and Action Plan

The process of implementing an innovative communication strategy is considered one of the main

goals of the organization of ArabEMBs in line with its efforts to facilitate communication and exchange of knowledge among Arab electoral bodies.

The communication strategy was prepared and adopted along with the adopted strategic principles and objectives, targeted groups, and the communication tools to be utilized for each group.

The Executive Board adopted the strategy and action plan during its meeting in December 2015. The Secretariat is currently working on measures required to start the first phase of the action plan and exerting continuing efforts to mobilize the necessary financial resources for the full action plan.

ArabEMBs Strategic Principles and Foundation Document

ArabEMBs, continuing its efforts to develop institutional strategies and action plans in partnership with UNDP Regional Electoral Support Project. A workshop was held from (10-13) February 2016, resulted in adopting ArabEMBs vision, mission, values, and basic principles and objectives. The workshop was attended by the president and members of the Executive Board, representatives of eight electoral management bodies from Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Somalia, and Yemen, in addition to the UNDP project. The workshop was managed and facilitated by an institutional development expert.



Strategic Principles and Guidelines Workshop

ArabEMBs Social Media Platforms

The ArabEMBs organization is utilizing social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to increase visibility and outreach. All activities of the organization and its members, updates on elections in the Arab world, and other relevant news are posted regularly on the Facebook page. The platforms are

utilized for exchanging information and holding interactive discussions on topics related to elections. The focus is geared towards quality versus quantity; special attention is paid to ensure that all posts are of added value. The organization continues its efforts to assess its outreach and number of followers on social media platforms, which currently falls around 4000.

Enlarging ArabEMBs Membership

As of the publication of this report, the organization of ArabEMBs has ten permanent members representing electoral management bodies from Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, Tunisia, Sudan, Mauritania, Somalia and Yemen, from six initial members at its launch in June 2015. The six



Strategic Principles and Guidelines Workshop



Screenshot of ArabEMBs Facebook Page

initial members are considered the founding members⁵ of the organization for their involvement in the preparatory work of the establishment of the organization.

ArabEMBs works continuously to expand its membership and attract members within the different categories. The organization focused initially on reestablishing connection with electoral management bodies who participated in the preparatory committee and who actively contributed in drafting the Charter, yet were unable to attend the facial launch ceremony. These efforts lead to the

inclusion of the Independent High Election Commission (Tunisia) and the National Election Commission (Sudan) under the status of founding members.

Furthermore, ArabEMBs communicated with a number of Arab electoral management bodies through their embassies in Jordan and through the assistance of international organizations that support elections and democracy in these countries. Such efforts resulted in the inclusion of the Independent National Election commission (Mauritania), and the Independent National Election commission (Somalia).

(5) Article (1) of the basic Charter defines Founding Members as: the Arab Electoral Management Bodies participating in the preparatory work during the establishment of the organization and the signatories of the charter during the first meeting of the General Assembly.

Chapter Three

Institutionalized Cooperation

with International and Regional
Organizations

Introduction

One of the main objectives of the organization is to promote and institutionalize cooperation and coordination among Arab electoral Management bodies and to develop means to facilitate the exchange of electoral information and technical expertise. Also, the organization acts as a platform for coordination with other international and regional electoral networks to provide an opportunity for exposure to international experiences and disseminate success stories and Arab experiences at the international level.

Accordingly, efforts were exerted during the organization's transitional phase to publicize the organization's objectives and activities, and to promote networking with similar regional and international organizations. To this effect, the organization was presented in six international events, and entered into two Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with international organizations working on elections.

International and Regional Recognition

The United Nations welcomed the establishment of ArabEMBs as the first of its kind organization in the Arab world. A reference to the organization was made in article (18) of the UN Secretary General report (A/70/306) presented at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly. The article made a reference to the importance of the organization as the first regional mechanism for coordination and cooperation between Arab electoral management

bodies, and as a platform for networking and the exchange of information and technical expertise.

“.....UNDP also facilitated and supported the development of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies..... Toward Enhancing knowledge and capacities and furthering the democratic agenda in the region. This is the first such regional electoral network among Arab States.”

UN Secretary General

Furthermore, H.E. Ambassador Ahmed Bin Halle, Deputy Secretary General of the League of Arab States (LAS) referred to the organization in his opening speech during the 'Forum of Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab World' which was organized by LAS and held in May 2016 Cairo, Egypt.

“It is imperative to note that “ArabEMBs”, an emerging organization established on 8 June 2015, aims at enhancing joint cooperation among electoral authorities in the Arab world.”

Deputy Secretary General of League of Arab States (LAS)

Networking with Regional and International Organizations

■ Signing of an MOU with (ACEEEO)

On September 9th 2015, the organization signed a Memorandum Of Understanding with the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO), one of the largest regional professional independent organizations that acquired its legal status in 1991 under international law and has (24) member electoral management bodies from European countries. The association aims at enhancing free

and equitable elections through building and developing the culture of transparency and accountability of electoral processes in Europe⁶. It seeks to enhance institutional and professional electoral democratic practices in the European region by providing opportunities to exchange expertise within and outside Europe on issues related to managing the electoral process. The association organizes workshops, training sessions, observation missions, and conducts research and studies on topics related to elections. In addition, ACEEEO holds an annual conference that focuses on one or more thematic topic determined by members. The conference is considered the biggest event on elections organized in Europe.



The MOU aims at consolidating cooperation between the organizations through the facilitation of networking and the exchange of knowledge and technical expertise among the two regions. The signing ceremony took place during the ACEEEO General Assembly, where the MOU was signed by Dr. Imad ALSayiah/ president of ArabEMBs and Dr. Luri Ciocan, Chairman and Mr. Zsolt Szolnoki, Secretary General of the association.



Signing an MOU with the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO)

■ Signing of an MOU with (Venice Commission)

The organization signed an MOU with the European Commission for Democracy through Law, known as Venice Commission, on 24 of October 2015. The commission is the council of Europe advisory body on constitutional matters, and concern with judicial and electoral reforms. The MOU will build consolidated cooperation and present an opportunity

(6) For more information on ACEEEO, you can visit: www.aceeoo.org



Signing an MOU with the European Commission for Democracy Through Law (Venice Commission)



for the commission to provide technical support to ArabEMBs in developing and customizing regional standards for elections in the Arab world.

The signing ceremony took place on the sidelines of the 104th Plenary Session of the Venice Commission. The MOU was signed by Mr. Hisham Kuhail, member of ArabEMBs Executive Board, and Dr. Gianni Buquicchio/ President of Venice Commission.

The Venice Commission is composed of (60) member states, (47) of which are member states to the Council of Europe. The Commission provides legal consultation to member states, particularly states seeking to develop structures and legal institutions in accordance with European standards, in addition to providing international expertise in areas of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The Commission's work focuses on three main areas: 1) democratic institutions and fundamental rights, 2) constitutional and legal justice, and 3) elections, referendums and political parties.

Promoting ArabEMBs at Regional and International Events

The organization participated in a number of regional and international events where it presented its mandate and scope of work to members of the international community and other organizations working on electoral affairs.

The 24th Annual Conference of (ACEEEO) which was held in Moldova from (9-11) September 2015 and attended by around 200 participants from European Electoral Management Bodies. At the conference, Secretary General of ArabEMBs, Ms. Badrieh El Belbisi gave a presentation on the importance of the organization and shed light on the main priorities of its upcoming work.



ArabEMBs Delegation to the 24th Conference of (ACEEEO)

104th Plenary Session of Venice Commission which was held from (22-23) October 2015 in Italy, whereby Secretary General of the organization, Ms. Badrieh El Belbisi gave a brief presentation introducing the organization of ArabEMBs.

The Sixth Forum of Latin Democracy was held in the Mexican capital, New Mexico, from (21-22) October 2015, organized by the Mexican National Electoral Institute (INE) and attended by 450 prominent figures including ex-presidents of Republics, Ministers, Parlia-



Participation in the Sixth Forum of Democracy in Latin America

mentarians, representatives from Academia, and number of Ambassadors.

At the forum, Mr. Safaa' Al Musawi, the Chair of the organization's Executive Board gave a brief presentation introducing the organization of ArabEMBs, highlighting its goals and strategies for supporting the various electoral management bodies.

The 11th International Electoral Affairs Symposium which was held from (12 – 14) November 2015 in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, was organized by the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies. At the symposium, Mr. Hisham Kehail, a member of the Executive Board, gave a brief introductory presentation on the organization of ArabEMBs and its goals.

The Forum of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) in the Arab World Which was held in Cairo, Egypt from (9-11) May 2016, and organized jointly by the League of Arab States (LAS) and the UNDP Regional Electoral Support Project. The forum provided a platform to discuss different electoral experiences and key challenges, as well as share success stories from the Arab region. The forum was attended by representatives of authorities working in electoral administration from eighteen Arab States, representatives from the United Nations Development Programme, representatives of the African and European Unions; as well a number of regional and international organizations.

The ArabEMBs participated in this forum as the first of its kind organization for regional cooperation among Arab electoral management bodies. A session was dedicated to introducing the



Participation in the Forum of Electoral Management Bodies in Arab World Organized by LAS and UNDP

organization through the speech of Dr. Imad Al Sayaih, President of ArabEMBs, who highlighted the importance for its establishment, and presented the organization’s goals, structure, membership categories, and main priorities. The session accommodate discussions and comments by delegates of electoral management bodies participating in the forum.

■ Meetings with Commissioners of (EMBs) throughout the World

The organization of ArabEMBs convened preliminary meetings for cooperation and networking with electoral management bodies around the world aimed at promoting the organization and reiterating the importance of coordination among these organizations, in particular the exchange of electoral materials among them.. The meetings were held with the Commissioners of electoral management bodies from Russia, Romania, and Kazakhstan, in addition to meetings with commissioner from both Mauritania and Somalia.



Meeting with Moldovan Foreign Affairs Minister



Meeting with Chairman of Russian Electoral Management Body

Chapter Four

Specialized Activities and Events

Regional Workshop on Voters' Registration in the Arab States

In partnership with UNDP Regional Project for Electoral Support, ArabEMBs held a regional workshop on voters' registration in the Arab States at the Dead Sea in Jordan from (29) September to (1) October. The workshop was aimed at providing an opportunity for the Arab electoral management bodies to share experiences and introduce various approaches for voter registration, and preparation of the voter records and lists, as well as enabling experts and practitioners to exchange technical expertise in this area and learn the best practices at the regional and international levels.

“..... Voters' registration is an important step to establish an individual's right to vote, and to prepare a comprehensive and accurate voter list, it is a milestone for enhancing citizens' confidence in the electoral process and a prerequisite to conducting credible and free elections.”

Safaa' Jasim

Chairman of the Executive Board

The workshop was successful with respect to the level of participation and organizing. It was attended by (65) representatives from EMBs and other entities working on voters' registration from nine Arab States (Jordan, Tunisia, Sudan, Palestine, Leb



Group Photo of the Participants of the Regional Workshop on Voter Registration in Arab Countries

representatives of the League of Arab States and experts from UNDP and the International Foundation for Electoral systems (IFES). Furthermore, a participatory approach was followed during the workshop, where 90% of the sessions were conducted by experts and practitioners from participating Arab EMBs through either presenting, facilitating, or documenting proceedings of sessions. The workshop was considered the first step towards enhancing the exchange of technical knowledge between professionals working on voter registration in the Arab world. With the assistance of the participants, ArabEMBs managed to identify tangible steps to addressing in voter registration in the future, summarized as follows:

1. Preparing an electoral map reflecting the existing climate of voter registration processes with embodied approaches, means of registering voters, voter records and lists, and modalities for updating records at each electoral management body. The map will also identify the problems and challenges facing the process of voter registration, as well as offer recommendations on how to remedy them. The map will be published as a printed booklet.
2. Establishing a specialized forum to facilitate dialogue between experts and practitioners in the field of voter registration in the Arab world, the forum is to be hosted on the ArabEMBs website.
3. Reviewing and studying the available electoral electronic programs and applications on anon,

“.....The workshop was characterized by good organization and management, importance of issues discussed, and a high level of participation by specialized experts in the area of voter registration from EMBs in nine Arab states. The workshop reached its objectives and assisted us, as entities seeking to upgrade the performance of the EMBs in the Arab states, to identify potentials available within the participating EMBs in the area of voter registration. ”

H.E Ambassador A'laa al Zuhairi
General Director of Election Affairs Directorate/ LAS



Regional Workshop on Voter Registration in Arab Countries

Libya, Mauritania, and Yemen), in addition to voter registration and assessing the possibility of providing access, for the programming and modalities needed to host such programs on the organization's website.

4. Preparing a training and accreditation program to develop the capacities of Arab experts in the field of voter registration to mobilize those experts at the regional and international levels in the future.
5. Establishing a list of topics for specialized workshops needed to enhance the capacities of Arab electoral management bodies and their cadre in areas related to voter registration, more specific on data bases and related programs.

A group composed of specialized experts working in electoral management bodies in Tunisia, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, Yemen and Mauritania was formed to follow up on the outcomes of the workshop and future steps.

Workshop on the Role of Arab EMBs in Enhancing the Participation of Women in Elections

ArabEMBs, in partnership with UNDP Regional Project for Electoral Support, organized a workshop on the "Role of Arab Electoral Management Bodies in Enhancing the Participation of Women in Elections" from (19-21) of April 2016, at the Dead Sea, Jordan. The workshop was attended by (55) partici-

pants representing electoral management bodies from nine Arab States (Jordan, Tunisia, Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Palestine, Mauritania, Yemen and Algeria), in addition to representatives of the League of Arab States, practitioners and experts from UNDP, Venice Commission, and a number of European electoral management bodies.

“...The active participation of women in elections is achieved through enabling her, easily and freely, to practice her democratic right as a voter and a candidate, by ensuring all barriers are removed. Furthermore, empowering her to hold different posts and functions at all managerial levels of the electoral process. ”

Mr. Emad Alsayah, Chairman of ArabEMBs

The workshop was aimed at empowering Arab electoral management bodies to support and enhance the participation of women as voters, candidates, or active players in election management. In light of the fact that the legislative gains achieved for Arabic Women and supporting their participation in the electoral process, alone is not enough to promote such participation, therefore, joint efforts should be exerted by Arab electoral management Bodies and its partners such as political parties, media, civil society and observers to build an enabling electoral environment that supports the principle of equal opportunities for men and women, and removes administrative, cultural,

social and economic barriers resulting in the exclusion of women from the electoral process. Such efforts will create electoral systems and procedures reflecting equality for women, and would be more responsive to their needs and aspirations as voters and candidates.

The workshop also aimed to provide a platform for the exchange of experiences and lessons learned between the different participating EMBs in addressing challenges facing women in this field,

and measures that can be taken to enhance their electoral participation. The workshop exposed participants to the best practices and strategies at the regional and international levels in enhancing women participation in the electoral process. It also shed light on the importance of implementing participatory approaches by electoral management bodies in changing the general perceptions of the role of women in the management of the electoral process . The workshop introduced a number of tools and interventions that can be



Group Photo of the Participants of the Regional Workshop on the Role of Arab EMBs in Enhancing the Participation of Women in Elections

used to improve the level of women participation at all levels of the electoral process.

In its pursuit to highlight the experiences and achievements of Arab women in leadership positions in public life in general and in the electoral process in particular, the workshop presented the personal experiences of four Arab women working in different leadership positions at different levels of the electoral process, two of whom are working in conflict areas. The women presented their success stories on their role in changing the traditional



Mrs. Elham Abdelwahab
Secretary General
Supreme Commission for Elections
and Referendum (Yemen)



Mrs. Halima Ismail Ibrahim
Chairwomen
National Independent Electoral
Commission (NIEC) (Somalia)



Mrs. Lamia Zargouni
Commissioner
The Independent High Election
Commission (Tunis)



Dr. Sabah Al Nawayseh
Chair of Local Election Committee
Karak Election District
(Jordan)

Figure (9) Example of Arab Women in Leadership Positions in Electoral Processes

public perception of the role of women, increasing confidence in women capacity working in the field. In addition, they highlighted the main challenges faced and the strategies adopted to address these challenges with a focus on societal perceptions.

“There are many obstacles facing women's participation in electoral process in Arab world, its important that we work together to overcome these obstacles and ensure effective and serious participation of women in the electoral process. ”

Ms. Zena Ali Ahmad,
UNDP Country Director (Jordan)

Furthermore, during the workshop, the organization launched a guidebook entitled *“Inclusive Electoral Process: A guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women`s Participation”*. The manual was published in 2005 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Entity for Gender



Regional Workshop on the Role of Arab EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections



Regional Workshop on the Role of Arab EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections

Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). The manual presents international examples on policies for enhancing the participation of women as well as documents a number of innovative and effective interventions to make elections more comprehensive and inclusive.

Status of Arab Women Participation in the Electoral Process and its Management

The lack of accurate and updated data on women participation in the Arab states makes it difficult to learn the detailed situation of Arab women participation as a voter, candidate, and key player in electoral management. The lack of analytical details stressed the urgency and need for the development of accurate and updated data on percentages of women participation as the base for assessing challenges facing women at both the management and process levels, as well as finding the adequate mechanisms to improve the level of participation.

ArabEMBs developed a fact-finding questionnaire on the status of women participation at all levels of the electoral process. The questionnaire was distributed to nine Arab electoral management bodies in Jordan, Tunisia, Iraq, Palestine, Libya, Sudan, Somalia, Mauritania and Yemen. ArabEMBs published the analysis from the obtained results to be used as an accurate and updated database for planning and follow up purposes. In addition, the database will provide valuable input that can be used to explore challenges facing woman participation in the electoral process and the necessary interventions to address them.

Participation in the Working Group for Creating WEM International

ArabEMBs became a member of the special working group formed for the initiative to create the International Association for Women in Electoral Management (WEM- International). The working group was formed in March 2016, headed by Ms.



Results Of The Survey Conducted by ArabEMBs On "The Reality of Women Participation In The Electoral Process and Administration"



Percentage of Women Representation in The Eelectoral Management Body

Percentage of women as a candidate and as a winner in presidential, Legislative and local elections

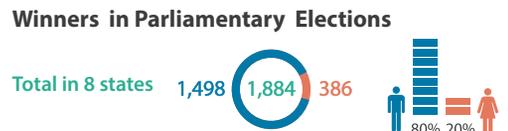
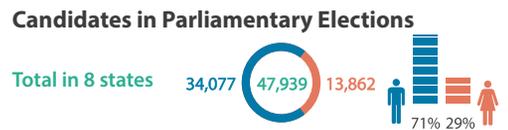
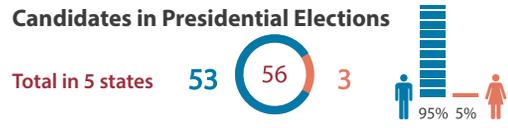
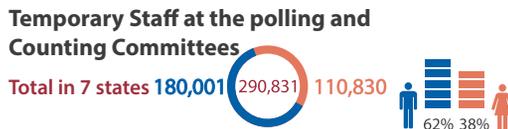


Figure (10) Samples of the Survey Results on the Status of Arab Women's Participation in the Electoral Process

Natalia Iuras, the director of The Centre For Continuous Electoral Training (CICDE) in Moldova, with member representatives of electoral management bodies from Moldova, Albania, Romania, Bosnia, Georgia, and Canada, in addition to representatives of regional and international organizations including ArabEMBs, UNDP, UN Commission for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES).

The International Association for Women in Electoral Management (WEM-International) is a specialized international organization aiming at enhancing the participation of women in elections. WEM-International provides support to electoral management bodies by encouraging the adoption and implementation of policies and programs aimed at achieving equal opportunities for the representation of women at all levels of the electoral decision-making process. The idea for establishing the organization was based on the recommendations of the 24th Conference of the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO) on promoting equal opportunities for the voting public with its different segments including women, the impact this inclusion has on equity of voting, and the need to address the exclusion of voters. The idea was also based on a number of recent studies that showed a lack in resources for electoral management bodies to ensure the equal and real participation of women in the electoral process and its administration.

ArabEMBs also participated in a number of meetings with the working group to draft the organization's Charter and strategic plan, and in launching its declaration, known as the Moldova Declaration, illustrating the basic grounds and justification for creating the international organization.



Working Group for Creating WEM International

Appendix

Annex 1

Preparatory Committee for Establishing(ArabEMBs)

Preparatory Committee for Establishing (ArabEMBs)

First composition of the Preparatory Committee (8 June 2014):

- Ms. Bushra abu Shahoot
Independent Election Commission (IEC)
Jordan
- Judge Murad Ben Molly/ Commissioner
Independent High Election Commission (ISIE)
Tunisia
- Dr. Jalal Mohammed Ahmed/General
Secretary
National Elections Commission (NEC) Sudan
- Mr Safaa Ibrahim Jassim/ Commissioner
The Independent High Electoral Commission
(IHEC) Iraq
- Mr.Hisham kuhail/ Chief Executive Officer
(CEO)
Central Elections Commission (CEC)
Palestine
- Mrs Faten Abu Hassan
Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
(Lebanon)
- Judge Hisham Mokhtar/
Election Commission (Egypt)

Second composition of the Preparatory Committee (21 Dec 2015):

- Ms. Badrieh Bilbisi/ Deputy of General
Secretary (Committee Coordinator)
Independent Election Commission (IEC)
Jordan
- Judge Murad Ben Molly/ Commissioner
Independent High Election Commission (ISIE)
Tunisia
- Dr.Jalal Mohammed Ahmed/ General
Secretary
National Elections Commission (NEC) Sudan
- Mr Safaa Ibrahim Jassim/ Commissioner
The Independent High Electoral Commission
(IHEC) Iraq
- Mr.Hisham kuhail/ Chief Executive Officer
(CEO)
Central Elections Commission (CEC)
Palestine
- Mrs Faten Younus/ General Director
Political and Refugees Affairs Directorate/
Ministry of Interior and municipalities
(Lebanon)
- Dr Emad Al-Sayeh/ Chairman of the Board of
Commissioners
The High National Elections Commission
(HNEC) Libya
- Judge Omar Marwan/ Spokesperson
Election Commission Egypt
- Mrs.Elham Abdul Wahhab/ Secretary General
Supreme commission for Election and
Referendum (SCER) Yemen

Annex 2

Elections conducted in the Arab World (July 2015 till December 2016)

Elections conducted in the Arab World (July 2015 till December 2016)



المنظمة العربية لمدارات الانتخابات

Country	Type of Election	Name of the election	Date of election	Electoral Management Bodies
Hashemite Kingdom OF Jordan	Legislative elections	Council of Parliament Election 2016	(20) Sept. 2016	Independent Election Commission (IEC)
Kingdom of Morocco	Legislative elections	-----	(7) Oct. 2016	Ministry of the Interior
Lebanese Republic	Local elections	Municipalities Council Elections	(829-) May 2016	Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
Arab Republic of Egypt	Legislative elections	Council of Parliament Election 2015	(17) Oct. till (2) Dec. 2015	High Election Committee
Tunisian Republic	Others	Supreme Judicial Council Election	(23) Oct. 2016	Independent High Election Commission
United Arab Emirates	Legislative elections	3rd session of Federal National Council	(3) Oct. 2015	National Electoral Commission
State of Kuwait	Legislative elections	National Assembly Elections	(27) Nov. 2016	Ministry of the Interior
Republic of Djibouti	The presidential election	Presidential Elections	April 2016	-----
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Local elections	Municipalities Council Elections	2015	Ministry of Municipalities

arabembms@gmail.com

Arab EMBS

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Annex 3

Summaries about the Electoral Management Bodies Members in (ArabEMBs)



Independent Election Commission (IEC)

Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

President: Dr. Khaled Kalaldeh

Phone: 0096265607406

Website: www.isie.tn

Fax: 0096265607423

Email: info@entikhabat.jo

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) (Jordan) considers one of the founding members of the Organization for Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs), which officially joined by signing its Charter in the launch ceremony in the 8th of June 2015.

The Commission was established under the Independent Election Commission Law No (11) (2012), as an independent body with legal personality, and financial and administrative autonomy. It has been given responsibility for managing and overseeing the Parliamentary Election process in all its phases and to any other elections decided by the Cabinet. Constitutional amendments (2014) expanded IEC role and responsibilities to include managing Municipal Elections and any other general election.

The Commission Board of Commissioners consisting of a Chairman and four members are appointed by Royal Decree for six years non-renewable, on the recommendation of a Committee formed for this purpose headed by the Prime Minister and comprises both the President of the Senate and The Speaker of the House and Chairman of the Judicial Council.

Secretariat is the operational arm of the Board of Commissioners, headed by the Secretary General which is designated by resolution of the Board associated with the Royal Decree and in accordance with conditions provided by the Commission Law. The Secretariat are responsible for preparing and implementing plans and programs necessary to achieve Commission objectives and fulfilling the requirements of the election process.

IEC managed and supervised General Parliamentary Elections (The seventeenth Parliamentary Council) in 2013, and the following five By-elections. In 2016, the Commission continued its constitutional role by managing the Eighteenth Council election.



Independent High Election Commission (ISIE)

Republic of Tunisia

President: Dr.Chafik Sarsar

Phone: 0021670018555

Fax: 0021671289483

Website: www.isie.tn

Email: contact@isie.tn

Independent High Election Commission (ISIE) Tunisia considers one of the founding members of the Organization for Arab electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs) that participated in the Preparatory Committee. ISIE has officially joined the organization in Nov. 2016.

The Commission is an independent and permanent constitutional body that has been established under basic law no (23) 2012 dated in (20) December 2012 and approved under the Constitution ratified on (27) January 2014. This commission came to replace the interim commission which has been set by Decree no. (27) 2011 dated in (18) April 2011 which managed and supervised the Founding National Council elections.

The commission has been assigned to supervise and manage the presidential, legislative and local elections (municipal and regional councils) and referendums in all its phases. In 2016 the role of (ISIE) has been expanded to include the responsibilities of organizing and managing the Supreme Council elections. The commission shall ensure the fairness and transparency of the electoral process.

The Board of commissioners consists of nine independent and neutral members who are competent with efficiency and integrity. The Board of commissioners members including the president are elected by The Members of the People's Congress by a two-thirds majority . The commissioners appointed for six years non-renewable, one third of the Board members are renewed every two years. The first board was elected in (8) and (9) January 2014.

The Independent High Electoral Commission has overseen the organization and management of legislative elections (26 October 2014) and the first session of the presidential (23 November 2014) and second session (21 December 2014), in addition to organizing and managing the Supreme Judicial Council Election (23 October 2016).



National Elections Commission (NEC)

Republic of Sudan

President: Prof. Mukhtar Mohammed Alasam

Phone: 0024 91 83520282

Fax: 00249183520281

Website: www.nec.org.sd

Email: info@nec.org.sd

National Elections Commission (NEC) considers one of the founding members of the Organization for Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs) for their participation in the work of the Preparatory Committee. NEC has officially joined the organization in 29th May 2016.

NEC is Constitutional body established under article (141) of the Interim Constitution of the Republic of Sudan. NEC holds legal status with financial and administrative autonomy, and enjoys technical independence to prevent any interference in its affairs or attempts to limit its powers provided by the Constitution.

The Commission was founded in November 2008 under the National Elections Law no (11) 2008, in charge of organizing and overseeing the implementation of the Presidential Elections, National Council elections, and Elections of State Legislatures Councils(local), as well as referendums take place according to the Constitution.

Board of Commissioners consists of seven members including the President. The members should be known for their competence and experience, impartiality, neutrality and non-partisanship, they appointed by the President of the Republic with the approval of the Vice President and the two-thirds of National Council members. Board Chairman selected by the President of the Republic with the approval of the Vice President from among the appointed Board members.

NEC has conducted The General Elections in April 2010 which included the President of the Republic Election, Election of the President of the Government of southern Sudan, Governors Election, National Council Elections, and South Sudan Legislative Council election, Elections of State Legislatures Councils. Also NEC has managed and supervised the General Elections conducted in 13 of April 2015, which include Presidential elections, National Council Elections, Elections of State Legislatures Councils.



National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC)

Federal Republic of Somalia

President: Mrs. Halima Ismail Ibrahim

Phone: 00252615985888

Website: www.niec.som/eng

Email: niec.som@gmail.com

National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) Somalia has joined the ArabEMBs membership in (7) June 2016.

(NIEC) is Constitutional body established under article (111) of Somali National Constitution. The commission considers an independent permanent institution holding legal status with financial, administrative and technical autonomy.

The commission was founded in July 2015 under the Independent National Electoral Commission Law in Somalia. (NIEC) is responsible for organizing and overseeing the implementation of the General election (Presidential, Legislative and Municipal) in addition to referendums.

Board of Commissioners consists of nine members including the President. They are chosen according to specific competitive mechanism specified in the legislation in which those interested can submit application; the government submits a list of eligible candidates to Parliament after sorting and reviewing applications. The Board members are appointed for six years non-renewable, by the President of the Republic with the approval of the majority Parliament members.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (Somalia) has been exempted of conducting 2016 elections, and mandated to focus on preparing legal and procedural measures necessary to ensure the expected election reform in the 2020 elections.



The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)

Republic of Iraq

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The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) (Iraq) considers one of the founding members of the Organization for Arab electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs), which officially joined as permanent member by signing the organization Charter in launch ceremony in the 8th of June 2015.

(IHEC) is an independent and permanent constitutional body established under article (102) of the Iraqi Constitution and the Commission Law no. (11) 2007. This commission came to replace the interim commission which has been established in 2004 by the Coalition Provisional Authority resolution no. (92) Issued (31) December 2004. The interim commission was responsible for managing and supervision elections conducted in 2005 which include the Presidential and the Constitutional Referendum in October 2005 and The House of Representatives Election (Parliament Council Election) December 2005.

The Commission has a legal personality with financial and administrative autonomy, and accountable to the Parliament Council. IHEC are responsible for organizing, conducting and supervising all elections held in Iraq, whether parliamentary or local government elections (provincial elections), as well as referendums.

The commission is headed by a Board of Commissioners consisting of nine members including the president. They are elected by a Special parliamentarian Committee framing for this purpose. The members are appointed for five years and entitled to run again for board membership. The composition of the board represents the components of the Iraqi people and the representation of women.

The Independent High Electoral Commission has organizing and managing of Governorate Council Election (2009), second session of the Council of Parliament Election (2010), third session of Governorate Council Election (2013) and the Kurdistan Parliament Elections September (2013). In April 2014, the commission conducted the third session of Council of Parliament Elections with the Provincial Council elections.



لجنة الانتخابات المركزية - فلسطين
Central Elections Commission - Palestine

Central Elections Commission (CEC)

State of Palestine

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Central Elections Commission CEC (Palestine) considers one of the founding members of the Organization for Arab electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs), which officially joined by signing its Charter in the launch ceremony in the 8th of June 2015.

CEC is a permanent national institution established under a presidential decree issued by the President of the Palestinian National Authority in the 10th of November 2002. The commission considers an independent institution enjoying financial and administrative independence and legal personality under Palestinian laws.

The commission is responsible for organizing and supervising general elections (presidential and legislative) since 2002. In 2005 the commission under Local Council Election Law no (10) 2005, was legally mandated to organize Municipal Election. In addition to its responsibility for conduct of referendums.

The commission consists of nine members, including the Chairman and the Secretary General, who are appointed by a presidential decree from among judges and senior academics and experienced lawyers, according to legally defined mechanism. The commission members are appointed for a term of four years renewable. Under the law, the Commission established administrative organ called "electoral management", so as to be able to carry out its functions. The electoral management chaired by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and works under the overall supervision of the Commission.

Since its inception, the Commission has organized several Electoral Processes, including the Election of the President of the Palestinian National Authority in January 2005, Election Members of the Legislative Council in January 2006, and the election of Local Councils in October 2012, in addition to register voters and updates it periodically.

الجمهورية اللبنانية
وزارة الداخلية
والبلديات



General Directorate for Political and Refugees Affairs
Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
Lebanese Republic
General Director: Mrs. Faten Younes
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Ministry of the Interior through the Directorate of Public Interior takes the responsibilities of conducting Elections in Lebanon since (1926). In 2000, the Directorate's name was changed to the General Directorate for Political and Refugees Affairs by Decree (4082) issued in (14) October 2000.

The General Directorate for Political and Refugees Affairs has been assigned to managing and overseeing the Parliamentary and local Elections process in all its phases.

It managed and supervised Parliamentary Elections conducted in (2000, 2005, 2009), and prepare for the parliamentary elections planned to be conducted in spring of 2017. Also the local elections (Council of Municipalities and Mokhtar) conducted in (2004, 2010, 2016).



High National Elections Commission (HNEC)

State of Libya

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The High National Elections Commission (HNEC) (Libya) considers one of the founding members of the Organization for Arab electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs), which officially joined as permanent member by signing the organization Charter in launch ceremony in the 8th of June 2015.

The Commission is an independent, permanent institution has legal personality and independent patrimony, established under law no. (8) 2013 issued by General National Congress (28 March 2013). HNEC came to replace the Interim Commission which has been established under law no (3) 2012 issued by the Transitional Council in (18) of January 2012.

The interim commission was responsible for managing and supervision the General National Conference Elections (the first Parliament in Libya) held in (7) of July 2012.

The High National Elections Commission (HNEC), under its current law considers the only institution that is responsible to organizing, and supervision elections in Libya and announcing its results. The commission is headed by a Board of Commissioners consisting of full time six members including the president (instead of seventeen members in the interim Commission). The commissioners are chosen and assigned by the National Congress from candidates who are reputable and neutral, not belonging to any political party or entity, and subject to the criteria established under the law no (26) issued 2012 by the High Commission to apply integrity and patriotism.

The High National Elections Commission (HNEC) has organizing and managing the elections of the Constituent Body to draft a Constitution (also known as the sixtieth Committee elections) that have been conducted in (20) of February 2014, and Lower House Elections in (25) of June 2014.



Supreme commission for Election and Referendum (SCER)

The Republic of Yemen

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Supreme commission for Election and Referendum (SCER) Yemen considers one of the founding members of the Organization for Arab electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs), which officially joined as permanent member by signing the organization Charter in launch ceremony in the 8th of June 2015.

SCER was established as a Constitutional Permanent Institution in 2001 under article (159) of the Constitution of the Republic of Yemen and under the law on General Elections and referendum no. (13) 2001. This commission came to replace the independent constitutional committees that have been formed since 1992 until 1999 for managing the elections away from the influence of the Government, party or organization.

During this period three general committees was formed by presidential decree, their members were chosen from a list of nominations submitted by the House of Representatives. The first Committee was formed in (1992) and managed the first Parliamentary Elections (House of Representatives) In (27) April 1993; The second one formed in 1996 which conduct the House elections second session date (27) April 1997; the Third Committee was formed in 1999 and managed the First Presidential Election in (23) September 1999, in addition to overseeing the referendum on amendments to the Constitution and elections for local councils in 2001.

Supreme commission for Election and Referendum (SCER) as a permanent institution is responsible for managing and supervising all General Elections in Yemen, whether Parliamentary or Presidential or local, as well as referendums. The Commission is headed by a Board of Commissioners consists of nine members including the President. The commissioners are appointed by the President of the Republic for six years from among a list of 15 names nominated by the House of Representatives, who meet the conditions identify by legislation. The proposed list of candidates should be approved by a two-thirds majority of the House of Representatives.

(SCER) has conducted the third session of the Council of Parliament Elections (2003), the Presidential Election in 2006, Local Council Elections in 2006, in addition to early Presidential elections 2012.



National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI)

Islamic Republic of Mauritania

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National Independent Electoral Commission (Mauritania)(CENI) has joined the ArabEMBs membership in (7) June 2016. (CENI) was established under the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania in 1991 and its amendments in (2006 and 2012), and under the law for the establishment of the Independent National Electoral Commission no.(27) for 2012, issued in (12) April 2012.

The commission is an independent permanent institution holding legal status with financial, administrative and technical autonomy in the performance of its functions and does not receive any instructions from any authority or public or private institution.

The commission was founded in (12) April 2012, and it responsible for organizing and overseeing the implementation of the General Elections including Presidential, Legislative and Municipal, in addition to Referendums. The Board of Commissioners and is known as "The Wise Men" consider the final reference in the elections decision .The board consists of seven members including the President. They are chosen from a list proposed by the majority and the opposition, appointed by Decree of the President of the Republic for five years non-renewable, the Commission is headed by the Elder member of the appointed board members.

National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) has organized two elections, the Parliamentary and Municipal Elections in November 2013 and the Presidential Election in June 2014.