



CARICOM ELECTORAL OBSERVER MISSION TO THE BAHAMAS 1-9 MAY 2012

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT ON THE ELECTIONS

At the invitation of the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, His Excellency Sir Arthur Foulkes, GCMG, a 10 Member CARICOM Electoral Observer Mission arrived in The Bahamas for the General Elections held on Monday, 7 May 2012.

The team spent six days prior to the Poll monitoring the preparations for the Elections and meeting with various stakeholders. The team met with His Excellency the Governor-General; the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Hubert Alexander Ingraham; Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Perry G. Christie; the Leader of the Democratic National Alliance, the Honourable William A. Branville McCartney; the Parliamentary Commissioner, Mr. Errol Bethel; the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ellison Greenslade, APM, MBA; and other civic and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

On Polling Day, three teams were deployed to observe the elections on New Providence and one team on Grand Bahama Island. The teams visited a total of 20 Constituencies and in excess of 200 Polling Stations. The Mission's preliminary assessment is that the preparations for the conduct of the poll were exceptional and the workers were properly trained which allowed them to execute their duties in a professional, consistent and impartial manner.

The Mission wishes to congratulate the Parliamentary Commissioner, the staff of the Parliamentary Registration Department, the Poll workers, the Political Parties, and the people of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas for the mature way in which the elections were conducted, with no reported incidents of violence and the great display of patience while waiting in long queues.

The CARICOM Electoral Observer Mission is of the view that the results of the General Elections reflected the will of the Bahamian people and reinforced their commitment to the democratic process.

The findings and recommendations of the Mission, including any suggestions for strengthening the electoral process of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, will be included in the Mission's Report to the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The CARICOM Electoral Observer Mission wishes to again thank the Leaders, civil society, media and the people of The Bahamas for their warm welcome and cooperation which contributed to the success of the Mission.

Thank You

Orrette Fisher Chief of Mission, CARICOM Electoral Observer Mission 8 May 2012

THE CARICOM ELECTORAL OBSERVER MISSION

- Mr. Orrette Fisher, Director of Elections, Elections Commission, Jamaica; (Chief of Mission)
- Mr. Gasper Jn. Baptiste, Deputy Chief Elections Officer, Saint Lucia; (Deputy Chief of Mission)
- Mr. Anthonyson King, Electoral Commissioner, Electoral Commission, Antigua and Barbuda;
- Ms. Angela Taylor, Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral and Boundaries Commission, Barbados;
- Ms. Rose Reid, Registering Officer, Electoral and Boundaries Commission, Belize;
- Mr. Manzoor Nadir, Member of Parliament, Guyana;
- Mr. Welzjin Ferdinand, Member of the Suriname Electoral Council, Suriname;
- Ms. Fern Narcis, Senior Legal Counsel, Elections and Boundaries Commission, Trinidad and Tobago

CARICOM SECRETARIAT

- Ms. Mignon Bowen, Project Officer, Resource Mobilization and Technical Assistance
- Ms. Helen Marshall, Senior Secretary to the Assistant Secretary-General, Foreign and Community Relations