



Statement

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Statement on St. Kitts and Nevis Elections from Head of the CARICOM Observer Mission

The CARICOM Secretariat, at the invitation of the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis, sent a Mission to observe the national Elections that were held on 16 February 2015. The CARICOM Observer Mission comprised Ambassador Rudy Collins Head of Mission and former Chairman of the Guyana Elections Commission and Mr. Anthonyson King of the Elections Commission of Antigua and Barbuda.

The CARICOM Observer Mission, which arrived just 2 days before Election Day, focused its attention on the conduct of the Elections itself. It visited all of the constituencies in St. Kitts and the electoral districts in Nevis and observed the activities at over fifty polling stations. . The process in virtually every instance was



orderly and appears to have been administered within the context of all the relevant laws, rules and regulations.

The elections process, in its legal, institutional and operational aspects, presented numerous challenges that had the potential to disturb and even disrupt the electors' peaceful exercise of their franchise. The CARICOM Observer Mission wishes to commend the voters and indeed the people of St. Kitts and Nevis for their enlightened response to these challenges. The maturity of their response resulted in the satisfactory conclusion of all the activities on Elections day, free of any significant incident that would inhibit the exercise of their democratic right to vote for the candidate of their choice. Against this background therefore the CARICOM Observer Mission is deeply concerned at the delay in publicly communicating the results of the respective choices made by the voters on Elections day.

The CARICOM Observer Mission engaged in numerous discussions with representatives of the St. Kitts and Nevis Labour Party, with representative of the opposition parties and civil society groups and with concerned citizens. Their collective views, expressed openly and sometimes with uncomfortable frankness pointed to the many legal, institutional and administrative challenges with which they had to cope and which in their collective view had an ongoing impact on the effectiveness the St. Kitts and Nevis elections process as a whole.

The CARICOM Observer Mission will analyse these expressions along with all other relevant data with a view to making substantive recommendations for future action, to be initiated by the CARICOM Secretariat, towards ensuring that common regional standards become the hallmark of elections in Member States of the Caribbean Community.

Rudy Collins
Head
CARICOM Observer Mission
17 February, 2015