

GHANA'S ELECTION 2004



WHAT THE OBSERVERS' SAY

Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO)

A Project by

The Ghana Center for Democratic Development, CDD-Ghana

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The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) retains final responsibility for all errors, omissions and interpretation in this report.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDD-Ghana	-	Ghana Center for Democratic Development
CENSUDI	-	Center for Sustainable Development Initiatives
CODEO	-	Coalition of Domestic Election Observers
CPP	-	Convention People's Party
DPP	-	Democratic People's Party
EC	-	Electoral Commission
FNF	-	Friedrich Naumann Foundation
GCPP	-	Great Consolidated Popular Party
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technology
MP	-	Member of Parliament
NCCE	-	National Commission on Civic Education
NDC	-	National Democratic Congress
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMC	-	National Media Commission
NPP	-	New Patriotic Party
NRP	-	National Reform Party
PNC	-	People's National Convention
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The December 7, 2004 general elections marked another milestone in Ghana's Fourth Republic. CODEO, comprising thirty-four secular and religious civil society organizations, in conjunction with the Ghana Center for Democratic Development undertook two election-related activities, pre-election monitoring and Election Day observation, to promote public participation and ownership of the electoral process, prevent electoral violence and draw attention to flaws in the electoral process.

PRE- ELECTION MONITORING

The pre- election monitoring and observation exercise covered the period 1st June to 6th December 2004 and was undertaken with direct funding support from the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development. The exercise continued until the day of the elections when CODEO deployed over 7000 people to observe the conduct of the polls.

Criteria for the Selection of Constituencies for Monitoring

In selecting constituencies, some of the following issues were taken into consideration:

- ◉ Regional representation, based on the number of constituencies in each Region
- ◉ Constituencies prone to violent conflict
- ◉ Newly created constituencies
- ◉ Constituencies difficult to access because of poor roads, conflict situations, etc

Scope of Pre- Election Monitoring

The pre- election monitoring covered activities and events leading up to Election 2004 including: Compilation of the Voters Register (concluding phases of the voter registration exercise photo-taking and moping up), Voter Education, Party Congresses, Party Primaries, Political Party Development and Gender Issues among others.

FINDINGS FROM THE PRE-ELECTION MONITORING

The pre-election monitoring produced the following results:

Voter Registration

The first phase of the voter registration was reported as quite successful, except in some areas like the Volta, Greater Accra, Northern, and Ashanti Regions where logistical problems were widespread. Monitors attributed the problem largely to the Electoral Commission's inability to supply registration officials with sufficient logistics. However, during the mop up exercise, it was reported that supply of registration materials was adequate.

The two main political parties posted observers to registration centers during the exercise. Nonetheless, some opposition parties, particularly the NDC in the Ketu North constituency expressed suspicion that the government manipulated the registration exercise to disenfranchise people in constituencies known to be opposition party strongholds.

The effectiveness of the photo taking/mop up exercise of the voter registration was undermined by low participation reflecting inadequate information and public education.

Party Primaries

When the monitoring exercise begun, only the ruling NPP and the major opposition NDC parties were conducting primaries. The smaller opposition parties (PNC, CPP, NRP, DPP, EGLE, and CPP) were largely inactive for much of the period.

While the primaries of the ruling NPP party and to a lesser extent, the NDC, were often acrimonious and at times, quarrelsome, those of the smaller opposition parties were generally peaceful. The presence of representatives from the other political parties at most of the primaries was one positive development for healthy inter-party relations.

Several unverifiable allegations of irregular and corrupt practices involving the two dominant parties were recorded. However, the primaries of the smaller opposition parties were often devoid of the allegations of vote-buying and “delegate camping.”

Some primaries were postponed several times, apparently to enable the leadership of the parties to either convince other contestants to step down for preferred candidates or impose candidates themselves.

It was also observed that some members of the NDC and NPP who lost at the parliamentary primaries contested as independent candidates. This development seemed to have caused cracks in the support base of those parties in the affected constituencies.

Party Rallies/Campaigns/Public Gatherings

The month of October witnessed a rise in the number of political party rallies and meetings to introduce aspiring parliamentary candidates to the electorate. The NPP launched its national campaign in Accra, and NDC, PNC, and CPP organized rallies to canvass support for their respective presidential and parliamentary candidates. A number of independent candidates also launched their campaigns. Most of these meetings and rallies were peaceful.

Much of November saw the presidential candidates and their running mates outside of Accra. All contesting parties held series of rallies in the regional and district capitals and introduced their aspiring parliamentary candidates.

House-to-house campaigning was intensified as a major strategy for canvassing support in some of the constituencies monitored during the election period.

Inter-Party Conflicts

Though it was generally reported that the campaign period was peaceful, a number of incidents in some of the monitored constituencies underscored political tension and conflict, particularly between the NPP and NDC.

There were reports of clashes between the NDC and NPP supporters in constituencies including Kumbungu, Cape Coast and Yendi. Other aspects of inter party competition also demonstrated conflict. Our monitors reported the destruction of banners and posters of opposing parties and candidates (presumably by political opponents).

Political Party Developments

Overall, the NDC and NPP emerged as the most vibrant parties. Reported activities included among others raising party flags and distribution of party paraphernalia, . Even in the heat of campaigning, there were indications of intra-party co-operation.

Gender Issues

Our monitor in the Builsa Constituency reported in October that women in the constituency were proudly displaying posters of female contestants in their bars and market stalls to show solidarity with female parliamentary candidates.

A local NGO, Community Action, was also reported to have collaborated with the United Nations Gender Systems to organize a workshop to build the capacity of women candidates for the parliamentary elections.

Nonetheless, the participation of women in political life in general and electoral politics in particular remained very weak, despite advocacy campaigns by gender advocacy groups and other gender-centered NGOs.

Use and Misuse of Incumbency

Mixing of political campaign tours and official/state visits by incumbent party officials and political leaders was widely reported in the monitored constituencies. There were several instances where visits were designated as “official”, though the President and the Vice President introduced their party’s parliamentary candidates, solicited the support of voters, made partisan political speeches and included campaign messages in their speeches. For instance, in November, on a visit to the Jaman South constituency of the Brong Ahafo Region, the President was alleged to have asked the people to vote for the NPP parliamentary candidates in the district after he had cut the sod for the construction of a post office in the district. Some traditional leaders were reported to have openly expressed their support for the ruling party. Failure to clarify the line between official/state visits and partisan campaign visits by incumbent officials creates the potential to grossly abuse incumbency.

Civic Education

The NCCE was active in most of the constituencies monitored. They held seminars and discussions on local radio stations on issues of elections. They also carried out civic education campaigns in a number of second cycle institutions in some of the constituencies. Other civil society bodies, NGOs, traditional rulers and State institutions were actively involved in civic education.

RECOMMENDATIONS - PRE-ELECTION MONITORING

The positive and negative observations made by our monitors lead to a number of recommendations worthy of note and action by relevant bodies such as the Electoral Commission, government, political parties, democracy and civic education and pro-democracy bodies such as the National Commission for Civic Education, media, and civil society.

Voter Registration:

A key recommendation is that the Electoral Commission should introduce an “open registration” system that allows an all-year round registration. This would allow anyone who reaches the voting age of eighteen to walk into the nearest office of the Commission to register. It is also recommended that the election timetable be established well in advance of the elections to ensure smooth administration.

The EC, the NCCE, political parties and all stakeholders in the democratization process must proactively get involved in all the stages of the voter registration process.

Political Party Primaries

It is recommended that parties review their constitutions and procedures and develop a “code of conduct” or “code of ethics” to guide the conduct of primaries.

The method political parties adopt for electing candidates in the primaries to contest parliamentary seats needs a critical review. A situation where only constituency executives vote to elect parliamentary candidates makes the process prone to manipulation. To overcome this, political parties must open the election of parliamentary candidates at the constituency level to all party card-carrying (or any means identifiable) constituents.

Political parties should review their ground rules and procedures for selecting/ electing parliamentary candidates and making other crucial decisions internal to the party, to reflect the letter and spirit of the 1992 Constitution.

Political parties should also streamline the rules governing the primaries and strive to strengthen transparency and fairness in ways consistent with constitutional provisions enjoining them to be internally democratic.

The use and Misuse of Incumbency

It is important to establish a clear line between official/state visits and partisan campaigns to prevent over-exploitation of incumbency for electoral advantage.

Gender Representation in Political Life

Political parties should make a greater effort to encourage women to contest the primaries and elections for parliamentary seats. Parties must endeavor to encourage women to contest in safe seats and provide them with the necessary support to win.

Civic Education

The NCCE and other civil society agencies must step up civic and democracy education to get political parties and activists to live up to their obligations under the Constitution and to align their internal procedures with the canons of democracy.

It is also recommended that the NCCE intensify its educational campaigns in educational institutions to instill the spirit of civic responsibility in the younger generations.

The National and Regional Houses of Chiefs and the NCCE should collaborate to educate all Chiefs on the Constitution and its provisions, particularly those regarding the politically non-partisan status of chiefs.

ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION

The Recruitment, Training and Deployment Sub-Committees worked through member organizations of CODEO to recruit and train all observers. The training was carried out in three stages. The first stage was at the National level where 43 observers were trained to serve as CODEO national trainers. The second stage of training was carried out in all ten regions of the Country for the regional trainers. A total of 479 observers were trained in ten regional centers. The third and final stage of training was at the district level and involved over 6000 observers trained at 64 training centers throughout the Country.

The Training Curricular Covered the Following:

- ◉ CODEO mission statement
- ◉ Legal framework for election observation
- ◉ Polling day procedure and electoral offences
- ◉ Observers' code of conduct
- ◉ Training techniques
- ◉ Completing the observers' checklist and incident report forms

Officials of the Electoral Commission, the Ghana Bar Association and CODEO secretariat assisted in the training at all levels.

A total of 7360 observers were deployed in all the 230 constituencies in Ghana. One hundred and seventeen of these observers came from the Ghana Federation of the Disabled. In all, CODEO observers covered 6302 polling stations throughout the Country.

CODEO issued three statements on the elections. The first one on the eve of polling day, 6th December 2004 informed the public of the preparations CODEO had made towards observing the polls. The second on mid-day of the polling day, 7th December 2004, presented a situational report on the

polls in progress. And the third was a preliminary statement on the conduct of the polls on 9th December 2004. (These statements are contained in appendices 1, 2 and 3)

FINDINGS FROM THE FIELD: ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION

Six thousand and fifty nine, representing 96 percent of the 6302 Observers' Checklists distributed for the December 7, 2004 elections, were processed and form the basis for the following analyses and report.

The observers reported that the procedures for polling station set-up were followed. Most of them were also satisfied with the voting procedure and indicated that the procedures for counting and declaring results were followed. Observers also found the voting process orderly and peaceful and the overall election process satisfactory.

Analysis of Incident Reports

The analysis of the incident reports is based on a total of 346 reporting forms received from CODEO observers from all the ten regions of the Country. The breakdown of reporting forms received by region is as follows:

- ◉ Greater Accra (32%)
- ◉ Upper West (14%)
- ◉ Northern (11%)
- ◉ Central (10%)
- ◉ Volta (8%)
- ◉ Western (9%)
- ◉ Eastern and Brong Ahafo (6% each)
- ◉ Upper East and Ashanti (2% each).

Voting Irregularities

The most common incidents reported on polling day at the polling stations across the country were intimidation of voters, harassment of voters, improper voting procedures, difficult access for aged/disabled persons, violence, improper set-up of polling station, and denial of access to polling stations.

Notable Incidents

Observers noted a number of incidents that had the potential to mar the exercise on polling day. Notable incidents included: threats to burn down district offices of the Electoral Commission, disagreements between party agents and presiding officers over technical issues, gun shots, and unavailability of vehicles to transport election officials and materials to collation centers as well as the absence of security personnel at certain polling stations.

RECOMMENDATIONS: PRE-ELECTION PROCESSES

The National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE), the Electoral Commission (EC), civil society organizations and individuals must start voter education at the beginning of an election year and continue through out the year rather than wait until a few months before elections.

Election officials should be given a realistic amount of travel and preparation time to arrange and get all materials ready before polls open.

PROJECT IMPACT

The impact of the CODEO election observation project on Ghana's December 7, 2004 polls includes the following:

The pre-election monitoring exercise helped to generate early warning signals on possible elections-related conflicts and helped draw attention to areas of the election process that needed positive intervention.

The project broadened and deepened citizen and civil society interest and participation in the monitoring of the December 2004 polls. In general, it enhanced civic engagement in Ghana's electoral and democratic process.

Expanded citizen involvement in the electoral process as poll watchers helped to avert difficult-to-resolve disputes over election results. It also induced broad public acceptance of the outcomes of the election.

The project helped to build local capacity for election observation. Under this project, over 7000 Ghanaians received training on the electoral process and election observation.

SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to Election Monitoring and Observation

The conduct of a transparent and open election in accordance with established legislation is of fundamental importance to an emerging democratic society. The right to political participation is important not only for the immediate election (but also presupposes adherence to other basic human rights such as freedom of expression, movement, peaceful assembly and association.) Election observation is therefore more than just a technical exercise, as it can contribute directly to the promotion and protection of universal human rights. Elections may be seen as a celebration of fundamental human rights. Observation can prevent violations of the rights associated with the electoral process through the very presence and visibility of observers, as the integrity of the election process itself is assessed.

After several years of military rule, civilian rule was restored in January 1993 with the inauguration of the first democratically elected government. The consolidation of democracy progressed with two successful general elections in 1996 and 2000; those of 2000 led to the first power alternation through the ballot box in the country's history.

The participation of citizens in the electoral process, not only as politicians, candidates, party members and voters but also as interested and concerned non-partisan observers is essential for enhancing transparency and credibility of electoral outcomes. Keeping the democratic system on track and maintaining public confidence in it is also essential to the promotion of

internal peace, stability and development. Today, this is also recognized as a condition for international cooperation and support.

Revival of CODEO

To involve civil society as non-partisan observers of the 2004 elections, the broad-based Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) that had been formed to observe the 2000 elections was enhanced and reconstituted under the auspices of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana). It included thirty-four religious, professional, labor as well as independent nongovernmental organizations committed to the promotion of democracy, peace and stability in Ghana. The coalition recruited, trained and deployed 7,360 civil society volunteers to observe the conduct of the polls on 7 December 2004.

Objective of CODEO

The overall objective of the coalition was to deepen civil society participation and involvement in Election 2004 in order to mitigate election related conflicts, enhance electoral transparency and lend legitimacy and credibility to electoral outcomes. The objective was to be achieved through two main activities, namely, (1) Pre-Election Monitoring and (2) Election Day Observation.

List of CODEO Members

Membership of CODEO was open to all credible civic, religious and professional organisations with interest in democracy. Participating organisations included the following:

1. Action on Disability and Development (ADD)-Ghana
2. African Association for Health, Environment and Development (AAHEAD)
3. Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission (AMM)
4. Amnesty International (AI)-Ghana

5. Association for the Advancement of Women in Africa (ASAWA)
6. Centre for the Development of People (CEDEP)
7. Christian Council of Ghana (CCG)
8. Civil Servants Association (CSA)
9. Civitas Ghana
10. Federation of Muslim Councils in Ghana (FMC)
11. Ghana Bar Association (GBA)
12. Ghana Committee on Human and People's Rights (GCHPR)
13. Ghana Federation of The Disabled (GFD)
14. Ghana Legal Literacy and Resource Foundation (GLLRF)
15. Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT)
16. Ghana Registered Midwives Association (GRMA)
17. Institute of Democratic Studies (IDS)
18. International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA-Ghana)
19. Islamic Council for Development and Humanitarian Services (ICODEHS)
20. Legal Resources Centre (LRC)
21. Mankind's Advancement, Upliftment and Development (MAUD)
22. Moral Re-armament (MRA) - Ghana
23. Municipal Action Foundation (MAF),
24. National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT)-Ghana
25. National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS)
26. Non-violence International (NI)
27. Partners for Democratic Change (PDC)
28. Peace Promotion and Conflict Resolution Foundation (PPCRF)
29. Ronject, Kpando
30. Save our Sons and Daughters (SOSAD)
31. The Civic Foundation (CivFo)
32. Trades Union Congress (TUC-Ghana)
33. Women in Law and Development (WiLDAF)
34. Youth Network for Democracy and Human Rights (YouNet)

Structure of CODEO

A nine-member Advisory Board chaired by two eminent Ghanaian citizens exercised executive authority of CODEO. A secretariat housed at CDD-Ghana provided administrative support. Members of the Board includes the following:

- ◉ Professor Miranda Greenstreet, former Director of the Institute of Adult Education of the University of Ghana (co-chair)
- ◉ Justice V.C.R.A.C. Crabbe, a retired Supreme Court Judge (co-chair)
- ◉ Professor E. Gyimah-Boadi, Executive Director of CDD-Ghana
- ◉ Dr. Baffour Agyeman-Duah, Associate Executive Director of CDD-Ghana,
- ◉ Nii Osah Mills, member of the Ghana Bar Association
- ◉ Rev. Dr. Fred Deegbe, General Secretary, Christian Council of Ghana
- ◉ Dr. Kwesi Appiah, Executive Director of the Civic Foundation
- ◉ Mr. Nicholas Kodzo Akyire, Public Relations Officer, Ghana National Association of Teachers
- ◉ Mr. Eric Carbonu of the Graduate Teachers Association of Ghana

The following three sub-committees assisted the Board in carrying out its responsibilities:

- ◉ Recruitment, Training and Deployment Committee: responsible for creating an inventory of potential observers from member organizations at the national, regional and district levels, planning and coordinating the recruitment of observers, trainers and supervisors, compiling a database of CODEO personnel, planning and implementing the training schedules for observers at the national, regional and district levels and designing observer deployment plans including communication and information transfer strategies on Election Day.

- ◉ Logistics and Resource Committee: responsible for identifying and advising the Advisory Board on the logistical needs for CODEO's operations, planning and securing Electoral Commission accreditation for all certified election observers, assisting in the distribution of materials to CODEO teams for training and for Election Day observation and helping to retrieve field returns from CODEO observers after elections.
- ◉ Drafting and Reporting Committee: responsible for drafting and reviewing training manuals and observer guidelines, drafting and reviewing checklists and incident report forms, collating and analysing Election Day checklists and incident reports, drafting interim and final reports on CODEO observation project

Publicity of CODEO Activities

CODEO activities were widely publicized in both the print and electronic media. The first press conference to announce the timelines for the CODEO monitoring project was held in April 2004, after which, pre-election monitors were trained and deployed throughout the country. Subsequently, three press statements were issued on the electoral process prior to Election Day. A final press briefing was held on the eve of the elections on CODEO's readiness to deploy the 7,360 observers and report on outcomes.

SECTION TWO

PRE-ELECTION MONITORING

Introduction

The pre-election monitoring and observation exercise covered the period June 1 to December 6, 2004 and was undertaken with direct funding from the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Twelve (12) monitors recruited from selected constituencies in the country were initially trained and deployed to monitor pre-election political activities from June 1 to August 31, 2004. Another set of thirty-eight (38) monitors were trained and deployed in September, bringing the total number of pre-election monitors to fifty (50) reporting from 50 constituencies. The exercise continued until the day of the elections when CODEO deployed the mass observers for the elections.

Importance of Pre-Election Monitoring

Free, fair and transparent elections are the hallmarks of a functioning democracy. Pre-election monitoring activities are deemed essential for maintaining the integrity of the electoral process and ensuring democratic outcomes. An election fraught with violence and allegations of corruption constitutes a serious threat to political stability, democratic stability, and international support. Where the circumstances leading to the elections are questionable, they cast a shadow on the entire process and undermine the legitimacy of its outcomes.

Effective monitoring therefore helps to:

- ⦿ Deter fraud, as the risk of public exposure for corrupt campaigning can have serious negative consequences for the party (ies) or candidate(s) in question;
- ⦿ Enhance transparency;
- ⦿ Increase public confidence in the democratic process, which in turn leads to higher voter turnout and greater overall involvement in public affairs;
- ⦿ Enhance acceptance of the outcome for both winners and losers;
- ⦿ Establish the legitimacy of the government that finally takes office and enables it direct development initiatives for the country with confidence; and
- ⦿ Encourage international recognition, which is especially important as internationally accepted elections advance the eligibility of a country to

receive increased foreign investment and international aid.

Criteria for the Selection of Constituencies for Monitoring

In selecting constituencies, the following issues were taken into consideration:

- ⦿ Regional representation, based on the number of constituencies in each Region;
- ⦿ Constituencies that were keenly and competitively contested in the 2000 elections and those likely to be keenly contested in the December 2004 polls;

- ◉ Constituencies in which incumbent MPs were defeated in the primaries or had been barred from the 2004 contest by their respective parties;
- ◉ Constituencies which are traditional strongholds of particular political tradition(s);
- ◉ Constituencies difficult to access because of poor roads, conflict situations, etc;
- ◉ Constituencies in which independent candidates contested in the elections;
- ◉ Newly created constituencies;
- ◉ Constituencies in the border towns in Ghana where there was the likelihood of allegations of and complaints against voter registration and voting by foreigners;
- ◉ Constituencies prone to violent conflict.

Going by these criteria, the following constituencies were selected:

Ashanti Region:

Oforikrom, Odotobiri, Ejura-Sekyedumasi, Obuasi, Manhyia and Ahafo Ano North

Brong Ahafo Region:

Sunyani East, Jaman North, Berekum, Wenchi, Techiman North and Asutifi South

Central Region:

Agona East, Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem, Twifo Atii-Morkwa, Mfantseman East and Gomomo West.

Eastern Region:

Koforidua, Suhum, Akropong, Akwatia, Ofoasi/Ayerebi and Lower Manya

Greater Accra Region:

Ablekuma North, Dadekotopon, Ashaiman, Abokobi-Madina, Klottey-Korle, Odododiodio and Ayawaso Central.

Northern Region:

Tamale Central, Kumbungu, Sawla/Kalba and Tamale South

Upper East Region:

Navrongo, Bawku, Bolgatanga, Pusiga and Zebilla

Upper West Region:

Nadowli West and Lawra/Nandom

Volta Region:

Ho West, Akan, Krachi East, Buem and Ketu North

Western Region:

Takoradi, Tarkwa-Nsuaem, Ellembele and Amenfi West.

Scope of Pre-election Monitoring

The pre-election monitoring covered activities and events leading up to Election 2004 including:

1. Compilation of the Voters' Register - Concluding phases of the voter registration exercise; photo-taking & mopping up
2. Voter education
3. Party Congresses
4. Party Primaries
5. Activities of principal political actors, party officials and activists
6. Party rallies, campaigns, and demonstrations
7. Internal party developments
8. Complaints lodged by parties
9. Political atmosphere in constituencies/nation

10. Activities of important political/electoral agencies such as NCCE, EC, NMC
11. Use and abuse of incumbency
12. Gender issues

FINDINGS FROM THE PRE-ELECTION MONITORING

The pre-election monitoring produced the following results:

Voter Registration

- ⦿ Reports indicated that generally, the first phase of voter registration was quite successful, except for the Greater Accra Region where logistical problems were widespread. Monitors observed significant difficulties in the photo-taking exercise, stemming from lack of materials, especially photo films and laminating materials. The difficulties were generally nationwide, although they appeared more severe in the Volta, Greater Accra, Northern and Ashanti regions. Monitors attributed the problem largely to the Electoral Commission's (EC) inability to supply registration officials with sufficient registration materials. However, during the mop-up exercise, monitors reported that supply of registration materials was adequate. No registration center complained of shortages, unlike during the first phase of the registration process where shortage of registration materials had been a key inhibiting factor.
- ⦿ The presence of observers from political parties at some polling stations, especially during the first phase of registration was considered very positive. Unfortunately, however, only the NDC and NPP parties were represented in most of the constituencies covered.
- ⦿ Some opposition parties, particularly the NDC in the Ketu North constituency, and their supporters expressed suspicion that the

government manipulated the registration exercise to disenfranchise people in constituencies known to be opposition party strongholds. Monitors could not ascertain the veracity of such claims and it remains unclear how the government could have manipulated the EC to the advantage or disadvantage of a particular political party.

- ◉ The effectiveness of the photo taking/mop up exercise of the voter registration was undermined by low patronage reflecting inadequate information and public education. Our monitors observed a paucity of information (especially in the newly created constituencies) on vital issues such as the location of the voter registration mop-up centers, causing some people to lose the opportunity to complete their registration.
- ◉ The Electoral Commission displayed the provisional voters register nationwide to create the opportunity for registered voters to cross-check their names, photographs and other details in the register and rectify all anomalies. Turnout for this exercise was low in most of the constituencies covered. Our monitors however contended that voter apathy and inadequate public education as well as technical lapses on the part of the EC were the main causes of the low turnout. Notable anomalies on the register included: wrong spelling of names, incorrect ages and dates of birth, picture swapping and omission.
- ◉ Some logistical problems were also reported during the display phase of the voter registration exercise. For example, some polling stations in the constituencies covered, notably the Ayawaso Central, Krachi East and West, Ejisu-Juabeng and Bawku West, experienced shortages of registration amendment forms.
- ◉ Allegations of disenfranchisement of voters by the EC were made in Alajo in the Ayawaso Central constituency when the register was

displayed. Some residents reported to our monitors that the EC had deliberately dropped their names from the register to disenfranchise them. However, these accusations were not supported by credible evidence and thus it was not possible to determine whether such problems were widespread.

- ⦿ Voter registration malpractices were recorded in some of the constituencies during the voter registration exercise. Some of the malpractices reported included the possession of multiple identification cards with similar pictures and monetary inducements to some people to acquire fictitious photo identification cards.
- ⦿ Conducting the voter registration in an election year also became an issue. There was suspicion, especially among the minority parties and their supporters that the exercise was intentionally arranged to disenfranchise some people. Tension was heightened when the date for photo taking in the Volta Region was changed.

Party Primaries:

- ⦿ When the monitoring exercise began, only the ruling NPP and the major minority NDC were conducting primaries. Activities of the smaller minority parties (PNC, CPP, NRP, DPP, EGLE and GCPP) were relatively minimal during a greater part of the campaign period. Although it must be noted that the PNC held a Congress towards the end of the campaign period and conducted many more primaries. The CPP also accelerated the pace of its primaries in October. Monitors also observed that posters, billboards and other party paraphernalia of the minor opposition parties were less visible in the constituencies.

- ◉ The primaries by the smaller minority parties were generally peaceful while those of the ruling NPP party and, to some extent, the NDC, were often acrimonious and, at times, quarrelsome. Common complaints included partiality and bias on the part of some party executives in favor of candidates as well as collusion between party executives and candidates. The Police had to intervene to prevent violent confrontations among activists of the NPP during the Okaikwei North constituency primary. Apparently, there was serious misunderstanding among the party executives, the aspiring MP and the incumbent MP in that constituency. Violent confrontation almost erupted at a press conference convened by the constituency executives and attended by the incumbent MP. Police presence was also observed in the Ayawaso West Wuogon constituency primary of the NPP.

Other constituencies where the NPP primaries resulted in intra-party conflict included: Ledzokuku where the incumbent MP was defeated by one vote; Offinso South where one of the two contestants was disqualified at the primary and Yendi where the former Minister of the Interior was declared the party's parliamentary candidate. Among the constituencies wracked by intra-party conflicts in the NPP camp were Navrongo Central and Bole Bamboi. In some constituencies aspirants who lost the primaries threatened to, or chose to run as independent candidates. In Wenchi East, for example, supporters of the defeated incumbent MP organised a news conference and urged him to contest the seat as an independent candidate. Although in that particular case he did not, this turn of events, often reflecting the uncompromising stance of some politicians and their supporters, tended to generate intra-party disputes.

- ◉ The NDC was also reported to have experienced internal conflicts in the Wenchi East and Agona East constituencies. An attempt by

party executives to impose a parliamentary candidate on the constituency caused divisions in the ranks of the party in Wenchi East. A planned meeting to introduce that candidate to party members was met with stiff opposition and ended abruptly. The candidate selection process in the Agona East constituency also caused considerable tension within the NDC. Tension within the NDC in that constituency abated only after the Agona Swedru High Court ruled on the nationality of the main challenger and paved the way for the incumbent MP to be re-elected to represent the party in parliamentary elections.

- ◉ One positive development in most of the primaries was the presence of representatives from other political parties. For instance, representatives of the NPP and CPP were present when the NDC held a primary in the Takoradi constituency on the 11th of September. The NPP constituency chairman was reported to have suggested that executives of all the political parties in the region should meet once every month to explore ways of promoting peace and understanding in the constituency.
- ◉ Several unverifiable allegations of irregular and corrupt practices involving the two dominant parties were recorded. The primaries of the smaller opposition parties, notably the CPP and PNC, were often devoid of the allegations of vote buying and delegate camping. Among the allegations recorded against the two dominant parties were: vote buying and improper inducement; interference from constituency, regional and national party executives; as well as the hosting of delegates by candidates. There were allegations of vote buying in the form of “camping of delegates in hotels” in the NPP primaries in Akwatia constituency, for example.

- ◉ Some primaries were postponed several times (for example, Ayawaso West Wuogon, Sunyani East, Anlo) allegedly to enable the leadership of the parties to either convince other contestants to step down for preferred candidates or impose candidates from on high. In one constituency – Garu/Tempane – there was a demonstration by NPP followers against the alleged imposition of a parliamentary candidate. And in Wa Central constituency, the NPP national executive was accused of having endorsed the Deputy Minister for Agriculture as the party's parliamentary candidate to the chagrin of the regional leadership of the party. These allegations underscore continuing deficits in internal democracy of the political parties, despite clear constitutional obligations.
- ◉ Our monitors observed that some members of the NDC and NPP who lost at the parliamentary primaries contested as independent candidates. This development seemed to have caused some cracks in the support base of these parties in the affected constituencies. Supporters who went with the independent candidates allegedly campaigned against their parties' parliamentary candidates. Following the primaries, various political parties, especially the NDC and the NPP, tried to put mechanisms in place to resolve the various intra-party conflicts which characterized their respective primaries. That notwithstanding, the phenomenon of defeated candidates going independent assumed prominence in the 2004 election. Some of the constituencies where defeated candidates were vying as independent candidates include Agona West, Bawku Central, Ho East, Navrongo Central, Offinso South, and Obuasi.

Party Rallies/Campaigns/Public Gatherings

- ◉ From the month of October, especially, there was a rise in the number of political party rallies and meetings to introduce aspiring

parliamentary candidates to the electorate. Most of the parties held rallies and other public gatherings to formally launch their election campaigns and inaugurate their “youth” and “women’s” wings. For example, the NPP launched its national campaign in Accra; and the NDC, PNC and CPP organized rallies to canvass support for their respective presidential and parliamentary candidates. The flag bearers of the NDC and CPP took their turns to deliver public lectures at the Great Hall of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology as part of a series of lectures organized by the university for all the presidential aspirants. A number of independent candidates also launched their campaigns in October with mini rallies and meetings. Most of these meetings and rallies were peaceful.

- ◉ Political campaigning was intensified in the month of November with political party leaders touring all parts of the country to present their messages to the electorate. All contesting parties held a series of rallies in the regional and district capitals and introduced their aspiring parliamentary candidates, whilst urging the electorate to vote massively for them. As observed by our monitors, the political ‘temperature’ was extremely high in November.
- ◉ Our monitors observed that most of the rallies held in November were very peaceful though the crowds were overwhelming in some places. There were incidents of verbal attacks on political opponents on some campaign platforms but these did not go far.
- ◉ House-to-house campaigning was intensified as a major strategy for canvassing support in some of the constituencies monitored including Ablekuma North and Okaikwei North. Political party rallies were generally peaceful.

Inter-Party Conflicts

- ◉ Despite the generally peaceful nature of the campaign period, a number of incidents in some of the constituencies monitored underscored political tension and conflict, particularly between the NPP and NDC. In Ashaiman, for example, NPP and NDC supporters clashed, apparently, over the management of public toilets and allegations of embezzlement of revenues. In Bongo there was an altercation between the NPP parliamentary hopeful and the incumbent MP of NDC and their supporters over a fatal motor accident following a campaign rally by the NDC flag-bearer. Two separate incidents of violence were reported in the first week of October in which supporters of the NDC and NPP attacked each other in the Pusiga-Pulmokon constituency. NDC and NPP supporters again clashed in the Yendi constituency on October 8th during an NDC rally.
- ◉ In November, it was reported that an NPP rally ended up in a clash between NPP and NDC supporters in the Cape Coast constituency. The mini rally was supposed to have taken place at Papratam in Cape Coast but the organizers allegedly changed the venue to a place close to the NDC office. This resulted in fierce exchange of words between supporters of the two parties and the police had to be called in to bring the situation under control. Confrontations between NDC and NPP supporters were also reported in the Ketu North and Kumbungu constituencies.
- ◉ Other aspects of inter- and intra-party competition also demonstrated undemocratic modes of competition. Our monitors reported destruction of banners and posters of opposing parties and candidates (presumably by political opponents), supporters of the NPP and NDC appeared to have been the main culprits. Our monitors

reported incidents of party supporters defacing and tearing down the posters of their opponents generating tension and conflicts between the NPP and NDC in Ahafo-Ano and Buem constituencies. According to our monitors, only the timely intervention and counseling by the NCCE District Director on the need for mutual tolerance helped to avert violence in Ahafo-Ano.

- ◉ The so-called NDC and NPP “Keep-Fit Clubs” established ostensibly to promote solidarity among party supporters introduced an element of militarism. As reported in the Ayawaso East constituency .

Political Party Development

- ◉ Overall the NDC and NPP emerged as the most vibrant parties. Reported activities included raising party flags, distribution of party paraphernalia (t-shirts, flags, buttons), and high profile meetings to present party candidates.
- ◉ Even in the heat of campaigning there were incidents of intra-party co-operation. In November, the Ketu South constituency Inter-party Advisory Committee in Denu convened a meeting to deliberate on issues affecting the constituency in the electioneering campaign period. In attendance were representatives of all the political parties, the District Police Commander and the District Director of the Electoral Commission.

Gender Issues

- ◉ Our monitor in the Builsa Constituency reported that women in the constituency proudly displayed posters of female contestants in their chop-bars and market stalls to show solidarity with female parliamentary candidates. In November our monitors also reported

few cases of female involvement in political activities including rallies organised by the women's wings of some political parties to campaign for their parties as happened for example, in Bawku Central and Kumbungu constituencies.

- ◉ A local NGO, Community Action, was also reported to have collaborated with the United Nations Gender Systems to organize a workshop to build the capacity of women candidates for the parliamentary elections.
- ◉ Nonetheless, the participation of women in political life in general and electoral politics in particular remained weak despite increasing advocacy campaigns by gender advocacy groups such as the Center for Sustainable Development Initiatives (CENSUDI) and other NOGs to encourage more women to participate in electoral politics. Women are scarcely actively involved in high-level party discussions even though they are sometimes in the majority at party rallies and meetings.

Use and Misuse of Incumbency

- ◉ In the run-up to the elections, monitoring reports captured a number of official tours of the President and Vice-President to some districts and constituencies where durbars were held in their honor. In October, for example, the President undertook official visits to the Ashanti, Eastern and the Volta regions, addressing durbars of chiefs and citizens. He also undertook a "duty tour" of some communities in the Greater Accra region where he met chiefs, elders and interested citizens. The Vice-President also visited parts of the Central and Brong-Ahafo regions.

- ◉ Monitors reported that party paraphernalia were generally 'absent' at these durbars, that is, the durbar grounds were not officially bedecked with party colors, although several party activists wore party colors.
- ◉ Although most of the visits were designated as "official" on nearly every visit, both the President and his Vice introduced their party's parliamentary candidates, solicited the support of voters, made a partisan political speech that included campaign messages. For instance, in the Agona East constituency on August 6, the President promised to elevate the Agona-Swedru town to a Municipal status in two years and also to provide the people of Agona-Nsaba with an ICT center. Again in November, on a visit to the Jaman South constituency of the Brong Ahafo Region, the President was alleged to have asked the people to vote for the NPP parliamentary candidates in the district after he had cut the sod for the construction of a post office in the district.
- ◉ It was alleged that some traditional leaders openly expressed their support for the NPP party. In one instance, an Okyeame was alleged to have prayed to the gods to help the NPP win all the votes in the district. Such partisan utterances by traditional leaders were contrary to the constitutional provision that disqualifies them from engaging in partisan politics.
- ◉ At a ceremony to mark the National Farmers Day Celebration in the Krachi East and West constituencies of the Volta Region, in November, a District Chief Executive was alleged to have asked the people to vote massively for the NPP in order to facilitate the development of the area. A similar incident allegedly occurred in the Biakoye constituency in the Volta region. Failure to clarify the line between official/state visits and partisan campaign visits by

incumbent officials appeared to have created the potential to grossly abuse incumbency.

Civic Education

- ◉ The NCCE was very active in most of the constituencies monitored. Reports indicated that in some constituencies the NCCE in collaboration with some religious bodies, political parties, security agencies and District Assemblies formed committees to help ensure peaceful elections.
- ◉ NCCE officials held seminars and discussions on local radio stations on issues of elections. They also organized forums for political parties and the security agencies in some constituencies to advocate for peaceful elections. In the Cape Coast constituency, the NCCE organized a street procession in November dubbed 'Peace March 2004' for all political parties.
- ◉ The NCCE carried out civic education campaigns in a number of second cycle institutions in some of the constituencies. These educational campaigns enabled students to interact with officials of the NCCE and ask questions relating to the December 2004 elections.
- ◉ Some political party leaders and functionaries repeatedly called for peaceful elections in December. These educational activities were commendable and they seemed to have contributed to the lessening of political tension and violence during the campaign period.
- ◉ A number of civil society bodies, traditional rulers, NGOs and state institutions, including the Ghana Education Service, the District

Assemblies and Information Services Department were active in civic education.

Others

- ◉ The month of October witnessed the filing of nominations by parliamentary and presidential candidates with the Electoral Commission. The activity was very peaceful nationwide. Our monitor for the Bole/Bamboi constituency reported that the CPP Parliamentary candidate was disqualified on the grounds that his name was not on the voters register.

RECOMMENDATIONS - PRE-ELECTION MONITORING

A number of recommendations arise out of the observations – both negative and positive – that our monitors flagged in their reports are worthy of attention by relevant bodies such as the EC, government, political parties, activists and advocacy groups, and civil society in general.

The Voter Registration Exercise:

- ◉ Given the rancor that preceded the voter registration exercise, especially regarding the timing of the exercise, there is the need to manage the process better. A key recommendation is that the Electoral Commission should introduce an “open registration” system that allows an all-year round registration period. This way, anyone who attains the voting age of eighteen could walk into the nearest office of the Commission to register. Such a system would cut down on administrative cost and the several inconveniences and controversies associated with the current system.

- ⦿ The election calendar must be improved to ensure smooth administration. The Electoral Commission must properly and in a timely manner schedule key activities such as voter registration, exhibition of voters register, etc.
- ⦿ The EC, the NCCE, political parties and all stakeholders in the democratization process must proactively get involved in all the stages of the voter registration process (i.e. the registration, photo-taking, and verification of registration). To reduce the level of citizen apathy and indifference observed in the exhibition of the provisional voters register, the EC, NCCE, parties, the media and other civic educators must impress on the Ghanaian electorate to take all stages of the voter registration process seriously.

Political Party Primaries

- ⦿ In view of the controversies and discord in the conduct of party primaries, it is recommended that the parties review their constitutions and procedures for primaries and make them conform to democratic principles. It may also be necessary for the parties to develop a “code of conduct” or “code of ethics” to guide the conduct of primaries. Although the Electoral Commission is mandated to hold the parties responsible for ensuring internal democratic principles in the conduct of party affairs, the NCCE, party followers and the public at large should demand and insist on adherence to these principles.
- ⦿ The method adopted by political parties of electing candidates at the primaries to contest parliamentary seats needs a critical look. The idea of having a few (in some cases less than 100) polling station chairmen and constituency executives voting to elect parliamentary candidates limits the participation of constituents and also makes the process prone to manipulation. Given that few people do the

voting, the possibility of the process being manipulated to favor some people cannot be ruled out. This may be the reason for the acrimony that characterized some of the pre-election activities. One way to overcome this serious drawback is for political parties to open the election of parliamentary candidates at the constituency level to all party card-carrying constituents.

- ◉ To ensure conformity with the letter and spirit of the 1992 Constitution and democratic principles, political parties should review their ground rules and procedures for selecting/electing parliamentary candidates and making other crucial decisions internal to the party. It is worth noting that many of the bitter intra-party conflicts were generated by perceived unfair manipulation of procedure by, and the show of favoritism on the part of, party executives during the primaries. Together with the NCCE and other civic educators, the parties should inculcate in their members and supporters democratic and civic virtues such as tolerance and mutual accommodation, especially since the rejection of the outcomes of primaries by losing contestants and their supporters was not always grounded in objectivity nor reflected respect for the 'will of the majority.'
- ◉ The conflicts that emerged in the primaries and characterize intra and inter-party political competition in Ghana reflect continuing political intolerance as well as weaknesses in internal party democracy – which are causes for concern in a young democracy. In general, these problems highlight the need for effective civic education to inculcate tolerance and political civility. We also recommend that political parties streamline the rules governing the primaries and strive to strengthen transparency and fairness in ways consistent with constitutional provisions enjoining them to be internally democratic.

- ⦿ Allegations of “vote buying” featured prominently in the 2004 primaries. We are unable to determine whether this reflects increased incidence or increased reporting. However, the reports and allegations of corrupt practices that characterized many of the primaries must be thoroughly investigated and sorted out by the affected political parties. The EC and NCCE could also conduct their own investigations to inform their future civic and voter education programs.
- ⦿ Allegations of “vote buying” highlight prevalence of worrying levels of political corruption that could erode the democratic process. We call on political parties to make every effort to discourage vote buying and other corrupt practices in their primaries. The EC, CHRAJ and other official anti-corruption bodies must investigate these allegations thoroughly and impose appropriate sanctions to deter such practices.

Political Party Activities

- ⦿ The acrimonious activities that have, and continue to characterize some of the political party activities, especially the primaries, coupled with intolerance of some political party activists as observed by our monitors, are causes for concern in a growing democracy. These unfortunate manifestations are clear indications that there is a civic education deficit in our political system that must be addressed.
- ⦿ Monitoring reports highlighted inter party tensions and conflicts, especially between the NPP and NDC. This is not unusual in an election season, but it is important that it does not get out of hand. We urge the political parties, especially the NPP and NDC, to educate their members to eschew practices such as hooting at rival contestants and vandalising opponents' posters, to forestall violent conflicts. We also call on the Police to maintain vigilance over these “hot spots,” and take all the

precautions necessary for the prevention and control of pre-election and post-election violence in the future.

- ⦿ It is very important to intensify civic education among the various political groupings. Political parties also need to educate their supporters on the internal democratic principles and make it imperative for supporters to uphold these principles at all times. Political parties and their active supporters need to know that they play a very important role in nurturing our young democracy.
- ⦿ Civic and voter education must be strengthened to promote tolerance of intra- and inter-party opposition and to discourage voters and delegates from taking bribes from candidates and/or allowing bribes to influence their electoral choices

Use and Misuse of Incumbency

- ⦿ To address the situation where a President's duty tours may be construed as campaign tours, the ruling party must make a clear distinction between a purely party activity and official or state activity. At purely state functions, the use of party colors or paraphernalia should be discouraged. It is important that the line between official/state visits and partisan campaign visits by incumbent officials be clarified. This is an issue worth discussing by the Inter-Party Advisory Committee and other stakeholders.
- ⦿ To effectively address this issue, we recommend that Ghana, as a nation, develop and adopt rules that would regulate the partisan utterances of public office holders at state functions. If such rules were

effectively implemented Ghana would have taken a giant step towards creating a level playing field for political parties.

- ⦿ As a long-term strategy, there is the need to put in place a mechanism that could help reduce the problem of abuse of incumbency. As a nation, we should develop a framework or some form of code of ethics that clearly spells out what constitutes an abuse of incumbency. By this, we can be sure that at least, some level playing field would be created for all political parties in the 'game'.

Gender Representation in Political Life

- ⦿ Gender activist groups and individuals should intensify their campaigns for women's participation in political life in general and electoral politics in particular.
- ⦿ Political parties should make a special effort to actively seek to address gender inequalities in political life by fielding more women to contest parliamentary seats and giving them the needed support to win elections as required by the constitution.

Civic Education

- ⦿ The NCCE and other civil society agencies must step up civic and democracy education to get political parties and activists to live up to their obligations under the Constitution and to align their internal procedures with the canons of democracy.
- ⦿ To instill the spirit of civic responsibility in the younger generation, it is recommended that the NCCE intensify its civic education campaigns in educational institutions in the country. A reintroduction of civics in the educational curricula from the primary level is worth considering.

- The issue of traditional leaders openly supporting some political parties is most unfortunate and violates the constitutional provision that enjoins them not to take active part in politics. The National and Regional Houses of Chiefs and the NCCE should collaborate to educate all Chiefs on the Constitution and its provisions, particularly those regarding the politically non-partisan status of chiefs.

SECTION THREE

ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION

PREPARATIONS

Selection and Training of Election Observers

The Recruitment, Training and Deployment sub-committee worked through member organizations of CODEO to recruit and train all observers. The training was carried out in three stages. The first training workshop was held in Kumasi from 8th – 10th October 2004 for 43 participants drawn from the ten regions of Ghana. This first group of observers served as CODEO national trainers; they were used as resources persons to train other CODEO observers at the regional and district levels.

The second stage of training was carried out in all ten regions of the country for the regional trainers. A total of 479 observers were trained in ten regional centers on October 23 for observers in Greater Accra, Eastern, Central, Volta and Western Regions and, on October 30, for observers in Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions. All 50 pre-election monitors participated in the regional level training workshops. The third and final stage of training was at the district level and involved over 6000 observers trained at 64 training centers throughout the country. The national and regional trainers together with officials from the Electoral Commission served as resource persons at these workshops. The district training workshops were held on November 6 for observers in Greater Accra, Volta and Eastern Regions; November 13 for observers in Western and Brong Ahafo Regions; and November 20 for observers in Ashanti, Central, Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions.

The training curricula covered the following:

- ◉ CODEO mission statement
- ◉ Legal framework for election observation
- ◉ Polling day procedure and electoral offences
- ◉ Observers code of conduct
- ◉ Training techniques
- ◉ Completing the observers' checklist and incident report forms

Officials of the Electoral Commission, the Ghana Bar Association and CODEO secretariat assisted in the training at all levels. All training sessions were made participatory with questions, discussions and simulation exercises constituting major components. At the end of each training session, participants were made to sign a 'Pledge of Neutrality and Objectivity' to indicate their willingness to be impartial and neutral in observing the conduct of the elections. CODEO published two basic materials for election observers. These were:

- ◉ Election Observer Training Manual
- ◉ Information Guide for Election Observers

Both publications were made available to observers trained at the national and regional levels while those trained at the district level received only the information guide for election observers.

Deployment of Observers

A total of 7360 observers were deployed in all the 230 constituencies in Ghana. 117 of these observers were from the Ghana Federation of the Disabled. Each observer had an accreditation card from the Electoral Commission and wore a white CODEO-embossed tee-shirt and was given one observers' checklist and two incident report forms to report on polling day activities. In all, CODEO observers covered 6302 polling stations throughout the country. Roving observers were appointed in each

constituency and their duty was to supervise at least 10 polling station observers and report on any notable incidents to the district supervisor or CODEO secretariat as they moved about the polling stations.

CODEO INITIAL STATEMENTS

Eve of Polling Statement

On Monday, December 6, 2004, CODEO issued a statement at a press briefing to inform the public on the preparedness of CODEO towards observing the general elections. In a special appeal, the Coalition urged all observers, candidates, political parties, the security agencies and Ghanaians to strive to maintain the peace prevailing in the country.

Mid-day Situational Statement

At mid-day December 7, CODEO issued a situational statement on the conduct of the elections based on the early batch of reports transmitted via telephone or fax from supervisors and observers deployed in the regions. The highlights were that voter turnout was timely and high, voting materials arrived at most polling stations on time, the Electoral Commission officials were professional and cooperated with observers and political party agents. The voting process was reported to have been generally peaceful and orderly with very few incidents, notably occasioned by the absence of security agents at some polling stations.

Preliminary Statement

On December 9, 2004, after receiving some more reports from observers CODEO issued a preliminary statement to the press on the conduct of the elections. The general conclusion drawn from the reports received was that polling on Election Day was generally peaceful, free, fair and transparent with minor incidents. (See Appendices 1, 2 and 3 for full texts of the Statements)

FINDINGS FROM THE FIELD - ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION

Observers' Checklist

Out of a total of 6302 observers' checklists distributed for the December 7, 2004 elections, 6,059 representing 96% were processed and analyzed.

CODEO observers were interested in whether, generally, the procedures for polling station set-up, voting and counting and declaration of results were followed and whether the balloting was free, fair and transparent.

The majority of the observers who submitted a checklist (94%) reported that the procedures for set-ups were followed. Most of them (93%) were satisfied with the voting procedure and nearly all (96%) indicated that the procedures for counting and declaring results were followed. Thus the observers found the overall election process satisfactory. Below are the specific findings from the analysis:

1. **Voting materials:** Nearly all observers (96%) reported that voting materials were available during set-up.
2. **Electoral officers and party agents:** Observers also noted that on average there were 5 polling station officials and 5 political party agents at each polling station. Most of observers (97%) also reported that presiding officers were present during set-up.
3. **Campaign materials near polling station:** A small proportion (4%) of observers reported the incidence of campaign materials being near polling stations during voting.
4. **Voting start time:** A significant majority, (79%) of observers reported that voting began at exactly 7:00am with 15% reporting that voting started between 7:01am and 9:00am and 0.4%, reporting that voting started between 9:01am and 12:00pm.

5. **Shortage of voting materials:** Here also, very few (2%) of the observers reported the shortage of voting materials during voting.
6. **Violence/Disruption at or near polling station:** 97% of observers reported that there was no violence/disruption at or near the polling station in the course of voting
7. **Underage voting/multiple voting or voter impersonation:** Cases of underage voters, multiple voting, and voter impersonation were very minimal as noted by CODEO observers. Only 1% of observers reported incidents of underage/multiple voting and impersonation.
8. **End of voting:** Majority of observers (83%) said voting ended at exactly 5:00pm with 8% reporting that voting ended between 5:01pm and 8:00pm.
9. **Signing of statement of results:** 95% of observers reported that party agents signed the statement of results. Also, 96% of observers said they were satisfied with the vote count.

Constituency Collation Center Checklist

The analysis is based on 156 constituency collation center checklists processed out of the 230 distributed to CODEO observers for the December 7th 2004 elections, giving a return rate of 68%.

1. **Number of Polling Stations:** The mean number of polling stations according to the forms received is 91 while the minimum and maximum numbers of polling stations were 10 and 197 respectively.
2. **Ballot Boxes Arrival Time:** A significant majority of the observers (92%) indicated that the ballot boxes arrived at the constituency collation centers between 5:00 and 9:00 p.m. According to the observers, majority of the ballot boxes (89%) arrived at the center sealed with very few (9%)

reported unsealed. The minimum and maximum number of ballot boxes that arrived at the collation centers unsealed were 1 and 6 respectively, giving an average of four (4). The Eastern and Ashanti regions recorded the highest number of unsealed ballot boxes (i.e. 6 each) followed by Brong Ahafo and Central Regions with 5 each.

3. **Collation Start Time:** Two-thirds (67%) of the collation exercises started between 5:00 and 9:00 p.m. while a little less than a quarter (22%) commenced between 9:01 p.m. and midnight. 8% of observers reported that collation took place a day after. On the average, 19 party/candidate agents were present during the collation.
4. **Presence of Security Agents and Observers:** A significant number of the constituency collation center observers (94%) indicated that security personnel were present. Similarly, 96% said election observers were also present. One constituency collation center each in the Ashanti, Central, Eastern and Upper East did not have security personnel during the collation.
5. **Call for Ballots Recount:** 12% of the constituency collation center observers said recounting of ballots took place. Significant proportions of the call for ballot recount were recorded in the Brong Ahafo (21%), Eastern (16%) and Upper East (16%) regions. The Central, Northern and Upper West Regions recorded 10% each while Ashanti, Eastern, Greater Accra, Volta and Western Regions recorded less than 6% each.

Most of the calls for recount (32%) came from NDC representatives, followed by Constituency Returning Officers and representatives of all the parties/candidates (16% each) and the NPP representatives (11%).

A little less than two-thirds of the observers (63%) indicated that the recount did not alter the overall results of the affected constituencies while a third (33%) said there were changes in the results after the recount.

6. **Signing of Constituency Results Sheet:** Most (88%) of the constituency collation center observers said the constituency results sheets were signed and dated by the party/candidate agents and the election officials after the collation, 6% by only election officials and 4% by only party/candidate agents. Very few (1%) said the constituency results sheets were not signed at all.
7. **General observation of the electoral process:** A significant proportion (87%) of the constituency collation center observers said the electoral process worked satisfactorily. 7% thought otherwise while 6% did not make any comment.

Of those who thought the process did not work satisfactorily, 33% were from Greater Accra, 25% each from Central and Brong Ahafo regions and 17% from Ashanti Region.

Incident Reports

Analysis of the incident reports is based on a total of 346 reporting forms received from CODEO observers from all the ten regions of the country. The breakdown of reporting forms received by region is as follows: Greater Accra (32%), Upper West (14%), Northern (11%), Central (10%), Volta (8%), Western (9% each), Eastern and Brong Ahafo (6% each) and Upper East and Ashanti (2% each).

The top five incidents that occurred during the elections at the various polling stations across the country were intimidation of voters (18%), harassment of voters (9%), improper voting procedures and difficult access for aged/disabled persons (6% each), violence and improper set-up of polling station (5% each) and denied access to polling station (3%).

Notable Incidents

Based on the reports from our observers deployed throughout the country, the elections were generally free, fair and transparent and the electoral process was satisfactory. This notwithstanding, there were a number of isolated incidents worth noting:

- ◉ CODEO views with great concern the incidents of threats to burn down some district offices of the Electoral Commission and the actual burning of some ballot boxes. Though not widespread, these incidents led to delays in the declaration of results for some polling stations/constituencies. The delayed release of results created some tension and suspicion that the electoral process was manipulated and this does not augur well for a growing democracy.
- ◉ Our observers noted isolated cases of disappointed party/candidate supporters issuing threats to presiding and returning officers and describing some of them as incompetent and irresponsible.
- ◉ The issue of some voters, particularly the aged, illiterate and the disabled having difficulties with the voting process was widespread. Presiding officers and polling agents spent a lot of time educating people on how to vote and in some cases allegedly doing the thumb printing for the voters.
- ◉ The security agents' resort to the use of warning shots to disperse crowds caused a lot of panic and unease especially in the conflict prone areas. Our observers noted the incidents of warning shots in Bawku and sporadic gunshots in the Tamale metropolis on polling day and the day after.
- ◉ Our observers also reported the lack of commitment on the part of some electoral personnel, including polling assistants, presiding officers and returning officers. There were reported incidents involving polling assistants leaving the polling stations before counting began

because everybody had voted before 5pm. Some presiding officers also simply abandoned the ballot boxes, the counted ballot papers and the polling station results slips at the constituency collation centres and went home.

- ◉ The lack of vehicles to transport polling officials and ballot boxes from polling stations to constituency collation centres after polling was another issue of concern. A case was reported where a supposed 'good Samaritan' offered his vehicle to convey the post election materials only to bolt with all four ballot boxes containing the materials: two Presidential and two Parliamentary.
- ◉ The issue of transferred voters not locating their names at the polling stations where they transferred their votes to was reported by many of our observers. Such affected voters were denied the opportunity to exercise their franchise.
- ◉ Disagreements over technical electoral issues were widespread. Agents of the parties and candidates disagreed with presiding officers over issues that were purely technical. There were reported incidents of party/candidate agents refusing to allow people who had their names in the Poll book but not in the Register to vote, though the presiding officers identified such people as eligible to vote.

RECOMMENDATIONS - ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION

- ◉ The issue of some voters, especially the aged, illiterate and the disabled, not knowing how to vote underscores the inadequate voter education on the voting procedure. This resulted in a large number of rejected ballot papers. CODEO would like to appeal to political parties, the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE), the Electoral Commission (EC), civil society organisations and individuals to make voter education, especially the voting procedure, a continuous process rather than wait till a few months to elections.

- ◉ The reported incidents of angry party faithfuls burning ballot boxes containing ballot papers underscores the lack of civility on the part of a section of the populace and calls for more education on civic responsibilities.
- ◉ The lack of commitment of some polling officials is also worrying and has the potential to grossly undermine the integrity of the electoral process. CODEO would like to recommend that the Electoral Commission review its procedure for recruiting polling officials and possibly make the remuneration package more attractive to people with better education.
- ◉ Resort to the use of warning shots by the security agencies to disperse disorderly crowds during the voting, especially in conflict prone areas, tends to create panic and anxiety in these areas. We recommend that the security agencies adopt less intimidating tactics of crowd control, especially in these conflict prone areas.
- ◉ While acknowledging the enormity of the work of the EC, especially in an election year, and lamenting the inadequacy of resources available for their operations, CODEO, nevertheless, recommends that efforts be made to ensure that vehicles are made available to cart election materials and electoral officers, especially after polls, to the constituency collation centers. This would help minimize the incidents of ballot boxes going missing.
- ◉ Vote transfer operations posed quite a challenge to the EC as noted by our observers. CODEO would like to recommend to the EC to streamline the voter transfer facility so as not to create an avenue to disenfranchise prospective voters.
- ◉ Disagreements over technical electoral issues underscore the lack of sufficient education, especially for party/candidate agents on technical electoral issues and calls for redress. We recommend

that the EC and political parties should collaborate and jointly train polling station officials and party/candidate agents to avoid illegal disenfranchisement of voters and too many incidents of rejected ballots

- Election officials should be given a realistic amount of travel and preparation time to avoid delays at the polling stations.

SECTION FOUR

CONCLUSION

Project Impact

The impact of the CODEO election observation project on the electoral process and Ghana's December 7, 2004 polls includes the following:

- ◉ The pre-election monitoring exercise helped to generate early warning signals for potential problems for the elections and helped draw attention to areas of the election process that needed intervention. CODEO monitors' reports capturing difficulties encountered and lapses in the voter registration exercise were widely published in the media. These publications drew attention to gaps in the electoral process and called on the appropriate agencies to fill such gaps. The pre-election exercise also helped to get a full record of the 2004 polls.
- ◉ The project broadened and deepened citizen and civil society interest and participation in the monitoring of the December 2004 polls. In general, it enhanced civic engagement with the Ghanaian electoral and democratic process.
- ◉ Expanded citizen involvement in the electoral process as poll watchers helped to avert difficult-to-resolve disputes over election results and this induced broad public acceptance of the outcomes of the election.

- ◉ The presence of pre-election monitors in some selected constituencies put a check on the utterances of some public officials at state sponsored functions and the use of state resources for political party activities. This contribution, to an extent, resulted in levelling the electoral playing field for all political actors in some of the monitored constituencies.
- ◉ The project helped to build local capacity for election observation. Under this project, over 7000 Ghanaians received training on election observation and electoral procedures.
- ◉ The presence of CODEO observers played a key role in maintaining a generally peaceful atmosphere at the polling stations. As reported by most observers, their presence instilled discipline in the behaviour of contesting candidates, political party agents and Electoral Commission officials.

Final Remarks

CODEO congratulates all individuals and groups who worked tirelessly to ensure that the December 2004 elections were overall successful and peaceful. In particular, the Coalition applauds all political parties, civil society groups, the media, the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE), the Electoral Commission (EC) and Ghanaians in general for the immense contribution they made towards a successful election and the maturity displayed on polling day. Democracy has come to stay in Ghana, and together, we must ensure that we sustain and improve on the enviable image we have gained over the years.

A P P E N D I X O N E

PRESS STATEMENT ON THE EVE OF ELECTIONS

**By Prof. Miranda Greenstreet and Justice V.C.R.A.C. Crabbe,
Co-chairpersons of the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers
(CODEO)**

Given at a CDD Conference Hall, Accra, 6th December 2004 at 11am

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media:

We have invited you here this morning to brief you on our preparations towards observing the up-coming presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for tomorrow, Tuesday, December 7 2004.

About CODEO

With your permission, let me say a few words about CODEO. The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) was first formed in May 2000, under the management of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD), with the sole purpose of recruiting, training and deploying local observers for that year's presidential and parliamentary elections. CODEO was revived and reconstituted in May this year, under the auspices of CDD.

Currently, CODEO comprises thirty-four civil society, professional, and religious bodies in the country. Among them are Ghana National Association of Teachers; Ghana Bar Association; Ghana Registered Midwives Association; National Union of Ghana Students; Christian Council of Ghana;

Federation of Muslim Councils; Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission; International Federation of Women Lawyers; Amnesty International; Civil Servants Association; Trades Union Congress; Civic Foundation; Moral Re-Armament; Ghana Federation for the Disabled; Women in Law and Development; Legal Resource Center; Association for the Advancement of Women in Africa; Ghana Legal Literacy and Resource Foundation; Non-Violence International; Islamic Council for Development and Humanitarian Services; National Association of Graduate Teachers; and Center for the Development of People, Save our Sons and Daughters, Mankind's Advancement, Upliftment and Development, Ghana Committee on Human and People's Rights.

CODEO is managed by a nine-member Advisory Board and supported by three committees in charge of (a) recruitment, training and deployment; (b) logistics and resource; and (c) drafting and reporting.

The other members of the Advisory Board include Rev. Fred Deegbe of Christian Council of Ghana, Nii Osah Mills, Ghana Bar Association, Mr. Eric Carbornu of National Association of Graduate Teachers, Dr. Kwesi Appiah, Civic Foundation, Mr. Nicholas Akyire of Ghana National Association of Teachers, Prof. E. Gyimah-Boadi and Dr. Baffour Agyeman-Duah, both of CDD-Ghana.

The objectives of this Coalition are to:

- ◉ Promote free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections;
- ◉ Instill confidence in the electoral process and the Ghanaian public at large;
- ◉ Work to deter, prevent and/or detect electoral fraud; and help
- ◉ Prevent and/or manage conflicts.

Preparation of CODEO Observation Program

We have invited you here this morning to brief you, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Media, on our preparations towards meeting our stated objectives. A three-day national training-of-trainers workshop was organized for fifty participants in Kumasi in early October 2004. Participants were nominated from among members of the Coalition from each of the ten regions. Ten regional training workshops were subsequently conducted, one in each regional capital. In all, six hundred observers were trained at the regional level. The Coalition also conducted training workshops in 60 districts throughout Ghana in the month of November.

The training covered the following subjects:

- ◉ Legal framework for the elections;
- ◉ Code of conduct for observers;
- ◉ Polling day procedure and electoral offences; and
- ◉ Observing the polling.

Officials of the Electoral Commission and the Ghana Bar Association facilitated the training with support from members of the Advisory Board. We want to register our profound gratitude and appreciation for their support and collaboration.

At this point, we are fully confident that our observers have been given the best of training and they are ready for their assignments.

CODEO will deploy 7400 observers on election-day. Observers will be deployed in all two hundred and thirty (230) constituencies, covering over 30 percent of the over 21,000 polling stations in the country. In addition to observing the polling centers, CODEO observers will be posted to all the 230 constituencies collating centers. Our observers will appear in white tee-shirts with CODEO boldly printed on the front and back. The observers

will report to the polling stations by 6:30 a.m. and observe the entire process, including the counting of ballots.

An information bureau has been set up at the offices of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development to receive and process media enquiries on the election. The bureau will receive, analyze and prepare the preliminary CODEO report on the polls.

A reporting structure has been devised to ensure accuracy and timely delivery of information to the CODEO Secretariat in Accra. On the basis of these reports, CODEO will issue a statement on its general impressions of the polling around noon on election-day, and a preliminary report within 24 hours after the polls. The final CODEO report on the 2004 polls will be issued later in January 2005.

On behalf of the Advisory Board, I wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the large number of Ghanaians who volunteered to work for the CODEO project with enthusiasm and dedication. The Board also thanks the regional and district coordinators who worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the training workshops. We are confident that on election-day our observers will apply to the maximum the discipline, non-partisanship, objectivity, knowledge and skills that have been imparted at the workshops.

Importance of Election 2004

The citizens of this country have worked assiduously to consolidate our newfound democracy under the Fourth Republic. Election 2004, in our view, brings us to the crossroads of our political development. It is an important test of Ghana's democratic institutions and their ability to function under different administrations and ruling parties. The successful outcome of the 2004 polls will contribute immensely to Ghana's democratic consolidation. It is important that Ghana succeeds. The whole world is watching how we, as a people, conduct ourselves at this critical stage.

We acknowledge and applaud the improvements in the overall environment for this year's elections: enhanced transparency in election administration and the electoral process; the relative evenness of the electoral playing field, especially in terms of media coverage of the campaign and other political activities. We also note with commendation the active civic and electoral education of citizens by the National Commission for Civic Education and others. Equally commendable are the activities undertaken by the churches and mosques, traditional rulers and several civil society organizations, including the media to promote peaceful and successful elections.

We of CODEO will do our best to contribute to the success of the elections. Our presence at the polling stations on Election Day will hopefully be a moderating influence and help to ensure electoral integrity. We believe that once the process is seen to be free, fair and transparent, the outcome will be legitimate and acceptable to all, winners and losers alike.

Special Appeal

We wish to make a special appeal on behalf of the 7,400 observers of CODEO, to all the contesting candidates, political parties, their leaders, the security agencies and Ghanaians as a whole to help maintain the peace in our country.

We recognize that the competition for power usually evokes passions and extreme partisanship. However, we remind all candidates, parties and their supporters that they must not allow such sentiments and actions to create needless chaos in the country. We implore the political parties, especially the NPP and NDC, to urge their members to conduct themselves properly on election-day to forestall violent conflict. We call on politicians to endeavor to place the peace and stability of the country above parochial and partisan interests.

We appeal to the nation's security agencies to approach their national duty with professionalism and utmost respect for the Constitution. They should be nonpartisan in the political process, respect the electoral process, and seek the protection of all Ghanaians and most importantly the Constitution.

We implore all Ghanaians to cooperate and support the Electoral Commission in conducting tomorrow's elections.

On behalf of CODEO, we wish to express our deepest gratitude to the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the European Commission, through the UNDP, for their generous support for CODEO's mission.

Finally, we appeal to all Ghanaians to comport themselves properly on the Election Day. Let us avoid any acts of intimidation or violence to ensure a peaceful election.

Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen.

APPENDIX TWO

COALITION OF DOMESTIC ELECTION OBSERVERS (CODEO)

MID DAY SITUATIONAL STATEMENT ON GHANA'S PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION

Issued on Tuesday, 7th December 2004

INTRODUCTION

To contribute to the transparency and integrity of the 2004 Presidential and Parliamentary Election in Ghana, the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) deployed 7400 people across the country in the 230 constituencies in all the Ten (10) regions. This situational report is based on observations of polls by CODEO observers as at midday. CODEO is made up of thirty-four (34) civil society, professional and some religious organizations.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ◉ Turnouts
Turnout has been high. This illustrates voter enthusiasm and awareness.
- ◉ Political Campaigning
Relatively free of direct political influence on voters at the polling station

PREPAREDNESS OF ELECTORAL COMMISSION

- ◉ Election Materials

Preliminary observation is that there were adequate supplies of the electoral materials at most polling stations that CODEO has observed.

- ◉ Time-keeping

Voting generally started on time. Most polling stations started at 7am. There were however a few cases of delay. These, according to our observers were few and isolated.

ELECTORAL INTEGRITY

- ◉ Performance of EC Officers

The conduct of electoral officials has been professional. On the whole, they have displayed a lot of independence and neutrality.

- ◉ Privacy of Voting

Arrangements at most polling centers provided enough privacy for voting.

- ◉ Performance of Party Agents

Party agents have cooperated fully with the electoral officials.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

As at the time of this release voting generally has been peaceful, orderly with very few incidents reported to the CODEO secretariat. We hope that this situation will continue till the end of the poll and that the counting and collation will be conducted in a cordial atmosphere. We believe that all of us Ghanaians would cooperate in this exercise.

Issued by: CODEO Secretariat

Signed by:

Justice V.C.R.A.C CRABBE & Professor Miranda GREENSTREET
Co-Chairpersons, CODEO

A P P E N D I X T H R E E

PRESS STATEMENT ON ELECTION 2004

COALITION OF DOMESTIC ELECTION OBSERVERS (CODEO)

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT ON GHANA'S PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION

**Held on Tuesday 7 December, 2004; Issued on Thursday 9
December 2004**

INTRODUCTION

The December 7, 2004 general elections marked another milestone in Ghana's Fourth Republic. To contribute to the transparency and integrity of the elections, the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) deployed 7400 observers in all ten (10) regions of the country to observe the presidential and parliamentary elections. CODEO Observers were posted to polling stations as well as at constituency collating centers in all the 230 constituencies in Ghana. The deployment of local observers by CODEO was to achieve the following objectives:

- ◉ Promote free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections;
- ◉ Instil confidence in the electoral process and in the Ghanaian;
- ◉ Work to deter, prevent and/or detect electoral fraud; and help
- ◉ Prevent and/or manage conflicts

In the afternoon of the election-day (December 7, 2004), CODEO issued a statement on the polling process, based on reports received from the

observers. The general conclusion of that report was that the conduct of the polls at the time was peaceful and orderly, with very few incidents. Thirty-six (36) hours after the close of polls, CODEO is pleased to issue this preliminary general statement on the elections based on reports received from its observers throughout Ghana. A detailed analysis of CODEO observations will be released later in our final report.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STATEMENT

Voter Turnout

Voter turnout was very impressive. As early as 4am, voters had started forming queues at some polling stations and at the close of polls at 5pm; there were still long queues at some polling stations. Indications are that turnout figures will exceed the 2000 level of 62.0%. Though voters reported at their polling stations as early as 4am - well before the official 7am opening of the polls – they comported themselves in a patient and dignified manner.

There was compelling evidence across the country that voters understood their electoral rights and responsibilities, as the polling process across the nation generally went quite smoothly. In the few cases where minor irregularities at the polling stations did occur, disputes were settled amicably as polling officers, party agents, election observers, and voters were aware of the prescribed election procedures. The high voter turn out on the whole illustrates increased voter and civic awareness that are necessary in a democracy. However, the process could have been speeded up if voter education on the voting process had been better than it was and this could have prevented the high incidents of rejected ballots.

Preparedness of Electoral Commission

The supply of voting materials to the more than 21,000 polling stations across the country once again proved challenging to the Electoral Commission. As at 7am when polls were supposed to have been opened, materials for some

polling stations had not arrived. It is worth noting however, that such incidents were relatively isolated and did not affect the smooth conduct of the polls. Reports indicated that there were adequate supplies of the electoral materials at polling stations. In areas, where there were shortages, the Electoral Commission eventually replenished them. Voting generally started on time. Most polling stations started at 7am. We note, however, that there were a few cases of delay.

Electoral Integrity

Generally, officials acted in an entirely non-partisan and professional manner, and were well apprised of the rules and regulations established by the Electoral Commission. Most electoral officers displayed independence and neutrality although there were reports of some officials conducting themselves in a way that suggested that they did not receive enough education and training.

Party agents were vigilant during the polls. For the most part, party agents conducted themselves in a collegial and mutually respectful manner. Almost every polling station had at least one party agent from the NDC and NPP, and most had representatives from PNC and CPP as well. Some political parties devised a tally card system on which their agents used to track the number of ballots cast at each polling station. They then used the tally cards to reconcile with the figures provided by the Electoral Commission.

Privacy of Voting and Access to the Disabled

Arrangements at most polling centers provided enough privacy for voting. We note with commendation efforts made by the Electoral Commission to provide adequate access and support to the disabled to exercise their franchise. Particularly, the introduction of the tactile ballot system for the blind was a welcome innovation.

Security Conditions

For the most part, the security personnel conducted themselves in a professional manner. Reports from observers however indicated that some polling stations were without security personnel at the start of polls but this was resolved by the security agencies. We shall give a comprehensive report on the security presence when we have analyzed the data from our observers.

Malpractices or irregularities

There were reported cases of irregularities at some of the polling stations covered. In one constituency, our observer reported that two ballot boxes for the presidential and two for the parliamentary ballots got missing. It is alleged that at the close of polls, there was no vehicle to convey the materials to the constituency collation center. A 'good Samaritan' offered to assist with his own vehicle and in the process, bolted with the boxes.

Incidence of Violence

There were reports violence and threats to the electoral officials. There were also threats to burn down some offices of the Electoral Commission in some districts. In addition, there were also reports of violent behavior by political party supporters in some constituencies during polling. These isolated incidents of violence and threats did not affect voting.

General Conclusions

Based on initial reports and returns from our observers, polling proceeded smoothly across the nation, with only minor incidents. From the preliminary reports from our observers, we can say generally that polling on Election Day was peaceful, free, fair and transparent with minor incidents. It must be noted that Ghanaians, in some instances, provided a congenial environment including the provision of benches and chairs for people to sit on. The aged and infirmed were also permitted to vote ahead of those in the queue. The entire voting process is a major achievement of which Ghanaians should be

proud. The peaceful conduct of the elections once again demonstrates the ability of our established institutions to function properly in a democracy.

The coalition commends the various political parties, their supporters and Ghanaians in general for the mature way in which they conducted themselves during the polls and appeals that this maturity should be exhibited in the post-election period. Since all Ghanaians have a stake in the good governance and development of this country, CODEO appeals to all of us to sustain the peace that has prevailed throughout this election period.

Prof. Miranda Greenstreet

Justice V. C. R. A. C. Crabbe

Co-Chairpersons, CODEO
9 December 2004