

THE ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION TO THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS,  
CARRIED OUT BY THE BRITISH ISLANDS AND MEDITERRANEAN REGION OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION OF THE (CPA BIMR)

15th December 2016 Elections to the House of Assembly  
FINAL REPORT

*The Mission would like to thank the Governor and his staff, political parties, media, the electoral authorities, police and most importantly the voters for their cooperation and assistance, and for placing no impediments to observation activities.*

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## Executive Summary

The Election Observation Mission (EOM) to the Turks and Caicos Islands took place between 8th and 18th December 2016, and was made up of six members.

The observers found that the voting and counting process was good or very good in all polling stations visited. Voting was broadly orderly and transparent, and counting was conducted in a transparent and generally well-organised manner.

The increase in the number of polling stations and officials is to be welcomed, however there were still some long queues after opening.

The main problem observed was a lack of consistency, particularly as regards to the layout of polling stations, the way in which Presiding Officers checked their initials on the ballot, and the information that was handwritten on the ballot's counterfoil. However, it is important to stress that these inconsistencies did not have an impact upon the integrity of the process.

The observers recommend introducing a standard layout of polling station and simpler voting procedures. It is also recommended that the process be simplified by removing superfluous requirements such as writing the date of elections on the ballot's counterfoil.

The secrecy of the vote was broadly respected. However polling procedures continued to include the recording of voter's registration numbers on the counterfoil of the ballot paper, which makes all marked ballots traceable. There were also instances of police officers present inside polling stations, in contravention of the law.

As for the counting of the vote, Returning Officers handled this in a professional and orderly manner. However the counting of All Island ballots was particularly time-consuming, and the reporting and announcing of results was not done on a uniform basis in the polling stations visited.

Finally the observers recommend that, after two General Elections, it is now time for a thorough review of the Elections Ordinance. Observers found that there were sometimes piecemeal amendments, such as a recent change to the layout of the ballot paper for the All Islands electoral district. A review would allow for the enactment of a comprehensive new piece of legislation better suited to current requirements.

## **Political Background**

The Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) have the status of a British Overseas Territory. The Governor, appointed by Her Majesty the Queen, has the responsibility of appointing the Premier and a Cabinet of not more than six ministers from among the members of the House of Assembly.

The 15th December 2016 elections to the House of Assembly were the second legislative elections in TCI since the introduction of the direct interim administration by the UK in 2009. This resulted in the TCI Constitution being partially suspended and the Assembly dissolved as a result of the report of the Commission of Inquiry on corrupt practices by senior members of government led by the Peoples National Party (PNP). The then Premier, Michael Misick, who amongst other members of his government is facing charges in court, stood in the 2016 elections as an independent candidate.

The 2012 Election Observer Mission deployed by CPA BIMR and the Association of Caribbean Electoral Organizations concluded that the election process was transparent and accountable and that voting took place in an orderly manner despite organisational shortcomings. The PNP won a narrow majority in the House of Assembly while the opposition People's Democratic Movement (PDM) won six seats.

Following the expiry of the four year mandate of the House of Assembly, new elections were called for 5 December 2016. However, the Governor moved this date to 15 December, to ensure that all deadlines under the Elections Ordinance were complied with.

## **Legislative Framework**

The legal framework for the December 15<sup>th</sup> general elections is to be found in two principal instruments - the Constitution of the Turks and Caicos Islands (Statutory Instrument 2011 No. 1681 UK), as consolidated in December 2014; and the Elections Ordinance (Ordinance 14 of 2012), as amended by a series of three ordinances in 2016. Legal provisions relating to the elections are also to be found in the Political Activities Ordinance 2012 and the Political Activities (Amendment) Ordinance 2016, which regulate campaign finance and related matters. The Turks and Caicos Islands (Electoral District Boundary Commission) Order (UK) 2011 and the Electoral Districts (Boundaries Amendment) Ordinance 2012 established the Commission and created the districts as they are at present delineated. The jurisprudence of the courts of the Turks and Caicos Islands, as in many other common law jurisdictions, also contains some elements of electoral law, regulating matters such as the interpretation of citizenship rules which determine eligibility for membership of the House of Assembly.

The provisions of several pertinent UN human rights instruments - the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination - are applicable to the Turks and Caicos Islands. The European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, including the right of individual petition to the European Court of Human Rights, is also binding. All of these instruments contain provisions which establish the human rights of participation in political life through elections.

The extension of two additional human rights instruments to the Turks and Caicos Islands also merits consideration, as they have a bearing upon political rights. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities would enhance the status of persons with disabilities in political life, both as voters and as candidates. Extension of the Convention against Corruption would reinforce the rules which require transparency in political funding. There ought to be few legal obstacles to extension as the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights is already very developed in these areas of law.

The December 2016 elections are the second cycle of elections to be conducted pursuant to the Constitution of 2011. Amendments to the Elections Ordinance have been made in response to some of the practical experience of implementation of the law. The Elections (Amendment) Ordinance of 2016 amended section 37 of the principal Ordinance to allow for an increase in the number of polling agents to be appointed. Section 44 was amended to allow for forms of government-issued identification to be used to verify voter identity. An amendment to Section 44 (7) reformed the procedure which had required the handing over of the completed ballot papers to the presiding officer, removing the requirement for anyone other than the voter to handle the ballot paper once issued. These amendments are to be welcomed as positive responses to particular problems noted in 2012.

The Elections (Amendment) (No.2) Ordinance 2016 was assented to on October 14<sup>th</sup> 2016, and published in the official *Gazette* on October 21<sup>st</sup> 2016. This amendment changed the layout of the ballot paper for the All Islands electoral district, replacing a standard alphabetical listing of candidates with a series of lists of political parties, within which their candidates were listed alphabetically and vertically, succeeded by a list of independent candidates. On the face of it, such a ballot paper facilitates the political parties in their efforts to secure votes “down the line” for their candidates, to the detriment of independent candidates. A change in the law so close to the election is generally not considered to be good practice internationally, as it is important that all stakeholders are certain of prevailing law well in advance of elections.

The law was also changed to allow the Elections Supervisor to designate the colour of the ballot papers which would be issued. Legal Notice 69 of 2016 stated that purple ballot papers would be used for the All Island ballot paper, and white ones for the geographic districts. Despite the distribution of sample ballot papers in

purple, the ballot paper used on election day was in fact white. It is important too that voter education information is both accurate and widely circulated, sufficiently in advance of the election, to ensure that voters are not confused in the polling booth.

The Political Activities (Amendment) Ordinance 2016 came into operation on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2016. The principal significance of this was the extension of the requirement of registration with the Integrity Commission to independent candidates. It afforded independent candidates and unregistered parties a five-day period in which to seek registration with the Commission once the holding of an election has been proclaimed. While this represents a welcome development in order to promote equality and accountability for all candidates, further amendment is required to subject independent candidates to the weekly reporting requirements as a matter of law.

While prevailing electoral law has only recently been revised, being applicable for just a second electoral cycle as currently codified, there are nonetheless instances in which the clear letter of the law has been disregarded. The Constitution provided, in Article 60, for the establishment of an Electoral District Boundary Commission which would be appointed anew, at the latest at least four years from the report published by the previous such Commission. Despite the clear instruction in the Constitution to this effect, political agreement was not reached to appoint a Commission in advance of these elections, although the last Commission reported in August 2012.

The Constitution also requires that the Commission “shall ensure that the electoral districts contain, so far as is reasonably practicable, approximately equal numbers of persons qualified to be registered as electors”. There were major differences amongst the numbers of voters registered in each district, with the largest, ED 7 Richmond Hill and Cheshire Hall, containing 1,108 registered voters, as compared to the smallest, ED 3 South Caicos, which had just 370 registered voters. It is arguable, therefore, that electoral boundaries have not been drawn in compliance with the Constitution. In addition, the differences in numbers of voters per elected representative undermine the principle of equality of the suffrage and the equal weight of the vote, with a vote in ED 3 having more than three times the power of a vote in ED 7 in electing a representative to the House of Assembly.

**Recommendation 1: consideration should be given to the appointment of an Electoral District Boundary Commission with the intention to revise constituency boundaries and promote equal suffrage.**

**Recommendation 2: additional legal guidance, through amendment of the Elections Ordinance, is necessary to guide any future Electoral District Boundary Commission as to the interpretation and practical application of the Constitutional requirement of equality of districts. As absolute equality is almost impossible to achieve, guidance as to what standard deviation will be tolerated is essential.**

**Recommendation 3:** A thorough review of the Elections Ordinance could be considered in the light of the experience of the two general elections which have been conducted subject to its provisions. This would avoid the practice of piecemeal amendment, and would permit the enactment of a comprehensive new piece of legislation better suited to current requirements.

**Recommendation 4:** An amendment to election law is required to clarify the specifics of Article 49 (1) (a) which deals with disqualification from membership of the House of Assembly on the grounds of dual citizenship and related matters. It is important that detailed legal provisions are advanced in the area, rather than determination on an *ad hoc* basis.

### **Electoral System**

The House of Assembly of the Turks and Caicos Islands consists of nineteen members, fifteen of whom are elected and four appointed. Of the fifteen elected members, ten are elected to represent geographic districts in ten single-member constituencies. Five members are elected in a single All Islands district, within which voters may cast up to five votes on a single ballot paper. Both elections are by means of a simple majority of votes cast.

Of the appointed members, two are appointed by the Governor following consultations with the premier and the leader of the opposition. The other two nominations fall within the absolute discretion of the Governor. There are no term limits in place for either election or appointment to membership of the House of Assembly, meaning that there is no limit on the length of time an individual may serve as a member of the House.

### **The Right to Vote and Voter Registration**

The right to vote is set out in Article 55 of the Constitution, which provides that the right to vote is dependent upon reaching the age of eighteen, being resident in the Turks and Caicos Islands, and being a Turks and Caicos Islander. Inclusion in the register of electors is also required. The residency provision requires that voters should have been resident for twelve of the twenty-four months preceding a qualifying date. Absence from TCI due to service as a member of Her Majesty's Forces, involvement in government business abroad, or engagement in studies overseas will not preclude satisfying the residency requirement.

The status of being a Turks and Caicos Islander - formerly known as "Belonger" status - is regulated by law. The Turks and Caicos Islanders Status Ordinance 2015 repealed pre-existing immigration law, and revised the conditions for the acquisition of Islander status both by right and by grant. The British Nationality Act of 1981 regulates the acquisition of British Overseas Territories Citizenship (BOTC) whereby a person becomes eligible for a BOTC passport. Many people hold both Islander status and a BOTC passport, but it is possible to hold just

one. Regardless of duration of residency or BOTC status, all except Turks and Caicos Islanders are ineligible to vote. This has led to the fact that, out of an estimated population of at least thirty-five thousand people, only 7,726 were eligible to vote.

Persons who are serving a sentence of at least twelve months are not entitled to vote until the sentence has been discharged. Prisoners on remand, and those in detention subject to sentences of less than twelve months, are entitled to vote. While the law is silent on the modalities of voting by prisoners, it does provide that their district of registration continues to be determined by their previous address and not by the location of the prison. The authorities have chosen, therefore, to transport prisoners to vote rather than to establish a polling station within the prison on Grand Turk. The Elections Office reportedly facilitated the voting of ten prisoners for this election. This represents a significant vindication of the right to vote as established in both the Constitution of the Turks and Caicos Islands and the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Article 55 (2) (c) of the Constitution provides that a conviction for an electoral offence disqualifies otherwise eligible voters either from registering to vote, or, if the conviction occurs subsequent to registration, from voting. The Elections Ordinance extrapolates on this disqualification further, providing, in Section 74, that convictions for bribery, treating, undue influence or personation disqualify an individual from registration as a voter for a period of eight years. Convictions for other illegal practices, such as the publication of a false statement that a candidate has withdrawn from the election, or the creation of disorder, lead to disqualification for five years.

The process of voter registration is active and continuous, requiring the voter to apply for inclusion in the register. The closing date for inclusion in the register for the 2016 elections was November 30<sup>th</sup> 2015. The Supervisor of Elections was furnished with information by the Ministry of Border Control as to the status of prospective voters as TC Islanders. The draft register (electors list) was published in January 2016, after which there was a period of claims and objections. Where voters were omitted, or where they found errors in their entry, there was an opportunity to seek rectification. It was also possible for persons to object to inclusions in the register. More than five hundred claims and objections were filed, originating in all ten electoral districts. Authority was vested in the Supervisor of Elections to make determinations and to correct errors. There was a subsequent opportunity to appeal against decisions of the Supervisor of Elections to election adjudicators, the decisions of whom were final and without appeal. The voter lists, which appear to be largely accurate, were published in a timely manner, as required by the law.

The total number of registered voters on the 2016 Register is 7,726. This is lower, however, than the number of potentially eligible voters. The Supervisor of Elections has reported that Jehovah's Witnesses with Island status have chosen not to register. Some persons may have encountered difficulties in securing the documents

required to register, such as student status papers overseas or Islander status certification documentation. It is crucially important that efforts to promote registration are undertaken on an ongoing basis, with the goal of increasing the proportion of eligible voters registered to vote.

**Recommendation 5: Consider extension of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to the Turks and Caicos Islands, in order to further promote the realisation of the political rights of persons with disabilities, as this would enhance the legal rights of persons with disabilities to participate in political life.**

**Recommendation 6: It is crucially important that voter registration efforts are undertaken on an ongoing basis, with the goal of increasing the proportion of eligible voters registered to vote.**

### **Candidate Registration**

The right to stand for election is set out in Article 46 of the Constitution. This provides that candidates must be 21 years of age on the date of nomination, must have been resident in the Turks and Caicos Islands for twelve of the preceding twenty-four months, and must be a Turks and Caicos Islander. Candidates must also satisfy the qualifications to be included in the register of electors.

Beyond this, candidates will be disqualified if they are, by their “own act, under any acknowledgement of allegiance, obedience or adherence to any foreign power or state”. The interpretation of this Constitutional provision has been a matter of some controversy in previous elections, with the Supreme Court of the Turks and Caicos Islands adjudicating upon the matter in the case of *Selver v Smith Missick and Others* (judgment January 9<sup>th</sup> 2013). It was determined at that time that the acquisition of foreign citizenship by naturalisation would disqualify a potential candidate.

The nature of this disqualification is somewhat ambiguous at present due to case-law in jurisdictions with similar legal provisions which have had different outcomes. This makes it difficult for candidates to be certain as to the steps which must be taken to avoid disqualification. Clarification of this legal issue is imperative, well in advance of future elections, in order that all potential candidates may be certain of what rules they must comply with.

Individuals who hold public office, or who are serving as judges or magistrates, are ineligible to run for election, as are persons who have any responsibility for the conduct of elections. Persons who are declared bankrupt are similarly ineligible, as are persons holding contracts with the Government, unless they have made appropriate declarations to the Integrity Commission. Convictions for offences of corruption, or offences relating to political party regulation or the misuse of public funds also disqualify potential

candidates. The imposition of a prison sentence of twelve months or more disqualifies an individual for a period of fifteen years thereafter. This appears to go beyond international norms on the right of political participation, which require that political rights must be restored within a reasonable time upon completion of sentence.

The formal writ for election was issued by the Governor on October 31<sup>st</sup> 2016. Nomination Day was held on November 18<sup>th</sup> during which a total of fifty-two candidates were nominated to run for election. These were comprised of thirty-one candidates for the ten geographic districts and twenty-one competing in the All Island district. The PNP and PDM parties each fielded fifteen candidates, while the PDA had twelve. There was a total of ten independent candidates, three within geographic districts and seven within the All Island District. Candidate registration was inclusive, thus offering voters a genuine choice from among a plurality of political alternatives. All candidates paid a deposit of \$500 USD. No objection was made to any candidate.

While there are no affirmative action provisions in electoral law to promote the participation of women or other traditionally marginalised groups, a guarantee of equality is set out in Article 7 of the Constitution. There is also protection from discrimination in Article 16 which prohibits discriminatory treatment on the grounds of race, religion, language, sex, and sexual orientation, among other grounds. A significant number of female candidates contested the elections. The first female premier, Sharlene Cartwright Robinson, was elected on behalf of the Peoples' Democratic Movement.

### **Campaign and campaign finance**

The CPA EOM observed a number of rallies conducted by the PDM and the PNP. Some of these were robust and lively events, featuring speakers, music and fireworks, however others did not seem to attract large audiences. No concerns were articulated by any interlocutors concerning their right to campaign, indicating that the freedoms of assembly, association and expression were respected. Public campaigning was prohibited on election day, as was canvassing within 150 yards of polling stations. Posters or other election materials could not be visible from polling stations. All of these rules were well respected, according to the observations of the EOM.

The Political Activities Ordinance 2012 is an anti-corruption measure which was introduced to promote transparency in political financing, both during elections and on an ongoing basis. It established the Integrity Commission and required that all donations and expenditure connected with elections must be recorded and reported to the Commission, with information subsequently made public. Any party or individual wishing to contest elections must apply to be registered with the Commission before candidates may be nominated. Once the writ for the election was published, un-registered parties and independent candidates had an

opportunity to apply for registration. Reports of all donations received and all expenditure incurred during the 365 days prior to the date of such application had to be submitted with the application.

The Integrity Commission has the general function of monitoring compliance with the rules in the Political Activities Ordinance. Reports must be submitted weekly during the campaign period by political parties as to donations received, while both political parties and independent candidates must file full returns of campaign expenditure after the election. A limit on expenditure was set at \$600,000 USD maximum per political party where it nominates the maximum number of candidates for all fifteen seats. There are also some restrictions in place on donations, as well as on spending by third parties. Additionally, expenditure may not be made to pay for travel to vote. This Ordinance, as well as the rules in the Elections Ordinance against “treating”, is aimed at reducing the influence of money on voters during the election campaign.

Enforcement action is possible under the Political Activities Ordinance. In February 2016 the People Progressive Party (PPP) was removed from the Commission’s Register of registered parties for failure to comply with its reporting and notification obligations under the Ordinance. The enactment of the Political Activities (Amendment) Ordinance, extending the application of the law further to independent candidates, is a welcome contribution towards continued enhancement of the transparency of campaign finance. It is imperative that the momentum in this sphere continues to be built upon, further extending the full measures on reporting and disclosure to independent candidates as well as to political parties.

**Recommendation 7: Consider extension of the Convention against Corruption to the Turks and Caicos Islands - to further bolster the work of the Integrity Commission in enhancing the transparency of campaign finance.**

### **Election Administration**

The elections in TCI are conducted by an independent Supervisor of Elections - appointed by the Governor - and over 200 election officials including permanent staff of the Elections Office, 11 Returning Officers and their assistants as well as over 190 Presiding Officers and poll clerks. The number of polling officials has substantially increased since 2012 in order to accelerate the voting process and to avoid long queues in front of polling stations which was the main problem in the last elections. Similarly, the number of polling stations increased from 17 to 21.

While the Supervisor of Elections has overall responsibility for nation-wide coordination of elections’ preparation and voter registration, the management of the electoral process in each District was under the responsibility of the Returning Officers. They were *inter alia* in charge of receiving and processing nominations of candidates, establishing polling stations as well as tabulating and declaring the results in their

respective constituency. Each Returning Officer had two or more Assistant Returning Officers who had also the power of Presiding Officers while visiting polling stations on the Election Day.

The Supervisor and his staff administered the elections in a transparent and impartial manner and technical preparations for the elections were accomplished successfully. The election officials appeared to enjoy the broad confidence of stakeholders. In a welcome development, the Elections Office published several manuals including handbooks for polling agents and returning officers as well as a nomination pack for candidates and a briefing for police officers.

The election officials conducted a nationwide voter education campaign with posters and leaflets explaining the voting process, including ballot marking on a newly designed All Island ballot paper. The posters and leaflets also dealt with access for persons with disabilities. A two-day training session was also held for polling officials.

### **Complaints and Appeals**

The Supreme Court has the jurisdiction to hear and determine election petitions and to challenge the validity of the election of members of the House of Assembly. The decision of the Supreme Court in this matter is stated to be final and without recourse to appeal. Election petitions must be filed within seven days of the election return.

There is a tendency to seek recourse to the courts in electoral matters. In 2003 the determination of an election petition resulted in the quashing of an election result which led to a change in government. Three election petitions were filed following the 2012 election, one of which, the case of *Selver v Smith Missick and Others*,, was successful. This resulted in the voidance of an election to the House. The results were set aside and a by-election had to be conducted.

The EOM was not informed of any concerns regarding the adjudication of election related disputes. There were expressions of confidence in the ability of the Judiciary to determine any such cases in accordance with the law.

### **Voting and Counting of Votes**

Election Day was very peaceful across TCI. The EOM observers visited 19 of the 21 polling stations and assessed the process as “very good” or “good” in all stations visited. The polling officials, most of whom were women, acted professionally and appeared to be dedicated to their public service. Voting took place in an orderly and transparent manner yet the efficiency of the process could have been improved by streamlining the superfluous

and out-dated procedures such as asking voters to state their occupation or writing the date of elections on the ballot.

Polling staff displayed competence and commitment in the discharge of their duties on election day. Infelicities observed were almost all due either to anachronistic procedures or to an absence of instructions related to procedures. The EOM would like to make particular mention of the returning officer for ED 1, Grand Turk, the Rev. Dennis Swan, who conducted his duties in an exemplary manner, despite the sad fact that his mother had died on the evening before the election and the funeral was awaited.

Some polling stations visited by the observers opened with a half-hour delay. A few observer teams noted some confusion of polling officials regarding the required opening procedures. There were long queues after opening of polling stations as many voters decided to vote in the morning and some of them had to wait even 3-4 hours to vote. The queues were orderly in all localities observed. In the afternoon, however, the situation improved significantly and there were almost no queues in the polling stations visited.

In nearly all cases, the understanding of voting process by poll officials, voters and candidates' agents was assessed as "very good" or "good". The poll officials' understanding of the procedures was assessed as "bad" in only one polling station visited. The voters could access polling stations without any intimidation or obstacle. However, two polling stations in the Elections District 4 were assessed as not having a reasonable access for persons with a disability.

The main problem observed was the lack of consistency in the voting process across TCI, particularly as regards to the layout of polling stations, the way in which Presiding Officers checked their initials on the ballot, and the information that was handwritten on the ballot's counterfoil. However these inconsistencies did not have an impact on the integrity of the process. In all stations visited the voting procedures were explained to the voters, but it was not always made clear that voters could vote for up to five candidates.

No instances of undue interference by candidates or their agents were noted. While not a single case of proxy voting was observed, cases of group voting were noted in two polling stations.

The requirement of marking voters' fingers was not sufficiently regulated thus there was a variety of practice observed such as whether it was a thumb, palm or index finger that was marked. In one polling station visited, voters' fingers were not marked at all. Importantly, there was no requirement for checking of voters' hands for traces of ink prior to issuing of ballots which could have eliminated the possibility of multiple voting.

The transparency was improved by the presence of Candidates and their agents in all PS visited, however some party agents were wearing clothing in the colours of the political parties.

The secrecy of the vote was broadly respected. However, polling procedures continued to include the recording of voter's registration number on the counterfoil of the ballot paper, which makes all marked ballots traceable, potentially undermining the secrecy of the vote. There were also instances of police officers present inside polling stations in contravention to the recent amendments to the elections ordinance. Observers also noted that there was inconsistency as to whether people assisting someone to vote had to swear an oath. Two requests for an open vote were observed - one was accepted and one was refused. Finally, isolated cases of group voting were noted, although these can be attributed to poor layout of voting booths in the polling station.

Counting was conducted in a transparent and generally well-organised manner in the presence of candidates and their agents. The counting of "all-islands" ballots was particularly difficult and time-consuming. The reporting and announcement of results was not done uniformly in the polling stations visited. There was one instance of recount of ballots in Election District 6.

Turnout of 81% was high, although slightly down on the 84% turnout of the 2012 General Election. This was despite a slightly complex voting system with two ballot papers, and with one of the papers (for the all-island constituency) containing 14 names from the three parties and seven independents. The number of spoiled votes for both the 10 constituencies (0.46%) and the all-island vote (0.78%) were both encouragingly low. This indicates that voting arrangements were well explained to the electorate before polling day and in the polling station.

- **Recommendation 8:** Consideration should be given to ensuring more consistency in the voting process through introduction of a standard layout of polling stations and simpler voting procedures.
- **Recommendation 9:** Voting procedures could be simplified by removing superfluous requirements for writing the date of elections on the ballot's counterfoil and for checking the initials of presiding officer on the counterfoil before ballot is cast.
- **Recommendation 10:** There is an urgent need to either end the practice of marking voters' fingers with ink, or to elaborate detailed procedures on application and checking before the issuing of a ballot paper.
- **Recommendation 11:** Displaying of results outside of each polling station would increase transparency and confidence in the outcome of elections.

### **Mission Information**

The Election Observation Mission to the Turks and Caicos Islands was led by Mr Jim Wells MLA (Northern Ireland) and was composed of Election Analysts Ms Anne Marlborough (Ireland) and Mr Konrad Olszewski (Poland), Short-Term Observers Hon. Michael Stewart MP (Jamaica) and Mrs Shivonne White (Montserrat), and Mission Coordinator Mr Alasdair Rendall (UK). The mission arrived in Turks and Caicos on 8 December 2016. Observers met with representatives of the two main political parties, election officials and other key stakeholders.

Observers also monitored three political rallies. On election day, observers visited polling stations on Providenciales, North Caicos, Middle Caicos and Grand Turk.

- ENDS -

## APPENDIX - Election Results

GENERAL ELECTIONS 2016 - RETURNS									
Electoral District	Political Party	Name of Candidate	Results	Registered Voters	Total Ballots Cast	Percentage Turn Out	No. of Persons not Voted	Rejected Ballots	Spoil Ballots
01 Grand Turk North	P.D.M	Derek Rolle	273	709	599	84.49	110		
	P.D.A	Kwame Odinga Smith	21						
	P.N.P	<b>George Lightbourne</b>	305						
02 Grand Turk South and Salt Cay	P.D.M	<b>Edwin Astwood</b>	399	908	753	82.93	155		
	P.D.A	Noel Terrence Skipping	66						
	P.N.P	Arthur Lightbourne	276						
	IND	Valerie Jennings	12						
3 South Caicos	P.D.M	Kenon Forbes	70	371	319	85.98	52	7	
	P.D.A	Christopher Hall	6						
	P.N.P	<b>Ruth Blackman</b>	146						
	I.N.D	Mc Allister Hanchell	97						
4 North & Middle Caicos	P.D.M	<b>Ralph Higgs</b>	262	521	463	88.87	58		
	P.N.P	Mark Fulford	201						
5 Leeward	P.D.M	Ezra Taylor	289	828	682	82.37	146	3	3
	P.D.A	Calsade Johnson	17						
	P.N.P	<b>Akierra Missick</b>	376						
6 The Bight	P.D.M	George C.D. Pratt	284	814	607	74.57	207		
	P.N.P	<b>Porsha Stubbs</b>	285						
	P.D.A	Dozzie McLom Delancy	38						
7 Cheshire Hall & Richmond Hill	P.D.M	<b>Douglas Parnell</b>	451	1109	841	75.83	268	18	
	P.D.A	Charles Delancy	43						
	P.N.P	Amanda Missick	347						
ED 8	P.D.M	<b>McMillian Goldray Ewing</b>	366	893	670	75.03	223		8
	P.D.A	Ciclyn Been	37						
	P.N.P	Claudine Ewing-Pratt	267						
ED 9	P.D.M	<b>Sean Astwood</b>	470	983	754	76.70	229		10
	P.D.A	Bobbie Chambers	15						
	P.N.P	Rachel Marshall Taylor	269						
ED 10	P.D.M	<b>Vaden Delroy Williams</b>	305	596	501	84.06	95		
	I.N.D	Hudson James Parker	23						
	P.N.P	Dameko Dean	173						
<b>Totals</b>			<b>5993</b>	<b>7732</b>	<b>6189</b>	<b>81.08</b>	<b>1543</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>21</b>

**ALL ISLAND DISTRICT  
GENERAL ELECTION 2016  
RETURNS**

NAME OF CANDIDATE	POLITICAL PARTY	ED1	ED2	ED3	ED4	ED5	ED6	ED7	ED8	ED9	ED10	Totals	% TURN OUT
Shariene Cartwright Robinson	PDM	257	420	81	163	331	302	437	359	400	274	3024	39.11
Josephine Olivia Connolly	PDM	281	442	81	162	330	298	426	345	381	273	3019	39.05
Hugh Derek Taylor	PDM	254	417	64	146	293	258	366	355	356	231	2740	35.44
Robert A. Been	PDM	214	357	51	133	227	203	315	261	341	212	2314	31.94
Karen Evadne Malcolm	PDM	237	417	67	152	304	254	369	296	368	261	2725	37.61
Rufus Washington Ewing	PNP	288	245	191	166	270	227	280	229	200	138	2234	30.84
Charles Washington Misick	PNP	290	254	199	168	276	232	278	233	252	153	2335	32.23
Sheba Latrice Wilson	PNP	214	165	173	114	227	195	250	184	208	131	1861	25.69
John Malcolm	PNP	245	222	226	145	227	182	242	174	215	133	2011	27.76
Ricardo Don-Hue Gardiner	PNP	248	181	158	131	214	191	261	202	194	121	1901	26.24
Oswald Skipings	PDA	40	78	29	14	70	54	81	68	66	49	549	7.58
Herbert Andrew Swann jr.	PDA	10	25	7	4	12	22	29	10	10	6	135	1.86
Shirley Louise Clarke-Calcano	PDA	17	25	7	3	20	24	34	18	22	8	178	2.46
Samuel Iotis Harvey	PDA	13	27	10	22	25	33	48	34	30	13	255	3.52
Michael Misick	IND	133	141	92	117	181	167	209	213	257	119	1629	22.48
Damian Wilson	IND	20	14	4	6	30	32	36	16	20	28	206	2.84
Clarence Wesley Selver	IND	28	40	7	14	42	38	56	21	39	16	301	4.15
Sabrina Elizebeth Green	IND	64	119	20	6	96	65	115	76	65	49	675	9.32
Oscar O'Brien Forbes	IND	4	4	3	3	10	9	7	8	5	14	67	0.92
Jasmin Walkin	IND	27	50	21	33	120	104	156	109	97	117	834	11.51
Courtney Missick	IND	4	15	12	27	38	26	44	25	31	18	240	3.31
<b>TOTAL ELECTORAL DISTRICT</b>		<b>2888</b>	<b>3658</b>	<b>1503</b>	<b>1729</b>	<b>3343</b>	<b>2916</b>	<b>4039</b>	<b>3236</b>	<b>3557</b>	<b>2364</b>		
Rejected				7				7				29233	
SPOILED							10		5	14	17	5846.6	
											<b>Electorate</b>	7732	
											<b>Turnout</b>	75.62%	