



AFRICA and the NEAR EAST



EXTENDING THE REACH OF DEMOCRACY

SEPTEMBER 2003

RWANDA

On August 25, 2003, Rwanda held its first presidential elections, marking the end of a nine-year transitional government established after the 1994 genocide. The presidential elections were also the first in Rwandan history with more than one candidate. Rwanda's first multiparty direct and indirect parliamentary elections will follow on 29, 30 September and 2 October.

Prior to the presidential election, the National Electoral Commission's final list of presidential candidates included incumbent Paul Kagame of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), former Prime Minister and independent candidate Faustin twagiramungu, Dr. Alivera Mukabaramba of the Concord Progressive Party (PPC) and independent candidate Nepomuscene Nayinzira. On the eve of the elections, the PPC withdrew its candidate and informed its supporters to extend their support to the RPF.



IFES observers, Pierre Cornillon and M. Aliyu Yandoto, at the opening of the polls for the presidential election in the Cyangugu province.

Twagiramungu, considered as Kagame's only real challenger, encountered several difficulties during his campaign and several diplomatic missions and international organizations called on the Rwanda government to allow free campaigning and a fair and transparent electoral process.

On August 25, elections were held throughout Rwanda's 12 provinces. No major incidents of violence were reported. Incumbent Paul Kagame won with 3,544,777 votes, equaling 95.05% of total votes cast while his closest challenger, Faustin Twagiramungu only received 3.62% of the votes and Jean Nepomuscene Nayinzira, had 1.33%. Shortly after the elections, Twagiramungu filed a petition to nullify the polls, making allegations of vote rigging, intimidation of his supporters, general violation of the electoral law and pressure on voters to choose Kagame. Twagiramungu's petition was dismissed by the Supreme Court on September 2, due to a lack of evidence

Activities

In July 2003, with a grant from USAID through CEPPS, IFES conducted a 2-week pre-election technical assessment for Rwanda's presidential and legislative elections. The scope of the mission was to collect pre-election data and to assess electoral preparations in Rwanda to determine whether or not to mount an observation effort.

From 23-26 August, IFES observers were deployed in two person teams to seven of Rwanda's twelve Provinces: Ville de Kigali, Kigali-Ngali, Cyangugu, Gisenyi, Gitarama, Kibungo and Ruhengeri. The 14-member Mission was comprised of 5 election officials from various African countries, 3 officials of non-governmental or inter-governmental organizations focusing on governance issues and elections, one expert on Rwanda, and IFES' consultants and staff members.

Elections

Governance

Civil Society

Rule of Law

**AFRICA AND THE NEAR EAST
Monthly Report**

In this Issue...

Rwanda	p. 1
Angola	p. 2
Bahrain, Oman, & Qatar	p. 3
Burundi	p. 4
Democratic Republic of Congo	p. 5
Egypt	p. 6
Guinea	p. 6
Iraq	p. 7
Jordan	p. 8
Kenya	p. 8
Liberia	p. 9
Niger	p. 9
Nigeria	p. 9
Sierra Leone	p. 11
South Africa	p. 11
West Bank & Gaza	p. 12
Yemen	p. 12



Election officials opening a ballot box after the closing of the polls of Rwanda's recent presidential election.

On election-day, August 25, 2003, the IFES delegation visited 34 of the country's 106 districts and 117 of the 11,350 polling stations. IFES produced a technical report on its observations for Rwanda's election authority, with the intention that some of the team's recommendations might be implemented in time for the legislative elections.

IFES will observe the direct and indirect legislative elections, scheduled for September 29-October 2, 2003.

ANGOLA

IFES is currently conducting program activities in Angola in conjunction with its partners, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI). As a focus of the 2003 project, IFES is targeting support to the election process in Angola. In consultation with government leaders, civil society and the international community, IFES is assessing the current level of election preparations and the legal and regulatory framework for elections.

One of the objectives of the IFES project in Angola is to provide recommendations to key administrators within the Government of the Republic of Angola (GRA) on the review of the electoral law and

regulations, in preparation for the approval of new legislation and the creation of election management bodies. As a background to this objective, IFES and its partners discussed the need for an in-depth study of the 1992 election experience. The findings were published in the form of a book and Onofre dos Santos, the former Director of Elections, was recruited to conduct the research and author the book.

The book report was launched during a conference entitled *"Angolan Elections: Lessons for the Future,"* which took place on July 23, 2003. The conference gathered high level officials from the GRA, political parties, civil society and other stakeholders to review the administration and technical challenges of the 1992 elections. The discussions highlighted technical issues that will facilitate IFES' work with its counterparts in preparation for Angola's next presidential and legislative elections.

IFES identified Mr. Samuel Kivuitu, Chairman of the Electoral Commission of Kenya, to serve as a speaker at the conference. As an international election expert, Mr. Kivuitu made a presentation on the challenges to the conduct of elections in the context of Angola, based on his experiences in Kenya. He shared Kenya's experiences in establishing and strengthening an independent electoral commission and conducting credible elections.

Also in July 2003, consultant Maria Helena Alves and IFES Senior Program Officer Laurie Cooper traveled to Angola to meet with primary interlocutors on the election process including the newly-appointed Director of Elections, the former National Electoral Council (CNE) president and the donor community. This visit was the first of a series of consultative visits to facilitate a technical assistance project based on needs jointly identified and agreed. In addition, the team participated in the rollout of the book report at the conference.

BAHRAIN, OMAN, AND QATAR

The IFES electoral assistance project located in Bahrain also operates in Qatar and Oman. It focuses on strengthening country-specific electoral processes, increasing citizen participation through greater access to information, and building regional linkages to facilitate the exchange of information on country initiatives in democratic reforms. IFES Pro-

ject Manager Nora Kankashian has established linkages and cooperative relationships with local partners, including NGOs, electoral officials, political societies, parliamentarians, municipal council representatives and the UNDP.



Participants from Qatar examining election material from Yemen during the Consultative meeting held in Bahrain.

Under a Travel Warning issued by the U.S. Department of State on February 12, 2003, Ms. Kankashian left the region in mid-March. She returned to the region in late April, in time for Qatar's April 29 constitutional referendum. In Qatar, she met with the newly formed election commission, put into position a day in advance of the referendum. Approximately 96% of Qatari voters cast their ballots in favor of the amended constitution, which calls for the nation's first parliamentary elections in less than two years.

In June, election officials from the Gulf region held a consultative meeting in Manama, Bahrain, from June 23 to 25, 2003, at the invitation of IFES. The participants, including officials from the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Republic of Yemen, gathered to discuss election administration and best practices from the IFES election assistance project in Yemen. Omani election officials were unable to attend the meeting. This is the first time that cooperation at this level had ever been initiated amongst these countries. Moreover, this was the first time such a meeting was even possible given the tense political environment in the region.

During the meeting, the participants gave an overview of election administration in their countries and exchanged experiences on such issues as voter education; voter registration; and the role of

women in elections. IFES followed by presenting a comprehensive overview of international standards for elections to provide a framework for discussion in the remaining days of the meeting. Throughout the meeting, IFES staff also consulted individually with the country representatives individually to learn more about election processes in their countries and possible areas for targeted electoral assistance. IFES observed that there is a genuine interest in the region to exchange and learn from each others experiences with election administration and that IFES should capitalize on this momentum and continue to organize such events that can serve as precursor to the establishment an official regional association of election officials that could be expanded to include countries such as Kuwait and Jordan. During that time, IFES Program Assistant, Lorraine Marulanda traveled to Bahrain to assist with project activities and establish contacts with local partners.



Participants at the "Mobilization for Peace" march in Bururi province.

In September, IFES closed its Bahrain office. IFES intends to maintain contact with election officials in the Persian Gulf in order to identify future opportunities for future collaboration.

BURUNDI

BURUNDI INITIATIVE FOR PEACE — MAKING THE PEACE PROCESS TANGIBLE

The Burundi Initiative for Peace (BIP) supports the implementation of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Accords (APRA), promoting community cohesion through a sub-grant program made possible with

funding from the USAID Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI).

May 1, 2003 was a watershed moment for both the nation of Burundi and the BIP project, as Presidential power was transferred as stipulated in the Arusha Accords. Though insecurity was a concern towards the end of April, the transfer of power occurred peacefully on May 1. For many Burundians this transition marked a significant step forward in the peace process. In late April, BIP began a series of high-profile "Mobilization for Peace" events. These activities included a national-scale "Walk for Peace," on April 20 in which over 50,000 citizens participated in the walk in 13 provinces: Bujumbura Rurale, Bururi, Cankuzo, Cibitoke, Gitega, Karuzi, Kirundo, Muramvya, Muyinga, Mwaro, Ngozi, and Ruyigi. In addition, radio programs focusing on peace were aired throughout the day.

Following the walk and on the day of the transition, the communities in each of the provinces joined together in expressions of national unity through music, dance, and discussions on peace and the future of Burundi.

In spite of the peaceful transition in May, in mid-July serious violence erupted in and around the capitol, Bujumbura. Negotiations with the rebels followed the attacks, but though the situation had improved as of early August, it is not yet clear if these negotiations will be successful. This breakdown of the peace process marks a significant setback for the transition to peace.

In addition to the activities surrounding the May 1st transition, the BIP program began activities under the Good Governance Program in the provinces of Ngozi, Kayanza, and Muramvya in 23 different communes. Using the training-of-trainers methodology, the program is in the process of training over 4,000 people in 74 different zones on transparency and good governance on the local level.

Though the insecurity created programmatic delays to a certain extent in mid-July, BIP continued with a project for the National Assembly and Senate of Burundi to provide both houses with a cyber café. These cyber cafes are designed to assist the Parliamentarians in accessing the Internet and to give them computer skills which will enable them to more effectively conduct their jobs. Equipment for both cyber cafes has been installed, and IFES expects that the opening ceremony for this activity will be held in early October.

GREAT LAKES JUSTICE INITIATIVE – RESPONDING TO THE SILENT MAJORITY

Under the Great Lakes Justice Initiative (GLJI), IFES seeks to strengthen the rule of law and promote human rights in Burundi. Working with local radio stations African Public Radio [RPA] and Radio Bonasha, IFES produced and aired radio shows on the peace process and the presidential transition, based on the radio call-in format previously designed by IFES.

Follow-up discussion groups were held with the civil society network in the province of Kayanza. This follow-up work helped the network identify activities they wish to undertake and prioritize their needs for the immediate future. Discussion groups in Bubanza and Makamba were scheduled for early August but due to insecurity in these provinces, local staff were prevented from traveling outside of the capital.

Working with the Burundi-based research organization, CRID, a workshop was held in mid-August on the perceptions of elections in Burundi. This workshop brought together leaders of political parties, civil society groups, politicians, and other key constituencies to discuss different types of election systems and the importance of elections in Burundi. IFES/Kenya Program Manager, Theo Noel led the workshop, which was well-attended and received extensive media coverage. Results from the workshop included a signed agreement by participants to lobby the Burundian government to provide civic education and elections training prior to conducting the scheduled elections.

In late August, a follow-up workshop was held with the civil society network leaders in Bujumbura. This workshop enabled civil society leaders to discuss with one another their experiences in their respective provinces, to share lessons learned, and to discuss priorities for civil society in Burundi in the future. Representatives from the three provinces of Makamba, Kayanza, and Bubanza were present, as well as representatives from USAID and key political parties.

In accordance with its funding and program calendar, IFES will close its GLJI office in Burundi on September 30, 2003. IFES wishes to thank the Burundi staff, including IFES Burundi's Program Manager Philippe Lamarche and its local employees and consultants for the tremendous work and efforts deployed in Burundi since 2000. IFES looks forward to future opportunities to support Burundi's peace process and its democratic development.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

IFES' activities in the DRC gained momentum under the guidance of acting Country Director Ahmed Shariff and Senior Specialist Micheline Begin, who arrived in Kinshasa on June 1, 2003. The three Peace and Democracy Resource Centers in Kinshasa, Kikwit and Lubumbashi continue to attract a combined weekly attendance of almost 1,000 people, indicating the continued high value that Congolese citizens place on information; and on the centers as locations for not only current information and internet training but as neutral forums to engage in constructive dialogue on the DRC's transition. 85 civil society partners throughout the DRC receive weekly electronic information dispatches, complemented in Kinshasa by 8 drop-off points for hard copies, which also serve as loci for debates and animations on issues surrounding the transition.



Micheline Begin and the Independent Electoral Commission staff.

A local IFES partner successfully received funding from USAID-OTI in July to complete the activity "Laying the Groundwork for an Independent Electoral Commission," which IFES has supported since October 2002. The formal adoption ceremony of the document detailing the composition, responsibilities and code of conduct of the Commission took place on July 30th in the presence of civil society delegates from each of the DRC's eleven provinces. Pursuant to the lifting of Brooke Amendment sanctions, IFES will support civil society in its efforts to present the transitional parliament with the document.

IFES recognized that the creation in July 2003 of the transitional government and the implementation of the two-year calendar for the holding of national elections necessitated an increased focus on building the capacity of the institutions that will support the

process. As part of this focus, IFES quickly established close links with the nominated president of the Independent Electoral Commission, responsible for heading the body that the transitional parliament will ultimately create, and has provided technical advice and recommendations on the immediate and longer-term strategy for the Commission.



Civil society drafting committee transmitting the bill creating the future Congolese electoral commission to the of CEI on Aug. 25, 2003.

Both the acting country director and elections expert have been highly active in informing the international community centered in Kinshasa about IFES' continued presence and researching possibilities of additional support.

EGYPT

In late February, IFES helped host the "Second Arab Justice Conference: *Supporting and Advancing Judicial Independence.*" A joint effort between IFES, the UNDP, and the Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession (ACIJLP), the conference brought together judges, lawyers, academics and civil society representatives to debate the state of judicial independence in the Arab region. Conference outcomes focused on recommendations to more effectively promote and monitor judicial reforms.

In the interest of more effective promotion of a strategic judicial reform agenda, the conferees produced the *Cairo Declaration*. A regional consensus document, the declaration outlines a living framework for monitoring and reporting judicial reform initiatives across the region by civil society and gov-

ernment. Follow-on work to ensure that these important regional documents are implemented is being explored.

In May, IFES sponsored several of the participants from the Cairo conference to take part in the 11th annual International Judicial Conference on "Courts of Ultimate Appeal: Issues of Judicial Independence," that was held in Washington, D.C. The conference is a joint initiative between The Center for Democracy, the Furth Family Foundation and IFES.

GUINEA

Political tension is increasing in Guinea as the period of the December 2003 presidential election approaches. The revision of the voters list started in early June but without the support and participation of the major opposition political parties. No formal date for the elections has been announced and the lack of confidence in the electoral process is evidenced by opposition political party representatives who state that only President Conte can re-initiate the stalled dialogue between political parties and the administration.

On August 21, representatives of 16 political parties outlined a series of recommendations to be implemented prior to engaging in dialogue with the government of Guinea. Recommendations include equal access to the media for all political party representatives as stated in article 20 of the Organic Law, freedom of movement for opposition leaders and freedom to assemble. Political party representatives also requested that Elhadj Fodé Soumah, cease all campaign activities for the Party of Unity and Progress (PUP), Guinea's ruling party. Opposition parties are still willing to engage in dialogue on issues related to the electoral process but stated their preference that external actors facilitate these dialogues.

According to a number of interlocutors, the government has the resources to organize the presidential election by the end of the year without the assistance of the international community. (Similar to the conditions prevalent prior to the 2002 legislative elections.) However, the deteriorating economic condition and recent incidents in Coyah involving newly established security forces and in Conakry involving the RPG along with other factors may result in the government postponing the election. One of

these factors is President Conte's health. The president recently appeared on television and publicly admitted he is ill, generating further speculation as to whether he will run for the presidency or will identify someone to run in his stead.

CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING PROGRAM

On April 18, IFES co-hosted a meeting with the education ministry which assembled over 45 key actors involved in civic education activities in Guinea. During the meeting, International and local NGO's, teachers' unions, school and government officials discussed challenges faced while conducting civic education activities in Guinea and identified strategies to improve their efforts.



Local trainer during a civic education training session.

IFES' voter education campaign took place from May 9-June 6, in Guinea's seven administrative regions. As part of the campaign, 142 trainers conducted over 1,200 animation sessions on the electoral process, engaging approximately 200,000 citizens in a dialogue on voter's rights and responsibilities, the voting procedures as well as the role of political parties, the government and civil society organizations in the electoral process.

As part of its voter education campaign, IFES organized 7 roundtables throughout Guinea on the electoral process and the necessity for dialogue among the actors involved in this process. Participants included delegates from ruling and opposition parties, government and CSO representatives and local elected officials. During the roundtable, participants identified common issues of concern, ways to address these issues and actions to be taken by all actors involved in the electoral process to promote

dialogue. IFES distributed a booklet on the electoral process and the necessity for social dialogue to the conferences' participants.

On September 6, 2003, IFES will conduct a rapid overview of the past and potential future role of the media in communicating with Guineans at the national, regional and local level. Through this assessment, IFES will evaluate the status of electronic media for Guinea. IFES will also identify media strengthening programs currently active in Guinea. Following the conclusion of this assessment, IFES will organize a roundtable on the use of the media as an outreach tool to continue the dialogue initiated through the IFES civil society program.

IRAQ

As a member of the "Iraq Local Governance" team led by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI,) IFES is recruiting election experts to be deployed to Iraq to assist in the development of municipal, local, and eventually national elections. The current conditions in Iraq have prevented the authorities from providing IFES with a better timeline regarding exactly when these experts will be needed and deployed. In addition to the election component, RTI has also expressed interest in harnessing IFES' rule of law expertise in development of a new constitution in Iraq.

In early September, IFES was tapped to undertake a large Pre-Election Technical Assessment in Iraq. Under guidance from the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), IFES assembled a team of election experts capable of successfully carrying out this assessment by producing a comprehensive final report. The assessment team is currently documenting in detail the political environment, capacity (or lack thereof) of existing electoral structures and institutions as well as the degree of viability, technical readiness, and capacity of existing institutions along with many other issues.

The assessment team's report will provide recommendations regarding the feasibility of, and requirements for, holding genuine elections at the national, provincial, and local levels, as well as a constitutional referendum preceding an election. The team will also present a range of options for consideration for an electoral process. Although the assessment is still underway and despite considerable security

concerns, significant strides are being made both in the field and in Washington towards setting an appropriate timetable and achieving significant results.

JORDAN

In May, IFES received funding from USAID award to assess and report on the Jordanians' election management and administration plans, provide limited, direct election technical advice to the election authority, and to outline a longer-term electoral support plan for Jordan. To that end, IFES/Yemen Project Manager, Enrique Saltos, traveled to Amman to observe the first parliamentary elections in Jordan under King Abdullah II on June 17, 2003. While in Jordan, Mr. Saltos met with political party representatives, candidates, media representatives, NDI, and embassy officials on a variety of issues applicable to the elections to better assess the political atmosphere in Jordan. Also, during King Abdullah's recent visit to Washington, IFES was among the US NGO invitees to join the King in a discussion of human rights and democracy related issues. This working breakfast provided considerable insight into the King's agenda for Jordan and helped IFES establish and solidify necessary relationships to make eventual activities in Jordan a success.

KENYA

At the request of the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK), Project Manager Theo Noel applied the communication network to three by-elections; the Wajir West and Naivasha by-elections in April 2003 and the Yatta by-election in July 2003. The by-elections served as opportunities for IFES and the ECK to improve on the performance of the communication network that was applied during the December 2002 presidential elections. The use of satellite phones improved communication between poll workers and the computerized tabulation of votes enabled election results to be announced the same day.

In Wajir West, Mrs. Kihara was declared to be the winner becoming Kenya's first widow to win her husband's seat in a by-election. The ECK condemned the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) for using state machinery to campaign in Naivasha; NARC

ministers had traveled to the constituency in a police helicopter and had attended rallies with flagged vehicles. Despite the intimidation exercised by NARC, the ECK confirmed that the election results were legitimate.

The ECK is currently computerizing the electoral rolls throughout Kenya, which should lead to improvements in the accuracy and speed with which the Electoral Roll can be updated. Provisional results for the registration of voters show 548,696 new registered voters, 221,052 transfers and 195,452 deceased voters deleted from the registry.

IFES information technology consultant Mike Yard continues to assist with the computerization of the ECK procurement department to enable accurate tracking of procurement, inventory, transportation and general logistics. Mike traveled to Nairobi in June to submit a first-draft design of the database for the entire procurement process and it is going through several cycles of review and modification with the ECK staff.

In May, IFES sponsored the Chairman of the ECK,



Meru District Office staff of the Electoral Commission of Kenya.

Mr. Samuel Kivuitu, to participate in the 11th Annual International Judicial Conference which was held in Washington, D.C. from May 21-23, 2003. During his visit to Washington DC, Mr. Kivuitu conducted a roundtable discussion on the technical management of Kenya's 2002 elections; the roundtable was hosted by IFES and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). In addition, Mr. Kivuitu conducted a series of briefings with representatives

from the State Department, USAID and the World Bank.

LIBERIA

Over the summer, the 14-year old conflict in Liberia intensified, reportedly resulting in the deaths of thousands of civilians. Forces in opposition to the Taylor government mounted a committed offensive on key population centers around the country, including the capital of Monrovia. Peace talks were held in June and July in Ghana with all warring factions, representatives of political parties and civil society activists to negotiate an end to the crisis, the establishment of a transitional government and the departure of President Charles Taylor. This development, contributed to the growing momentum of concerns, resulting the Accra Accords, signed on August 2003.

Following the signing of the peace accord, West African peacekeepers were deployed to restore order. This deployment paved the way for the departure of President Taylor and the establishment of a transitional government. Still, this has not restored order to the country. The conflict between forces opposed to former President Taylor and Taylor's supporters continues, posing a major challenge for the restoration of peace and security. A power-sharing government is due to be installed in October. However, unless the situation improves, Liberia may regrettably continue to be crippled by the ongoing civil war.

IFES continues to provide limited logistical support the Catholic church-affiliated Radio Veritas (RV). The subgrant to Radio Veritas, of funds granted to IFES by USAID, supports non-religious programming by enabling RV to produce programming intended to provide credible, balanced and accurate information to Liberians on topics of human rights, civic education, peace & national reconciliation, and health and education.

NIGER

In April/May 2003, for the first time since the National Conference of 1993, the Nigerien government attempted to unilaterally amend the electoral code without consulting Niger's political parties and civil society. The code is very sensitive and amendments would impact directly on the local elections as well as the 2004 legislative and presidential elections. This attempt has cast a shadow over the process though the government later retracted the proposed code and Prime Minister Hama Amadou conducted several meetings with political parties and civil society to discuss the proposed changes. During one of these meetings (in which 32 of Niger's 36 parties were represented), 30 parties stated they opposed the proposed code including the coalition of parties which supports the presidency, the Alliance of Democratic Forces (AFD) and the opposition coalition, the Coordination of Democratic Forces (CFD).

On May 30, an extraordinary session of Niger's National Assembly was called from June 2-6 to discuss the proposed amendments to the code. The last day of the session the amended code was adopted despite objections from the opposition who stated they would not accept the amended code unless a number of changes are made.

In August 2003, President Mamadou Tandja appointed Mr. Hamidou Salifou Kané, a magistrate, to preside over the newly formed National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI). Shortly after the nomination of Mr. Kané, the CENI announced the local elections will take place on March 27, 2004. These elections will be Niger's first local elections since the widely contested 1999 local elections.

IFES will provide technical assistance for the 2004 elections with support from USAID.

NIGERIA

IFES has been providing assistance to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) of Nigeria to assist in: developing the technical skills of the INEC permanent staff and enhancing the INEC's management of the electoral process in support for the 2003 elections and beyond.

In April and early May 2003, Nigerians went to the polls and elected the country's leadership for the

next four years. These elections marked a significant point, and a vital step, in the institutionalization of democracy in Nigeria. Thirty political parties contested the 2003 elections. Many entered the campaign late in December 2002 after a High Court ruling overturned previous resistance to the attempts by these associations to secure registration. They suffered from a lack of resources and experience, and an uneven coverage by the media. This hindered their ability to have a meaningful impact on the voting public during the campaign period. Polling took place on April 12 (National Assembly Senate and House seats), April 19 (Federal President and State Governors) and May 3 (36 State Assemblies). The 2003 contest for the federal presidency was a two-horse race between former Generals (and military dictators) President Olusegun Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Muhammadu Buhari of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP). A total of twenty parties nominated candidates for the presidential poll. Many of the new parties were essentially the vehicle for the political ambitions of one individual, rather than the coming together of a like-minded group of individuals committed to a particular set of principals, policies or a common party platform.



Nigerians waiting to cast their ballots during the April presidential elections.

The 2003 elections provided a measure of the progress made since 1999. Over that period, INEC took significant steps to enhance the transparency and credibility of voter registration and elections administration nationwide. INEC's conduct of the 2003 elections highlighted the fact that, despite the advances made, much remains to be accom-

plished before the commission can rest content with the level of performance achieved. The 2003 elections were marred by poor planning, a failure of logistics and the inability of commission headquarters to effectively coordinate with officials at the INEC state and local offices.

Amidst widespread claims and counter-claims of rigging by all parties, the ruling PDP substantially increased its hold on power at the federal and state levels. The results of the elections were volubly challenged in the media by the ANPP. The challenge amounted to little more than hurt pride; calls for mass action in support of Buhari, leader of the ANPP, were not heeded. There is evidence to suggest the transition will be successful. A new Government has been appointed by the president and members of both houses have taken their seats. Nonetheless, substantial numbers of cases challenging the results in specific constituencies across the country remain to be dealt with by the recently appointed Election Tribunals, and already several results have been overturned. In collaboration with the United Nations Election Assistance Division (UNEAD), IFES Washington hosted a post-election debriefing in mid-May to discuss the outcomes of the elections with interested Nigeria-watchers in the Washington metropolitan area. The presenters were IFES former Country Director, Vic Butler; IFES Senior Program Officer, Susan Palmer; and UNEAD's Election Assistance for Nigeria, Margie Cook.

As a follow up activity, IFES contributed to a tripartite post-election review in early July. The review was timed in order to contribute to INEC's post-election retreat in late July. IFES benefited from the review as an opportunity to identify lessons learned through the election process, and to identify next steps for its Nigeria program. The Electoral Review Team (ERT) visited Nigeria at the invitation of INEC. ERT members included individuals selected by the Commonwealth Secretariat, IFES and UNEAD. A report was prepared by the team in discussion with commissioners of INEC, senior and middle ranking staff of the commission at headquarters and in the state offices, representatives of the major political parties, members of the Federal House of Representatives and Senate, FOSIECON (Forum of State Independent Elections in Nigeria), civil society, the media, donors and others. The ERT report was formally submitted to INEC on July 23, 2003 in time for the INEC retreat. IFES is in the process of developing a new

program strategy for IFES Nigeria which is informed in part by the electoral review report, and through ongoing consultations with USAID and INEC. Susan Palmer, presently based in Abuja, continues to serve as IFES' interim country director as the search for a new country director continues.

SIERRA LEONE

IFES and its sister organization IFES Ltd are working in partnership in Sierra Leone in support of that country's developing and fragile democracy by providing technical support to the National Electoral Commission (NEC) of Sierra Leone. IFES and IFES Ltd provided technical assistance and commodity support to the NEC for its conduct of the May 2002 presidential and parliamentary elections which marked the nation's transition to an elected government following years of civil war.

To assist the NEC in preparing for upcoming local government elections, expected in the second quarter of 2004, IFES and IFES Ltd supported a two-day workshop, from 29-30 April 2003, held by the NEC in Freetown and attended by all the Commissioners and the Commission's technical staff. The workshop was co-funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the British Department for International Development and was facilitated by Dr. K. Afari-Gyan, Chairman of the Electoral Commission of Ghana, whose participation was supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Workshop participants analyzed the key steps that need to be taken to prepare for Sierra Leone's local government elections and produced a tentative election calendar which targeted the election date as April 2004. Since the workshop, IFES Ltd has provided technical advice to the NEC to support the development of a budget for the local government elections. The budgeting exercise was undertaken in July and has resulted in the production of an election budget which is now being used for preparing for the elections.

In August 2003, the Chairman of the National Electoral Commission, Mr. Walter O.F. Nichol, lost his valiant battle with cancer. IFES and IFES Ltd express their sincere condolences to the Nichol family, the National Electoral Commission and the peo-

ple of Sierra Leone on the occasion of the passing of Mr. Nichol. Mr. Nichol led the NEC in its conduct of the historic May 2002 election and thereby helped pave the way for the re-establishment of peace in Sierra Leone.

SOUTH AFRICA

IFES is conducting a civil society project in South Africa in conjunction with the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) and the Institute for Security Studies (ISS). In early June 2003, IFES awarded a subgrant to IDASA to conduct comparative research on regulation of private funding to political parties. Based on research findings, IDASA has made a submission to Parliament's Private Members' Bill Committee calling for monitoring of private funding by providing the legislature with universally practiced regulatory frameworks. A draft law was included in the submission to provide policy choices to law-makers. The Committee will review the submission in October 2003.

South Africa does not have legislation guiding private contributions to political parties or candidates. In general, there are three main sources of funding for South African political parties:

- Private contributions - Individual membership fees, corporate contributions, and voluntary contributions on the part of members.
- Foreign funding - Direct foreign funding to political parties, but also indirectly through financial support for voter education, election monitoring, churches and civil society organisations participating in the political process.
- State funding - Formal public financial support for political parties.

The government defrays some of the campaign costs by providing funds through the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) based on the number of seats each political party won in the National Assembly during previous elections. Despite this subsidy, it is common knowledge that the country's largest political parties successfully seek private contributions from individuals, corporations and foreign governments. In the continued political fi-

nance debate, the South African government has expressed commitment to fairly distribute and disperse resources. In light of the upcoming 2004 national elections, Idasa aims to raise the awareness of campaign finance issues among members of parliament, civil society organizations and businesses.

During July 2003, ISS hosted a meeting in Cape Town that convened 16 civil society organizations (CSO) lobbying around accountability and transparency issues. These included labor unions and religious groups such as the National Religious Leaders' Forum, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the Public Service Commission. There was a specific panel that dealt with the regulation of private funding to political parties and the way in which the CSOs could mobilize around the issue. The group formed the Civil Society Network against Corruption (CSNAC) to demonstrate commitment to the campaign for regulation.

IDASA has issued final request letters to political parties to provide their sources of funding and the amount of funding received from private companies. The information requests are in accordance with the Promotion of Access to Information Act. If the political parties do not respond, IDASA plans to institute proceedings against them in the High Court. In addition, plans are underway to create a program entitled 'Democracy Radio' to highlight the importance of regulating political party funding and the reasons behind any litigation undertaken by IDASA.

WEST BANK & GAZA

In February, IFES received funding to provide technical assistance to USAID/West Bank & Gaza and to its Palestinian and Israeli counterparts anticipated to be involved in elections in the West Bank & Gaza.

Jeff Fischer, IFES Senior Advisor for Elections, traveled to Jerusalem, Ramallah and Gaza from March 1 to 13, 2003. Mr. Fischer met with U.S. embassy officials, the Central Election Commission (CEC), the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) and the Ministry of Interior (MOI). Due to the war in Iraq, Mr. Fischer was compelled to curtail his visit. A voter registration assessment re-

port with IFES' technical recommendations was delivered to USAID/West Bank and Gaza, and his staff and was also shared with key Palestinian interlocutors.

In June, Mr. Fischer returned to Jerusalem to meet with representatives from the Central Election Commission's (CEC), the United Nations, and the European Union to conduct a review of a variety of budget and programmatic documents through meetings with CEC secretariat, department Chiefs, and other pertinent staff. In addition to this, IFES provided technical assistance to the Inter-Ministerial Reform Committee and the Palestinian Legislative Council to support reform of the Palestinian election law. For each included programmatic element, Mr. Fischer outlined appropriate procedures for each as stipulated by the current election law in addition to the provision of contingency plans.

YEMEN

The objective of the IFES project in Yemen, is to provide technical assistance to the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER) as it seeks to become a permanent, independent, and enduring institution. To that end, IFES continued to work closely with the SCER during the final preparation stages for the parliamentary elections that were held on April 27, 2003.

Prior to the elections, IFES Yemen Project Manager Enrique Saltos conducted an initial analysis of the national voter registration database. While the voters roll had many improvements, Mr. Saltos determined that there was reason to suspect that elements of the Yemeni government, through the Ministry of Education, allegedly encouraged heads of secondary schools to register their students. This and other pre-election irregularities were brought to the attention of the Yemeni authorities by IFES, NDI and the UNDP in a coordinated manner. In the months following the elections, IFES will present recommendations to the SCER on improvements to the voter registration database to safeguard against future inconsistencies.

In March, IFES received funding from UNDP Electoral Support Project to assist the SCER in training core trainers through the production of

specialized training videos for the nomination, campaigning and electoral periods. The practical training of all sub-commissions, relevant NGO's, and political parties was also conducted through these videos. The UNDP broadcast the videos in their three weekly television programs and used them in 60 promotional tents around the country. Due to security concerns at the time, IFES was unable to bring an additional technical specialist to Yemen to conduct the direct hands-on training of the core trainers.

During the April elections, an IFES legal specialist returned to Yemen the week of the parliamentary elections to facilitate the coordination between the SCER and the Ministry of Justice in the area of electoral dispute adjudication.

Parliamentary elections took place, as scheduled, on April 27, 2003. Although many irregularities were observed on Election Day, the elections were generally considered successful.



Yemeni woman casting her vote on Election Day.

Following the parliamentary elections, IFES conducted a post-election technical assessment. The assessment report issued by IFES shortly after the elections, lists a number of recommendations for improvement of the Yemeni electoral system. The assessment was presented to the SCER before being made available to the international community so as to promote further cooperation areas in need of further technical assistance. In the report, IFES stresses the need to redefine and restructure the election law as passed in 2001. Moreover, the report presents measures that need to be taken to empower the SCER, and make its role in the electoral process more distinct and technical rather than purely administrative in nature. Specifically, IFES

suggests the SCER should also serve as an electoral tribunal, with legal authority to effectively adjudicate all electoral crimes and grievances. In addition, IFES conducted an assessment of the election law in July and August. The assessment, which will include and analysis of each article of the election law, will be presented to the SCER and the international community in September.

In the fall, IFES will complete the production of two statistical analysis books on voter registration and elections in Yemen. The books will be available in English and Arabic versions, and will be available both in hard-bound copies and CD-ROM.

IFES Hosts "Yemen's Path to Democracy: Strengthening Human Rights."

On September 10, IFES hosted a roundtable discussion on the achievements and future strategies to strengthen human rights and further democratic development in Yemen. Ambassador Amat Al Aleem Ali Alsoswa, Minister of Human Rights in Yemen, described the many positive changes in her country since the unification of Yemen and the adoption of a democratic government thirteen years ago. Alsoswa outlined the continued progress in Yemen since 1990, but also stressed the need for further improvement.



Paul DeGregorio, IFES Executive Vice President, and Minister Amat Alsoswa, Minister of Human Rights during the closing remarks at the roundtable.

One of the main issues discussed at the event was women's roles within the Yemeni government. Alsoswa explained that, although the number of women voting in elections has steadily increased since 1993, women are still underrepresented within the parliament. There is currently one female Member of Parliament in Yemen. The only other female member lost her seat in last April's parliamentary elections. Minister Alsoswa stressed her commitment to working with the NGO community to reduce, if not eradicate, human rights violations in her country.



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of
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1949-2003

IFES Senior Advisor
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EXTENDING THE REACH OF DEMOCRACY

IFES provides technical assistance in the promotion of democracy worldwide and serves as a clearinghouse for information about democratic development and elections. Since its inception in 1987, the Foundation has pursued democratic initiatives in more than 120 countries. IFES activities are made possible, in part, by the United States Agency for International Development.

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