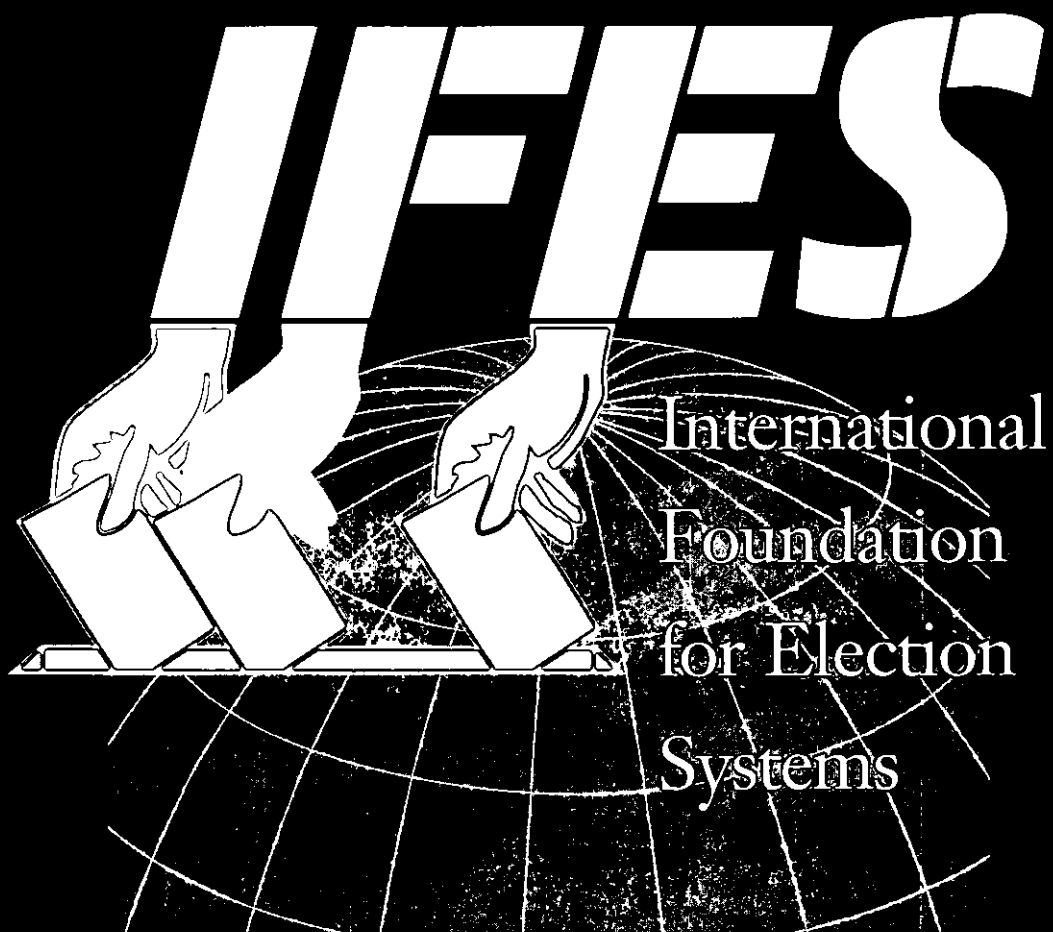


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Final Activity Report

The First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen

**March 15 to 18, 1999
Sanaa, Yemen**

Convened by Yemen's election commission, the Supreme Elections Committee (SEC),
in conjunction with the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)

June 1999

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Note:

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This report was prepared by Amy W. Hawthorne, Middle East Program Officer, IFES, with assistance from Dr. Ronald G. Wolfe, IFES consultant and conference project manager.

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I. Executive Summary

The first conference in the Arab world to bring together governmental and non-governmental actors to discuss election organization took place at the Central Organization for Control and Auditing (COCA) in Sanaa, the Republic of Yemen from March 15 through 18, 1999. The *First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen* was convened by Yemen's election commission, the Supreme Elections Committee (SEC), in conjunction with the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES). IFES, a non-profit, non-partisan foundation based in Washington, DC, provides technical assistance to support democratic development worldwide, with a focus on the organization of competitive, transparent elections. IFES has conducted project activities in Yemen since 1993.

Yemen continues to be an important locus for encouraging democratic development in the Arab world. Yemen has the only multiparty system on the Arabian Peninsula. The SEC is the only permanent election commission in the Arab world.

The *Colloquium* brought together fifty-nine of Yemen's main actors in the country's election process. Participants addressed the legal and administrative framework for Yemen's election system, reviewed lessons learned in the 1993 and 1997 Yemeni elections, and generated recommendations for improvements. Participants included SEC members (from the current and the two previous commissions), former local level election officials, representatives from the major political parties (in their capacities as former SEC members), Parliament, civil society and relevant government ministries, as well as some of Yemen's leading women's activists.

The methodology of the conference differed significantly from the typical conference format in Yemen. Rather than inviting several hundred guests to listen to speeches delivered by notable persons, this event provided a forum for sustained discussion and brainstorming among a smaller group of influential figures.

Discussions took place over a two-day period, March 16 and 17, 1999, with participants assigned among six working groups. A distinguished group of eleven international moderators from Palestine, the United Kingdom, Morocco, Canada, Lebanon, Spain, Egypt, Jordan and the U.S. facilitated the discussions. Working group topics were voter education and awareness; the election system; voter registration; election day procedures and the vote count; the independence and neutrality of the SEC; and election administration and training. The sessions were closed to the public to stimulate open discussion. Yemeni rapporteurs documented the proceedings for inclusion in the final record.

By the close of the conference, participants had adopted more than eighty recommendations for improvements to the election process. Notably, all recommendations but one were agreed to by unanimous consent. The recommendations were presented at the closing ceremony on March 18. More than two hundred Yemeni government officials and other distinguished guests attended this event, as well as the opening ceremony on March 15.

The recommendations are now being carefully reviewed for implementation by the SEC, the

Parliament, and other Yemeni decision-makers. They have been well-publicized in Yemen, and in other Arab countries as well, through the involvement of the Arab moderators. A full list of the recommendations is included in Appendix II to this report.

This report describes IFES' activities in designing, preparing for and carrying out the conference in coordination with the SEC. IFES received funding from the United Nations Development Programme/Sanaa (UNDP) for many aspects of the conference project. The UNDP funding included contributions from the British Embassy/Sanaa and from UNDP/Sanaa. The UNDP funding was made available through a contract between IFES and the UN Office of Project Services (UN-OPS) [contract number YEMEN/96/002]. In addition, the Japanese Embassy/Sanaa provided funding to cover the costs of the five moderators from the Arab world. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), through Elections Canada, covered the expenses associated with the Canadian moderator.

IFES commends the SEC commissioners –Chairman Dr. Abdallah Barakat, Vice Chairman Mohamed Dammaj, and members Mansour Sayf, Ali Saeedi, Khalid Abdelaziz, Ahmed Haidera, and Abdallah Ba Matraf-- and staff for their outstanding efforts on the conference project. IFES also recognizes the superb contributions and enthusiasm of the participants, and the skillful work of the international moderators. IFES sincerely thanks the donors –UNDP, the Embassy of Britain, the Embassy of Japan, and CIDA-- without whose support the event would not have been possible; we extend special thanks to UNDP/Sanaa and Resident Representative Onder Yucer and Deputy Resident Representative Khalid Alloush. IFES also appreciates the assistance of Ambassador Abdulwahhab al-Hajjri and the staff of the Embassy of Yemen in Washington, DC and officials of the Government of Yemen in Sanaa in helping to facilitate the conference. Finally, special recognition is due to IFES consultants Dr. Ronald G. Wolfe and Mazen S. Luqman, who served, respectively, as Project Manager and Local Representative.

II. Background

Defying the expectations of many in the region and against considerable socio-economic and political odds, the Republic of Yemen has taken the lead in forging a path of political liberalization on the Arabian Peninsula. In contrast to the demographic pre-conditions often assumed necessary for democratization, Yemen has one of world's highest birthrates and lowest per capita GDPs. The rate of illiteracy among Yemen's 16 million citizens is estimated at more than 60 percent, and as high as 75 percent among women. Further, the former regimes of North Yemen and South Yemen, which unified in 1990 to form the Republic of Yemen, shared a political culture marked by instability. In part due to Yemen's deep-rooted tribal system, elements of this political culture endure. There are persistent reports that Yemen's neighbors, particularly powerful Saudi Arabia, attempt to undermine Yemen's democratic experiment. Yet despite these challenges, since unity Yemen's leadership has embarked on a difficult but generally committed gradual path of liberalization. This has involved introducing a multiparty system and loosening state control over

civil society.

A centerpiece of Yemen's burgeoning democratic system is its election system. It is the only multiparty system on the Peninsula. Yemen is also the only Arab country to charge a permanent, independent election commission, the Supreme Elections Commission (SEC), with the conduct of elections, rather than the Ministry of Interior, as in other Arab countries. The 1992 formation of the SEC was a significant step by the Yemeni government, as politically independent and professional election administration is at the core of a credible election system. Parliament presents a list of fifteen nominees, all approved by vote of two-thirds of the members, to the President, who then selects the seven members. Once appointed, SEC members must freeze their party affiliations and partisan activities during their four-year tenure on the SEC.

The election process has been a central feature of political liberalization since Yemen's leaders determined that multiparty elections were critical to lend pluralistic legitimacy to institutions of governance, such as the Parliament, in the newly unified country. Yemen's first multiparty parliamentary elections were held in April 1993. In 1994, civil war broke out between Northern and Southern leaders, but unity prevailed after several months of fighting between northern and southern army units. In April 1997, Yemen's second parliamentary elections took place. Turnout for both the 1993 and 1997 elections was high, and the processes generally peaceful, suggesting the Yemeni public's enthusiasm for the multiparty system.

Like many new practices and institutions established since unification, Yemen's election administration system has now reached a stage at which review and reforms are necessary for consolidation and sustainability. International and domestic election observers, while judging the 1993 and 1997 elections as impressive for first and second elections, recommended changes in the legal and organizational framework, as well as in several administrative practices. Many in Yemen have strongly echoed this need.

Acknowledging the value of inclusive dialogue and multi-partisan participation in generating an agenda for reform, IFES and the SEC in 1998 conceptualized a high-level, national conference on election organization. The idea was that such an event, never before held in Yemen, would be beneficial in several respects. First, it would provide a forum for key actors to discuss election issues. This would help build a consensus for reform, as major stakeholders in the election process would have the opportunity to contribute their perspectives. Second, a comprehensive review of lessons learned in past elections, enhanced by the presence of former SEC members and by the outside expertise of international moderators, would heighten Yemeni awareness of best practices in election administration. Such an exchange would be especially beneficial to the new SEC members, who by the time of the conference, had not yet administered an election. They must conduct three electoral events (presidential, local and parliamentary) during their 1997-2001 tenure. Third, a high-level, high-profile event would draw national (and regional) attention to the importance of Yemen's elections in the country's transition to democracy.

IFES first proposed the idea of a post-election "lessons learned" conference in Yemen following

the 1993 parliamentary elections. IFES has successfully organized, in conjunction with election commissions and other in-country counterparts, post-election roundtables and conferences on election administration in Ghana, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Hungary and Russia, among other locations. Dr. Ronald Wolfe, who at that time was the project manager for IFES' 1993 technical assistance program to the SEC, raised the idea with the SEC members and with international donors. Initial enthusiasm was expressed. However, due to lack of sufficient interest from the Yemeni and donor sides, IFES was not able to proceed with the planning the conference.

IFES raised the idea again after the April 1997 election. In advance of this election, IFES had conducted a pre-election assessment, carried out a pollworker training project, and provided other technical assistance to the SEC. Having closely followed the election process in this way, IFES felt that the need for a post-election evaluation had become even greater since 1993. Various opposition parties had expressed dissatisfaction with the administration of the elections; a leading party, the Yemeni Socialist Party (a version of the ruling party of former South Yemen) had chosen to boycott the election. Several commissioners expressed interest in the idea of a conference, but their terms on the SEC were about to expire, so they were not in a position to make any decisions about future SEC activities. IFES also first discussed the conference with UNDP/Sanaa at this time. UNDP expressed interest in supporting such an event, but indicated that additional funds would probably need to be raised. All parties agreed that it was most appropriate to wait until the new SEC members were appointed to engage in more specific discussions. After its departure from Yemen in early May 1997, IFES remained in periodic contact with UNDP about the proposed conference.

Seven new SEC commissioners were appointed in late November 1997. They are Chairman Dr. Abdallah Barakat, Vice Chairman Mohamed Dammaj, and members Mansour Sayf, Ali Saeedi, Khalid Abdelaziz, Ahmed Haidera, and Abdallah Ba Matraf. In February 1998, IFES returned to Yemen, drawing on funds remaining from the 1997 training project. During the visit, IFES consultant Dr. Ronald Wolfe and IFES Middle East Program Officer Amy Hawthorne discussed the proposed conference with the SEC and the UNDP mission. The objectives of the visit were to discuss the conference concept with the new SEC members, to draft a concept paper in Arabic with the SEC, and to present the concept paper to potential donors in Sanaa.

During a series of meetings, IFES and the SEC discussed the goals and structure of the conference. The SEC expressed enthusiasm for organizing such an event with IFES' assistance. Agreement was reached on the objectives and structure of the conference and the roles of the two institutions. It was determined that IFES would seek funding to cover all major conference expenses, and that these funds would be administered by IFES. This approach meant the SEC did not have to dedicate any significant portion of its own budget toward the activity, apart from the time required of commissioners and staff.

Based on these discussions, IFES drafted a concept paper in Arabic. After incorporating feedback

from the SEC for a revised Arabic version, IFES translated the concept paper into English for submission to potential donors. As expressed in the concept paper, the objectives of the conference were as follows:

- To establish a national agenda for election reform, through the recommendations emerging from the conference deliberations.
- To provide an opportunity for the current SEC commissioners to benefit from the experience of the former SEC members, in the areas of the election law and regulations, election administration, and election procedures, as well as the obstacles faced, and ways of overcoming them in future elections.
- To provide an opportunity for those other than current and former SEC members concerned with elections in Yemen, including political parties, members of Parliament, civil society leaders, and local-level election officials, for effective and positive participation in setting out an election vision for Yemen and future directions for election administration.
- To highlight the independence of the SEC.
- To stress the crucial importance of training and capacity building in successful election administration at all stages of the election process.
- To highlight internationally Yemen's commitment to continuing progress in the development of election administration, through the participation of international moderators.

The concept paper envisioned a four-day conference, with two days of working group discussions and opening and closing ceremonies. IFES and the SEC also agreed to limit participation to about 65 to 70 Yemenis, to ensure that the event would involve those with the greatest direct experience and interest in the electoral process. IFES and the SEC felt that this approach, though somewhat atypical in Yemen, would also keep the size of the discussion groups manageable, thereby fostering substantive, participatory discussion. IFES and the SEC also envisioned that international moderators would lead the working group discussions, each of which would address a different aspect of the election process. Invited guests would attend the opening and closing ceremonies, and the recommendations would be presented at the closing ceremony.

During the February visit, the concept paper was presented at a series of meetings with potential donors. By the time IFES completed its visit, funds had been committed by UNDP and by the Embassy of Great Britain (through UNDP). Other donors, such as the Japanese Embassy and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), expressed preliminary interest.

Between March and July 1998, IFES remained in close contact with UNDP/Sanaa. It was determined that the best mechanism for the project would be for IFES to seek a contract from UN-OPS for the required funds. IFES prepared a detailed proposal and budget, with assistance from UNDP/Sanaa. UNDP worked hard to secure the remaining funds within the UN system. By late May, the UNDP funding package was complete. IFES submitted a revised proposal to UN-OPS, in response to a request from UN-OPS for more detailed information. In early July 1998, UN-OPS awarded IFES a contract for administrative and programmatic support of the conference.

IFES remained in contact with other potential donors, such as the Japanese Embassy, whose commitment of funds came a bit later.

During this period, IFES maintained regular contact with the SEC about conference plans, including fundraising. IFES discussed the conference plans in detail with Dr. Abdallah Barakat, SEC Chairman, when he visited Washington, DC in May 1998.

III. Conference Preparations

A. *Memorandum of Understanding*

Immediately after IFES and UN-OPS signed the project contract, Project Manager Dr. Ronald Wolfe and Ms. Hawthorne traveled to Yemen from July 13-22, 1998. Joining Dr. Wolfe and Ms. Hawthorne was Mazen S. Luqman, a local Yemeni consultant who has worked with IFES since 1993. Mr. Luqman was engaged by IFES as Local Representative for the conference project. His scope of work was to work closely with the team on the mission and to carry out other representational and organizational duties after Dr. Wolfe's and Ms. Hawthorne's departure, in the absence of a full-scale IFES presence in Yemen.

The objectives of the mission were to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with the SEC and to make preliminary logistical plans for the conference. IFES and the SEC also hoped to finalize a date for the conference, which at that time was anticipated for October 1998.

The purpose of the MOU was to specify the roles and responsibilities of the SEC and IFES in planning and implementing the conference. In previous projects with the SEC, IFES has found that preparing an MOU was essential to provide a solid framework for joint activities. Especially on a complex project such as the conference, an MOU provides a written reference if questions arise as to either side's role.

Unfortunately, IFES and the SEC were unable to reach agreement on the MOU during the visit. The SEC commissioners, all newly-appointed, had never worked on such a project before. This was their first experience with any kind of international technical assistance project and with working in partnership with an international NGO such as IFES and with the United Nations. This complicated reaching agreement on key elements of the conference, such as the funding structure and financial management issues. In spite of extensive discussions between IFES, the SEC and UNDP, no resolution was reached before IFES' departure, nor was a draft MOU prepared or a conference date set. During the visit, however, IFES was able to make some preliminary arrangements for possible conference sites and accommodations.

During the months that followed, IFES was in frequent communication with the SEC. After extensive long-distance discussions, outstanding issues were resolved. In early October, the SEC

prepared a draft MOU and sent it to IFES/Washington for review and comments. During October and November, several drafts were exchanged and revisions made by both sides. IFES translated the SEC's drafts into English for review by IFES/Washington and UNDP. In early December, the SEC was ready to sign the memorandum, and announced it had chosen conference dates of March 15-18, 1999 (after Ramadan and the post-Ramadan holiday). On December 9, 1998, the MOU was signed by both sides, with UNDP/Sanaa signing also as an observer. The English version of the MOU is attached as Appendix I.

B. Logistical and Programmatic Preparations

IFES and the SEC began conference preparations soon after the MOU was signed. Following is a description of IFES' preparatory activities, both at IFES/Washington and in Yemen. It is beyond the scope of this report to describe in detail the SEC's preparations, but mention is made of the SEC's activities when possible. The SEC did not begin full-scale preparations until February 1999, after Ramadan and the post-Ramadan feast, during which period very little or no official business takes place in Yemen. The SEC formed a preparatory committee for the conference, headed by SEC member Mansour Sayf, which worked closely with the IFES team through the duration of the project.

From December 1998 through early March 1999, IFES/Washington selected the international moderators and arranged their travel to Yemen, made arrangements for the conference facilities and accommodations, proposed working group discussion topics to the SEC, advised the SEC on drawing up the invitation list, and made other arrangements. In Yemen, Mazen Luqman carried out all in-country follow-up in advance of Dr. Wolfe's and Ms. Hawthorne's return in early March. This included liaising with the SEC, UNDP, local vendors and others in Yemen involved in the conference, as well as preliminary recruiting of the rest of the IFES project team (rapporteurs, typists, drivers, administrative assistants, etc.).

• Selection and Preparation of International Moderators

The international moderators were a key element of the conference. Because many Yemenis have an affiliation to or sympathy for a political party or other movement, it is difficult to find Yemeni moderators who are able to remain neutral while presiding over a discussion in which sensitive political topics, such as those inherent in the issue of elections, are raised. It is easier for outside moderators to take an impartial approach. Non-Yemeni moderators also bring new perspectives and information to the discussions, thereby helping to develop election expertise among Yemenis. Furthermore, the international moderators serve to bring regional and international attention to the conference and to Yemen's accomplishments in the area of election processes, by spreading word in their home countries about the event.

Dr. Wolfe and Ms. Hawthorne recruited ten international moderators from the Arab world and other regions (Dr. Wolfe also served as a moderator, making eleven in total). IFES covered the moderators' airfare, per diem allowance, hotel accommodations, visa costs, emergency medical

evacuation insurance, and other travel costs, and provided a modest honorarium. The Japanese Embassy in Sanaa provided funding for the airfare, per diem and honoraria for the Arab moderators, and the Canadian International Development Agency, through Elections Canada, covered the expenses for the Canadian moderator. All other moderator-related expenses were covered by UNDP funding.

IFES' objective was to recruit moderators who would comprise a diverse group of experts in election administration, political liberalization, Yemeni and Arab regional politics, and discussion facilitation. IFES was highly successful in this regard: the moderators were indeed an outstanding group. The moderators were:

- *Mr. Mohamed Es-Snoussi Mnaa*, lawyer and member of the Moroccan Parliament (USFP party; member of USFP central committee);
- *Ambassador Nicholas Veliotis*, former US Ambassador to Egypt and Jordan and former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs;
- *Dr. Mohamed Kamel* of Egypt, prominent lawyer and former elected independent member of Egypt's Shura Council;
- *Dr. Michael Hudson*, Professor of International Relations at Georgetown University and leading US expert on Arab and Yemeni politics;
- *Mr. Jean Jacques Blais* of Canada, former MP and Minister of National Defense and member of seven election observation missions;
- *Mr. Hani al-Hourani*, founder and director of Jordan's New Jordan Research Center, a leading Arab think tank;
- *Mr. Michael Meadowcroft*, former British MP, former director of Britain's Electoral Reform Society and member of 33 election missions to 19 countries;
- *Dr. Walid Mubarak*, Chairman of the Social Sciences Department at Lebanese American University and an expert on the Arabian Peninsula;
- *Dr. Nader Said* of Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, who oversaw the Arab world's first ever exit poll, conducted for the 1996 Palestinian elections;
- *Dr. Rafael Lopez-Pintor* of Spain, a prominent international expert on elections and governance and leader of election assistance projects in Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East; and
- *Dr. Ronald Wolfe* of the US; IFES Project Manager for IFES' 1993, 1997 and 1998-99 Yemen projects and a Yemen expert.

See Appendix V for additional information on the moderators.

In selecting the moderators, IFES drew on its extensive network of international experts. Dr. Wolfe and Ms. Hawthorne made initial contact with potential moderators to explain the assignment, following up with a formal letter of invitation. (The process of recruiting a Canadian moderator was a bit different. The Canadian International Development Agency funded a

Canadian moderator, via Elections Canada, with whom IFES has worked closely in Yemen previously. IFES provided Elections Canada with recommendations about the type of moderator IFES and the SEC desired. Elections Canada then selected Mr. Jean Jacques Blais, contracted him, using the scope of work IFES prepared for the other moderators, and made all arrangements for his travel to Yemen.)

IFES/Washington staff expedited the moderators' visa process, since it was imperative that all had visas before entering Yemen. In coordination with the Embassy of Yemen in Washington, IFES provided addresses and contact information for Yemen missions in the moderators' respective countries. Additionally, IFES obtained supporting documentation in Arabic from the SEC and the Yemeni embassy Washington, to accompany the moderators' visa applications. For moderators residing in countries without Yemeni missions, moderators sent their passports to IFES/Washington. IFES processed their visas at the Embassy of Yemen.

IFES/Washington made the moderators' flight reservations, and purchased round-trip tickets from their countries of origin to Sanaa. Additionally, IFES pre-paid hotel accommodations at the Taj Sheba Hotel in Sanaa, as well as for hotels en route for those moderators whose itineraries required layovers en route to Yemen.

Each moderator (with the exception of Mr. Blais, whose contract was with Elections Canada) was contracted with IFES from March 12 -20, 1999. As excerpted from their contracts with IFES, the moderators' scope of work was as follows:

1. Travel to Yemen from on or about March 12 through March 19, 1999.
2. Facilitate one of six working groups, each of which will include approximately twelve Yemeni participants. Moderators will be paired in teams, and the teams will co-lead their assigned working groups. The Arabic-speaking member of each team will translate consecutively or summarize remarks for his non Arabic-speaking co-moderator.
3. In coordination with his co-moderator, plan the working group discussion agenda, facilitate the participants' determination of priority areas for discussion, introduce topics and guide the discussion, and ensure that the discussion remains focused and that all participants have an equal opportunity to speak. The working group topics are to be selected by the SEC in coordination with IFES. IFES assigns moderators to working groups. The SEC will assign participants to the working groups.
4. Prior to departure for Yemen, review and familiarize himself with IFES background material on the conference. Participate in an IFES orientation session after arrival in Sanaa.

Once on contract, the moderators were sent their tickets, emergency medical evacuation insurance and background materials. The background materials, compiled in a detailed briefing book, included information on:

- Yemen's political background;
- Current events;

- The Election Law;
- Election administration in Yemen;
- Election observer reports from the 1997 Yemeni elections;
- IFES reports on its technical assistance projects in Yemen; and
- The conference and the role of the moderators, including the likely working group topics.

IFES compiled an Arabic version of the briefing book for Arabic-speaking moderators. Background materials, airline tickets, and other materials were sent at least two weeks before the moderators' departure for Yemen. IFES also held telephone consultations with the moderators to help them prepare for the conference.

Moderators arrived in Yemen from March 10 through 13, 1999. Upon landing at Sanaa International Airport, they were met directly at their planes by Dr. Wolfe and a SEC representative, and expedited through the VIP arrivals lounge. Through a fleet of cars, drivers and security arranged through the Office of the President, IFES provided moderators' transportation to and from the airport, the conference venue and other conference related activities. IFES also provided each moderator with a per-diem stipend to cover their meals and incidental expenses.

On March 13 and 14, IFES held a background briefing and orientation program for the moderators at the hotel. Led by Dr. Wolfe, the orientation included an overview of the conference schedule, structure, goals and format; Yemen's political history and recent political developments; Yemen's election system and the 1993 and 1997 parliamentary elections; and techniques for facilitating group discussions. Mr. Suleiman Khoury, Security Officer at UNDP/Sanaa, gave a security briefing regarding personal safety while in Sanaa.

Moderators were also assigned to working groups during the orientation. All were paired in teams, except Mr. Es-Snoussi, who led a working group on his own because he does not speak English or French and therefore could not be easily paired with a non-Arabic speaker. On the afternoon of March 14, Dr. Wolfe and Ms. Hawthorne held individual meetings with the moderating teams to help prepare them for their specific working group topics.

On March 14, the US Ambassador to Yemen, H. E. Barbara Bodine, hosted a reception at her residence in honor of the conference. Later that evening, the SEC held a special meeting for the moderators at SEC headquarters to welcome them to Yemen.

- *Conference Site and Materials*

During January and February 1999, Mr. Luqman made numerous logistical arrangements in Sanaa. In coordination with the SEC, he finalized arrangements for the conference site, the Central Organization for Control and Audit (COCA), and worked closely with COCA staff to prepare for the event. He also coordinated with the Taj Sheba Hotel, the Office of the President (for local

transportation and security), and organized the luncheon banquet held after the closing session of the conference. He procured all conference supplies for which IFES was responsible. These included embossed folders for participants, background materials, name-tags, banners, and invitations. Mr. Luqman also maintained regular contact with UNDP and other involved donors, such as the Japanese Embassy.

- *Invitations*

Invitations to the conference were of two categories: participants and invited guests. The SEC was responsible for drawing up the invitation list and for issuing invitations for both categories. IFES provided logistical support.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the selection of participants differed from the approach typically used in Yemen. Rather than inviting hundreds of people to listen to speeches delivered by notable persons, this conference instead provided an opportunity for intensive discussion among a much smaller group of influential figures.

As delineated in the MOU, participants were to be drawn from the following categories:

- *Members of the 1993, 1997 and current SEC*

To ensure that those Yemenis with the greatest level of experience in election administration make a major contribution to the conference, all former SEC members were invited. The participation of former SEC members also offered a means for the participation of Yemen's various political parties. This is so because membership in the SEC is unofficially apportioned among the major political parties. After appointment, SEC members are required to freeze their party membership for the duration of their terms, but after they leave the SEC, members resume their party affiliation and activities. The three political parties that have not had representation on the SEC were invited to send one participant each.

- *Former election officials from the governorate and constituency level*

These participants, who had served in the 1993 and/or 1997 elections, conveyed the perspective about how election administration works at the local level.

- *Members of the parliamentary committee responsible for revising the election law*

- *Representatives from civil society organizations and relevant government institutions involved in the election process, such as the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Education*

In February 1999, the SEC prepared a list of participants to be invited. The SEC then prepared a letter of invitation to each participant, which IFES reviewed. The letter explained the goals and structure of the conference, and highlighted the importance of their active participation, explaining that the event was focused on discussion and generation of recommendations, and that participants

were not to prepare research or papers for presentation. The letter also listed the working group topics, and requested invitees to select the working group in which they wished to take part. The SEC hand-delivered the letters to participants residing in Sanaa and faxed letters to participants outside of the capital. RSVPs were requested at least one week before the beginning of the conference so that working group assignments could be finalized. A total of 66 participants were invited.

Starting about one week before the conference, participants were able to obtain from the SEC a packet of background information including the constitution, the election law, the executive regulations for the 1997 elections, and the list of moderators and participants. This material was provided to participants on the first day of the conference as well, for those who could not pick it up in advance.

As for the invited guests or observers, these were about 200 distinguished Yemenis (government officials, politicians, scholars, journalists, and others), as well as foreigners resident in Sanaa, including diplomats, leaders of international organizations active in Yemen, such as the World Bank and the European Union, and other distinguished guests. These guests were invited to the opening and closing ceremonies and the closing banquet luncheon. As with the participants, the SEC was responsible for selecting the invited guests. Invited guests, including the media, were not invited to attend the working group sessions.

The SEC and IFES designed an invitation card for the opening and closing ceremonies, featuring the conference logo. These were prepared in Arabic and English (for some of the foreign invitees), and printed by a Sanaa printer (Appendix III). IFES oversaw the printing of the invitation cards. The SEC addressed and delivered the invitations for Yemeni guests, and IFES managed the delivery of the invitations for non-Yemeni guests. Invitations were delivered the week of March 8, 1999. RSVPs were requested by March 14. Guests were asked to show their card to COCA security for admittance to the conference. Invitations to the closing luncheon on March 18 were issued under separate cover to a slightly smaller group of guests, due to space limitations at the banquet site.

- *Working Group Topics*

In February 1999, IFES/Washington prepared a list of six possible working group topics for the SEC. The topics were chosen to cover the major issues in election administration in Yemen. An effort was made to select six discrete topics that would offer enough material for discussion over the two-day period of the working groups. The SEC then provided feedback to the IFES on the proposed topics. The list of topics was finalized after the IFES team's arrival in Sanaa in early March.

The working group topics were:

- Working Group One: Election Administration and Training
- Working Group Two: Voter Education and Awareness
- Working Group Three: Election Day Operations: Voting and the Vote Count
- Working Group Four: The Independence and Neutrality of the Supreme Election Committee
- Working Group Five: Voter Registration
- Working Group Six: The Election System: Legal Framework and Candidate Issues

- *Rapporteurs and Typists*

To ensure accurate documentation of the conference proceedings, IFES recruited and trained a team of seven Yemeni women to serve as conference rapporteurs, one per working group plus a head rapporteur who coordinated the whole effort. Their assignment was to take thorough notes on the proceedings of each working group session, to take attendance in each session, and to assist the moderators if the need arose. IFES also selected a team of Yemeni women typists, who typed up the rapporteurs' notes after each session and edited them in conjunction with the rapporteurs, so that the full proceedings of each working group could be distributed to participants the morning of the closing ceremonies. The week before the conference, IFES interviewed applicants for both positions. Recommendations came from the SEC, from women's organizations in Yemen, and from IFES' network of contacts in Sanaa. After selecting the seven rapporteurs and six typists, IFES held training sessions for both groups on March 13 and 14.

IV. The Conference: March 15 – 18, 1999

A. *March 15: Opening Ceremonies*

The conference opened the morning of March 15, 1999 in the COCA auditorium. More than 250 distinguished guests, participants and moderators, were in attendance. Nearly 90 percent of those invited attended. The opening ceremonies received wide press coverage, both in the Yemeni and other Arab press, and on Yemeni television.

The SEC organized the program of speakers, which was as follows:

- Recitation from the Qur'an
- Address by Dr. Abdallah Barakat, SEC Chairman
- Address by Mr. Khalid Alloush, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP/Sanaa
- Address by Dr. Ronald Wolfe, IFES Project Manager
- Address by H.E. Victor Henderson, Ambassador of Great Britain
- Address by H.E. Masakata Ishita, Charge D'Affairs, Embassy of Japan
- Address by H.E. Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, H.E. Vice President of the Republic of Yemen

All speakers, with the exception of the British Ambassador, delivered their remarks in Arabic. An interpreter provided consecutive interpretation for the British Ambassador's speech and translated the other remarks to English for the non-Arabic speaking members of the audience. A reception at COCA with tea, coffee and pastries followed the speakers' remarks.

Immediately following the reception, participants proceeded to the working group rooms at COCA. There, they registered, received the packet of background materials, and met their fellow working group members, moderators, and rapporteurs. The moderators then reviewed the main task before each group: to engage in discussions that would culminate in generating a series of recommendations, agreed upon by consensus, to improve the election process in Yemen. The moderators explained that the discussions would be democratic in that each participant would have equal time for speaking, and that no one participant would be allowed to dominate the discussion. The moderators also explained that their role was to facilitate the discussion and to provide technical input drawing from their own expertise, as appropriate. Neither moderators nor participants would be lecturing or delivering research papers. Each working group then devoted several hours to developing a discussion agenda for the following two days, through developing a priority list of issues within each topic. This process was facilitated by the moderators.

As stated earlier, participants were able to select the working group of their choice. However, in order to ensure that working groups were balanced in size (not more than 15 participants each) and in affiliation of participants (so that all previous SEC members, for example, were not in one working group, or most NGO representatives in another), the SEC re-assigned some participants. If participants were unhappy with their assignment, they were given the opportunity to switch groups after the first session. Only one participant requested such a change. Appendix IV contains a list of all participants and moderators by working group.

The conference secretariat, a small office on the ground floor of the COCA building, opened at this time. The office was staffed by SEC and IFES team members, and offered telephones, copying facilities, and administrative assistance for conference participants.

B. March 16 and 17: Working Group Sessions

On these days, participants met for morning sessions (9 am to 12:30 pm) and afternoon sessions (5 pm to 8:30 pm). There was a short break for tea and coffee during each session. (The late starting of the afternoon session was timed to correspond with Yemeni cultural practice. In Yemen, the main meal of the day is in the afternoon, after which many adults chew *qat*, a mild narcotic leaf, for several hours.)

To make the Yemeni participants feel as comfortable as possible, all sessions were conducted in Arabic, with Arabic-speaking moderators translating for their non Arabic-speaking counterparts. Sessions were closed to all except participants, moderators and rapporteurs to facilitate open and

focused discussion without the distraction of outsiders, particularly the media.

Rapporteurs took attendance in the working groups. Fifty-nine of the 66 invited attended. Fifty-eight participants attended all four working group sessions.

Based on the attendance list, IFES paid a conference stipend of \$25/day to the participants. IFES also paid participants from outside Sanaa (about ten people) a modest travel and per diem stipend. These payments were made on the afternoon of March 17.

The final session, on the afternoon of March 17, was devoted to finalizing the recommendations. Most working groups worked until late in the evening to accomplish their task. Appendix II contains an English translation of all the recommendations from each working group.

By all accounts, the two days of discussions were highly substantive, lively, and often quite heated. The interactive and democratic style of discussion was somewhat unusual in Yemen, and some participants adjusted to it more quickly than others. According to both moderators and participants, each working group developed a spirit of camaraderie, gained from working together intensively on a challenging set of problems over a two-day period. The participatory and inclusive atmosphere in the working group rooms was particularly remarkable given the diverse political affiliations of the participants, and the fact that in other forums such political party representatives might be openly hostile to one another, or simply uninterested in others' views. Participants agreed that keeping the discussions closed to outsiders was essential to creating a working environment of trust and productivity, which enabled the working groups to reach consensus on the recommendations.

As mentioned above, the rapporteurs also took detailed notes of the proceedings of each session. The rapporteurs' notes were delivered to the typists immediately after the conclusion of the sessions. The typists then prepared a draft of the notes, and returned them to the rapporteurs for editing. The final versions of the typed proceedings were distributed to participants, and to other interested parties upon request, at the closing ceremonies of the conference. The system of having the proceedings typed up during the conference, though logistically complicated, helped insure that the typed records were complete and available immediately to interested parties after the conference.

C. March 18: Closing Ceremonies and Presentation of Conference Recommendations

The closing ceremonies were held in the COCA auditorium on the morning of March 18. In attendance was a similar group of more than 225 distinguished Yemenis and foreigners. Almost 80 percent of those invited attended.

The main purpose of the closing ceremonies was to present the conference recommendations before an audience of influential figures in Yemen, establishing them for the public record and entering them into the domain of public discussion. Each working group selected a spokesperson to read its

recommendations before the assembled guests. In addition, the conference participants selected a fellow participant, Dr. Amat al-Aleem al-Suswa, Deputy Minister of Information, as the keynote speaker. The program was as follows:

- Recitation from the Qur'an
- Keynote address: "The Importance of Elections and Participation in Yemen's Developing Democracy," by Dr. Amat al-Aleem al-Suswa, Deputy Minister of Information
- Address by Dr. Ronald Wolfe, IFES Project Manager
- Presentation of recommendations
- Address by Sheikh Mohamed Hussein Dammaj, Vice Chairman, SEC
- Telegram from President Ali Abdallah Saleh (who was traveling in Japan during the conference; read by SEC)

Following the closing ceremonies, a luncheon banquet was held at al-Khayma restaurant in Sanaa to celebrate the successful holding of the conference and to honor the participants and moderators. Approximately 200 guests attended the luncheon.

On the evening of March 18, IFES held debriefing sessions with the moderators. Moderators began to depart Sanaa on March 19, with the last moderator departing on March 21.

On March 21, IFES held an extended debriefing session with the SEC. The IFES team departed on March 25, after completing various administrative and financial close-out duties.

V. Evaluation

In IFES' view, the conference was a ground-breaking event and a success, particularly in light of the challenging political environment in which was held, and considering the fact that this was the first event of its kind in Yemen and indeed in the Arab world.

In terms of format, participants, content, international involvement, and results, the conference took place almost exactly as outlined in the MOU, and as originally envisioned by the SEC and IFES. IFES and the SEC developed a close partnership through working on the conference. Through this partnership, and careful planning and hard work over many months, success was achieved not only in the logistical and organizational aspects of the conference, which were praised by participants for their professionalism, but also in attendance and the quality of discussion and of the recommendations.

• Attendance

In terms of attendance, the participation of 59 of 66 invited participants is unusually high by

Yemeni standards, as is the fact that 58 participants attended all four working group sessions.

In terms of diversity of political and institutional affiliations, the conference met its goals. Participants with high-level affiliation to the following parties took part: General People's Congress, Islah, Yemeni Socialist Party, al-Haq, Nasserite, Baath (Iraqi wing), and Rabita. (The first three are the main parties in Yemen.) Four of Yemen's leading female activists took part, three of whom are NGO leaders and one of whom is a high-ranking government official. Twelve former SEC members took part (from the 1993 and the 1997 commissions), along with all current members except one who was out of the country and could not attend. Leaders of ten well-known NGOs active in the democracy and elections sphere, including the Arab Democratic Institute and the Elections Monitoring Committee (both of which organized domestic observers for the 1997 election), the Yemeni Campaign to Eradicate Illiteracy (active in voter education), and several research institutes were present. Two members of the committee in Parliament responsible for reviewing the election law took part. In addition, several district (governorate and constituency) level election officials who served in the 1993 or 1997 elections were present.

- *Quality of Discussion*

Discussions were unusually open and constructive. Participants remarked that the event was a unique opportunity for public debate on election issues, in which a variety of perspectives, from a spectrum of political persuasions, could be expressed and considered thoroughly. A top Yemeni Socialist Party official, for example, told IFES that in his view, the Colloquium was the first public opportunity for his party to contribute its views on elections in this manner since the Yemeni civil war of 1994. This was a significant comment, considering that the YSP boycotted the 1997 elections. Another participant stated, "This event gave me hope that the process is not fixed and rigid, with no chance for outside input. It indicated to me that there is a role for me to play and a way for me to express my ideas to improve elections in our country; I left with a renewed sense of optimism."

- *Recommendations*

The recommendations generated at the conference are wide ranging, substantive, and many of them have great potential for practical application. The fact they were agreed to by consensus of such a diverse group of participants means they represent a sort of national consensus on election administration reform.

The recommendations have received wide publicity in Yemen, and were distributed to Yemen's top government figures soon after the conference.

- *Short-Term Impact*

In IFES' estimation, the conference created a space for productive dialogue among the SEC,

political leaders, and important members of civil society that has not previously existed on election issues. Such openings are critical in Yemen as safety valves for the expression of dissent, and as channels of regularized communication across partisan lines. It remains to be seen how long this opening will exist.

In addition, the event exposed the current SEC members to a wide variety of alternative viewpoints, useful suggestions, and practical recommendations. Such exposure is a key element in the SEC's successful functioning as a competent, transparent and non-partisan institution of governance.

- *Medium to Longer-Term Impact*

In the medium to longer-term, the recommendations will likely play a role in two key areas: the preparation of a new election law anticipated in Fall 1999, and the SEC's organization of presidential, local, and parliamentary elections. The parliamentary committee reviewing the election law has expressed to IFES its intention to take those recommendations that pertain to the legal framework for elections under full consideration when it discusses the draft law.

In May 1999, the SEC made a written commitment to IFES to review and prioritize those recommendations that relate to the procedural and organization aspects of the elections (i.e., those areas that fall within the SEC's purview) in order to determine which ones could be implemented, and how this will be accomplished. IFES will offer technical assistance to the SEC in this effort.

In general, in IFES' and the SEC's view, the conference not only provided substantive, well-informed, practical recommendations for improving Yemen's election process, but also created a precedent for the involvement of many diverse actors in shaping this process. IFES hopes the event will not only contribute to the positive development of Yemen's election process, but will also serve as a model for similar events to facilitate democratic participation in Yemen and elsewhere.

APPENDIX I

**Memorandum of Understanding
between the Supreme Elections Committee and IFES**

**for the implementation of
The First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen**

(English version)



**Memorandum of Understanding
Between
The Supreme Election Commission and the International Foundation for Election Systems
Regarding Organization of
The First National Colloquium on Election Administration Development**

Colloquium Title: The First National Colloquium on Election Administration Development

Preface

The Supreme Election Commission (SEC), in its determination to develop election administration to enrich and deepen the democratic experience in the Republic of Yemen in keeping with economic, cultural, and social developments, to promote cooperation with the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), and pursuant to meetings between the SEC and the IFES delegation in February and July 1998, the visit of the SEC Chairman to Washington in May 1998, subsequent meetings between the two parties, the minutes of these meetings, and correspondence exchanged between the two parties in this regard, the SEC, in cooperation with IFES, will convene an expanded colloquium on election administration development in Yemen with the participation of a number of agencies and organizations concerned with election matters in Yemen. A contract has been concluded between the United Nations and IFES with funding from the United Nations Development Program mission in Sanaa to provide technical assistance to the SEC in convening the colloquium.

Colloquium Objectives

1. To design a strategy for development of election administration in Yemen to be included in the final recommendations of the colloquium.
2. To provide an opportunity for the current members of the SEC to become familiar with and benefit from the experience of the former members of the SEC, in the areas of laws, regulations, and executive procedures related to elections, as well as the obstacles faced, and ways of overcoming them.
3. To provide an opportunity for those concerned with elections in Yemen, including the political parties, civil society organizations, and local-level election administration officials, including women's committees, for effective and positive participation in setting out an election vision for Yemen and future directions for election administration.

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4. To strengthen the independence of the SEC in reality, and in the view of others, based on non-interference by government institutions.
5. To stress the crucial importance of training in successful election administration at all stages of the election process.
6. To highlight internationally Yemen's commitment to continuing progress in the development of election administration.

Participants: Approximately 83 people with prior experience in election matters, including:

1. Discussants

- All the members of the previous and current SECs (about 34 people)
- Former members of the supervisory, basic, and branch committees (about 10 people)
- Members of the parliamentary committee responsible for revising the Election Law (about 8 people)
- Representatives from civil society involved with the election process (about 12 people)

2. Moderators

- 6 Arabs, 6 foreigners, from outside Yemen, with experience in election issues

3. Rapporteurs

- 7 Yemeni women who are university graduates, and who have previous experience working on election committees

4. Invited Guests

- 200 people, approximately, who will attend the opening and closing sessions only

Procedures for Implementation

1. The colloquium will be held in Sanaa for four days from March 15-18, 1999, at the Center for Control and Auditing (COCA) in Sanaa. It will include an opening session for all participants to which guests and the media will be invited, and at which the SEC chairman will deliver remarks.
2. Immediately after the conclusion of the opening session on the first day, the members of each working group will assemble in their assigned room to meet one another, to review the agenda for discussion within the working group, and to determine priority issues for discussion during the following two days.

3. During the second and third days, the participants (discussants and moderators) will be divided into seven working groups, each to discuss a specific area of upgrading election administration. The goal of each working group will be to arrive at a number of recommendations concerning how election administration can be further developed in the area assigned to the group to discuss. During these two days, working groups will convene for two sessions (9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.), with a half-hour break in the middle of each session.
4. On the fourth day, all participants will gather again for a concluding session to be attended also by invited guests. One Yemeni participant from each working group will present the recommendations reached in that group's deliberations.
5. Participants and guests will be invited to lunch on the final day.

Organizational Arrangements:

1. Mr. Mazen Luqman will serve as the local coordinator for IFES before the arrival of the IFES project team. He will meet on a regular basis with the members of the SEC colloquium preparatory committee to coordinate with them on the project.
2. Upon the arrival of the IFES team, just prior to the colloquium, the SEC will appoint two people from its staff to work with the IFES team and to form a secretariat to make the final detailed administrative arrangements, such as registration, etc.
3. The IFES team shall assist the SEC in the preparation of English language written materials for the colloquium, along with any other written materials.
4. During the colloquium, a secretariat office will be opened adjacent to the working group rooms. Two staff from the IFES team and two from the SEC staff will work in this office to provide assistance to colloquium participants and guests.
5. During the first day of working group sessions, after the opening ceremonies, the rapporteurs will distribute the colloquium stipends to the participants in exchange for a signed receipt.

Responsibilities of the SEC

1. The SEC is responsible for the administration, organization, and supervision of the colloquium in coordination with IFES.
2. The SEC is responsible for assigning participants to the working groups, based on the experience and abilities required by each working group, in coordination with IFES.
3. The SEC will determine the colloquium agenda in coordination with IFES.
4. The SEC is responsible for selecting the participants and issuing invitations to them.

5. The SEC is responsible for media coverage for the colloquium and shall bear all coverage expenses.
6. The SEC is responsible for providing security for the colloquium and shall bear all security expenses.
7. The SEC is responsible for preparation and design of the logotypes on colloquium forms in coordination with IFES.
8. The SEC is responsible for appointing those from the SEC who will form a reception committee to meet arriving international moderators at the Sanaa airport.

Responsibilities of IFES

The IFES team is responsible, in coordination with the SEC, for carrying out the following administrative and organizational activities:

1. IFES is responsible for providing the SEC with advice and technical assistance in all matters related to the planning and organization of the colloquium, including the overall format and objectives of the colloquium, the agenda and topics to be discussed, as well as the collection and distribution of international information on election administration issues of benefit to the colloquium.
2. IFES is responsible for inviting the Arab and international moderators, in coordination with the SEC, and for making all necessary arrangements for their international travel to Sanaa and their accommodations and in-country transportation during the colloquium.
3. IFES is responsible for selecting the members of the IFES project team and contracting with them to work under the direction of the IFES project manager before, during, and immediately following the colloquium. This team shall work hand in hand with the SEC to provide assistance to it and its staff. The IFES team in-country will include the local coordinator, the administrative assistants, the rapporteurs (one for each working group), drivers, and typists.
4. IFES is responsible for contracting with the colloquium site, including its equipment, and arranging for translation, interpretation, and refreshments.
5. IFES is responsible for contracting for the reception and hospitality arrangements for the opening and closing session, for working group sessions, and for the lunch after the closing session, in coordination with the SEC, within the limits of the amount allocated for this purpose in the colloquium budget.
6. IFES is responsible for providing all the necessary equipment and supplies for the colloquium and shall bear all the financial responsibilities related thereto.

7. IFES is responsible for purchasing and paying the costs of office supplies, two banners, and the document folders for colloquium participants.
8. IFES is responsible for paying the colloquium stipend for participants, in the amount of \$100 per participant, for attending the colloquium, as explained in the section above on organizational arrangements, as well as the salaries for the rapporteurs and the members of the IFES project team, including its staff working in the colloquium secretariat, and assistants, drivers, and IFES staff at the IFES headquarters in Washington.
9. IFES is responsible for paying for administrative costs incurred by IFES in the course of the colloquium project, including international communications, photocopying, mail, accommodations for the moderators, the moderators' transportation in Yemen, and the actual costs of travel and accommodations for those Yemeni participants traveling to attend the colloquium from outside the capital governorate.

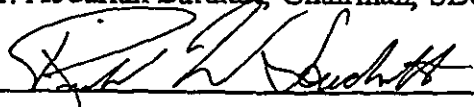
Conclusion

In closing, we would like to stress that good preparation and full cooperation between the SEC and IFES will ensure the success of this colloquium and that the objectives we hope to see from it will be fulfilled through the determination of both parties.

Signatures

Date:

Dr. Abdallah Barakat, Chairman, SEC, Sanaa, Yemen



Date: 24/11/98

Mr. Richard Soudriette, President, IFES, Washington, D.C.

Date:

Mr. Onder Yucer, Resident Representative, UNDP/Yemen (Observer), Sanaa, Yemen

APPENDIX II

The First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen

Recommendations

(originally prepared in Arabic; English translation by IFES)

Note: There was no fixed format for compiling and listing working group recommendations. Working groups could adopt whatever format they wished. Hence the difference in style and format among the following pages.

Working Group One:

Election Administration and Training

Recommendations on Election Administration

1. Supreme Elections Committee offices at the governorate level ["supervisory committees"] should consist of a permanent three-person committee, with a male or female chairperson and one male and one female member. The number of staff for each office should be determined on an as-needed basis.
2. The constituency-level offices [electoral-district level, or "basic committees"] also should consist of a permanent three-person committee, with a male or female chairperson and one male and one female member. The number of staff for each office should be determined on an as-needed basis.
3. In addition to registration of new voters and updating the voters list, another duty of the constituency-level offices should be to accept applications for candidacy prior to the candidate registration deadlines.
4. The voting process should be administered by supervisory, basic, and branch [polling station level] committees formed for that purpose by the SEC, with representation from political parties in keeping with the size of these political forces. Such committees may include chairpersons or members from the governorate and constituency-level offices.
5. The process of establishing SEC branch offices at the constituency and governorate level should be studied with the political forces.
6. Controls must be established for election workers to ensure that they are fair and competent. Women are to be included in the SEC and its various branches.
7. Oversight of the work of the branch offices by the judicial branch and by grass roots organizations should be guaranteed.
8. The election law and the executive regulations should include precisely defined rules for all procedures related to the election process.
9. Members of the diplomatic service and expatriates should be able to exercise their electoral rights in two cases: referenda and presidential elections. Legal steps and controls for facilitating the exercise of such rights must be observed.

Recommendations:
Election Administration and Training

10. Work should be undertaken to include a provision in the election law that makes it possible for members of the election security committees and the ballot box committees to exercise their voting rights.

Recommendations on Election Training

1. The importance of training all SEC cadres and formations should be emphasized. Training should be conducted by individuals and institutions with training expertise.
2. A team of both male and female trainers should be prepared to undertake the training operation.
3. A provision of the election law should be drafted that specifies that responsibility for training is among the duties and responsibilities of the SEC.
4. A centralized system should be adopted for establishing training policies and curricula, but training implementation itself should be decentralized.
5. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of selecting competent and qualified election committee members to conduct the elections.

Note: Due to limitations of time and size (this working group had many more members than the other groups), this working group was unable to discuss the process of training local observers and candidate representatives. We recommend this matter be studied in a future meeting.

Working Group Two:

Voter Awareness and Education

The voter education working group consisted of the following participants:

1. Said Muhammad al-Hakimi, former SEC member
2. Mansour Ahmed Saif, current SEC member
3. Muhammad Muhsin Ahmed al-Wadi'i, Ministry of Education
4. Izz al-Din Said Ahmed, Center for Information and Human Rights
5. Muhammad Muhammad Abd al-Ghani, The Agency for Eradicating Illiteracy
6. Ammat al-Alim al-Susuwa, Ministry of Information
7. Ahmed Sharaf Said, Journalist
8. Nour Abdullah Ahmed al-Harazi, branch committee [polling station] member, 1997 elections
9. Yahya al-Kuhlani, Federation of Labor Unions
10. Ahmed Salih Munsir, University of Aden
11. Fatma Hamza, General Federation of Yemeni Women

The facilitators were Dr. Nader Said and Amb. Nicholas Veliotes. The rapporteur was Salwa Ali Qasim al-Muayyad.

The working group discussed many issues related to voter education and looked at the progress that has been achieved in Yemen in the areas of democracy and human rights in general, and with respect to women, in particular, and education. These programs will be even more effective when a suitable climate exists at the economic, social, and educational levels. Effective educational programs can only be achieved through the large-scale national participation of governmental and non-government organizations, and therefore the SEC must have institutional capabilities and technical expertise.

In this report, we will present the action plan and recommendations drawn up by our working group regarding the concept of voter education (objectives, means, target groups, and implementing agencies).

Made the following recommendations regarding the introduction of voter education concepts into the curriculum for eradicating illiteracy:

The Concept of Voter Education

The working group stressed that voter education is an inseparable part of civic education based on the importance of equality between men and women, the concepts of democracy, and the principles of human rights. In this sense voter education is a long-term process that should be introduced into the concepts and practices of all institutions at all levels. Procedurally, voter education is designed to develop in the public a firm belief in the principles of democracy and elections. It is also designed to introduce the public to

their right to register, to vote, to become a candidate, and to hold their representatives accountable. It should also familiarize the public with constitutional provisions and election law and procedures, so that public participation is based on understanding and belief in the election process and its linkage with improving living conditions and promoting the development process and social peace in the Republic of Yemen.

Civic education includes *both*: short-term education related to procedural information as part of a specific pre-election program; and long-term education related to attitudes regarding elections and the democratic process as a whole.

The Objectives of Voter Education

The working group decided that the objectives of voter education are the following:

1. Deepening public awareness of democracy at the grass-roots level, as well as at the top level of responsible decision-makers in society and those working in election institutions.
2. The creation of enlightened public opinion that knows the importance of public participation in elections as a means of influencing decisions related to their personal living conditions and the future of development in general.
3. Awareness of the importance of women's participation as voters and candidates.
4. Awareness of legislation pertaining to election-related rights.
5. Reinforcing the public's understanding that they have a constitutional right to participate in elections.

Target Groups for Voter Education

In terms of the target groups for voter education, the working group emphasized the need for voter education among all segments of society, although the form of education may differ from group to group because of differing economic, educational, and social levels. The group placed special stress on the importance of focusing on the following groups: the illiterate, workers, farmers, the physically handicapped, students, soldiers, youth, and women.

Issues and Concepts

The participants agreed that the most important issue to focus on in the voter education process is that of educating the public that registering to vote, running as a candidate, and voting are their rights and the constitutional means of participating in government and decision-making. Another issue that was given priority was education the public about

the importance of the peaceful transfer of power, political pluralism, and the right of the citizen and grass-roots organizations to oversee the election process.

Means of Voter Education

The participants reviewed the various means that can be used to promote voter education. They stressed the importance of using all available means to ensure that education reaches all segments of the people. They stressed the importance of using the various forms of the media (audio, visual, and print) and the introduction of voter education into educational curricula.

Agencies Concerned with Voter Education

The working group emphasized that voter education is the joint national responsibility of all social institutions, whether governmental or non-governmental. In this regard, stress was placed on the SEC's role as an effective motivator and facilitator in enhancing the level of voter education. Institutions within civil society, private organizations, political parties, labor unions and federations, benevolent associations, and professional organizations also bear this responsibility. The working group pointed out that ongoing voter education requires an effective effort by media institutions and the ministries of Education and Culture, with the participation of other relevant ministries, including Local Administration, Defense, Youth and Sports, and Religious Endowments and Guidance.

Recommendations

The group came up with a number of recommendations included in the action plan. The most important of these are listed below:

1. A favorable social, economic, and political climate must be created to enable the public to fully and effectively participate in the election process.
2. The role of the SEC must be reinforced, its capabilities enhanced, and its neutrality strengthened so that it is able to provide suitable voter education.
3. So that the concepts of democracy and elections are an inseparable part of the educational process, voter education must be introduced into school curricula and programs to eradicate illiteracy.
4. The responsibility of private, grass-roots, and political party organizations [in voter education] must be reinforced. They should be invited to prepare voter education programs and to work to increase their technical and administrative effectiveness in this area.

Recommendations:
Voter Awareness and Education

5. The level of awareness of members of the public regarding the rights of women must be raised, and effective positive mechanisms must be created to reinforce women's participation in the elections as candidates and voters.
6. It is important that voter education programs target the most deprived groups in society and those residing in remote areas.
7. The role and responsibility of the political parties should be strengthened with respect to educating their members and the voting public about democratic principles and respect for differing opinions.
8. International agencies interested in the issues of democracy and elections should be invited to support voter education programs and assist national efforts made by the SEC and governmental and non-governmental institutions in the areas of training and technical expertise.
9. It is important to diversify the methods used for voter education and to adapt them for the various target groups.
10. The SEC is called on to prepare a voter education document to serve as a source of information regarding the concepts and methods of voter education.
11. The SEC is called on to set out a special section in the draft elections law that stress the following points:
 - The SEC shall play a major role in educating the public about the importance of elections and calling for broad participation.
 - Urging and encouraging the relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations to work towards voter education on the basis of partnership and cooperation.
 - The SEC, together with governmental and non-governmental organizations and the political parties, shall establish an authoritative national framework for education regarding the principles of democracy and human rights in accordance with constitutional and legal provisions and international conventions.
 - The SEC shall assume the responsibility for monitoring implementation of the recommendations related to voter education in coordination with the relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions.
12. We call on the SEC to form a specialized team, made up of governmental and non-governmental institutions, to evaluate implementation of the education programs and to prepare an annual report in this regard, to which all agencies would have access.
13. The working group recommends that the SEC form a team to follow-up the recommendations of the First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration.

Working Group Three:

Election Day Operations/Voting and the Vote Count

Recommendations

1. Good-quality, non-transparent paper should be used for the ballots. Foreign expertise should be used to help design the ballots.
2. Election symbols [symbols for political parties and independent candidates] should be printed on only one side of the ballot.
3. Ballots should be printed only after the legal period for candidate withdrawal has ended. Withdrawal after that date, or any change in the symbols, should be absolutely forbidden.
4. The ballot papers distributed to the polling station committees should equal the number of registered voters at the voting center, plus one percent additional ballot papers in reserve. Ballots should be serially numbered.
5. The size of the ballot paper should be suited to the size of the ballot box opening.
6. Anyone not having a legal right to be in the polling place and election center area should be kept out.
7. Apart from female committee members, polling station committee members should not be assigned to serve in the same electoral district in which they reside.
8. All procedures related to the presence and activity of domestic and international observers overseeing the election process should be simplified.
9. Spacious and suitable polling places should be provided so that voters can exercise their right to vote with full freedom and secrecy.
10. The permanent voter's card should be designed to be impossible to counterfeit.
11. Illiterate, handicapped, and elderly voters should be educated through the available media on how to exercise their electoral rights. Sufficient time in advance of elections must be allowed for this to be accomplished.
12. Clear signboards containing the symbols, photos, and names of the candidates should be set up by the polling station committee at the entrance to each polling place.

Recommendations:
Election Day Operations

13. Emphasis should be placed on educating the security forces about how they are directly linked to the election process at the supervisory, basic, and branch committee levels.
14. The tally should take place at the voting center [*i.e.*, collection of polling stations at one location, such as a school] as a whole [as opposed to the election district headquarters, where the count currently takes place]. Ballot boxes should be collected at the center level and tallied.
15. After the tally, the results should be compiled. Minutes should be written for signature by the chairperson and members of the committee and the candidates or their representatives.
16. The candidates or their representatives should be given an official signed and stamped notification of the result of the tally at the election center for each candidate.
17. These results should be immediately transferred to the district center. After the results of centers included in the district have been compiled, the main committee should announce the result and the name of the winning candidate. The results should then be sent to the Supreme Election Committee.
18. Article 25.B. of the election law should be reconsidered so that the selection of the election committees [registration and polling station committees] is more representative of the political parties based on their presence in the Yemeni political arena.
19. We recommend that the Supreme Election Committee and concerned agencies study the role of the armed forces, security forces, and any similar bodies as they relate to general elections.
20. The working group recommends that SEC form a follow-up committee consisting of one representative from each [working group] to monitor implementation of the recommendations prepared by the various other [working groups].

Working Group Four:

**The Independence and Neutrality of the Supreme Elections Committee
(SEC)**

Recommendations

1. The participants express their desire to improve administration of elections in Yemen, to create a favorable political climate for political and electoral participation, and to provide the mechanisms needed to enable the SEC to oversee fully administration of the election process.
2. The participants stress the importance of the role of the political parties in activating and strengthening Yemeni democracy and in the election process, in particular. They urge the various parties to initiate a political dialogue to overcome obstacles and difficulties in order to deepen national unity and to serve Yemen's supreme interests.
3. The participants stress the special responsibility the political parties themselves carry with respect to evaluating their experience since the beginning of political and party pluralism in the country and deriving useful lessons from this evaluation.
4. The participants emphasize the need to strengthen SEC independence and neutrality to enable it to bear full responsibility for administering the election process at all stages through its various bodies pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution and the Elections Law without any interference from any quarter whatsoever. The participants also recommend that all committees, especially the supervisory, main, and branch committees, must be subject to the direct guidance, supervision, and control of the SEC.
5. The participants recommend that members of the SEC be selected out of national figures (male and female) who are competent, fair, and objective, and who place the public interest above any personal or partisan interests.
6. The participants urge all political parties and institutions to work to reinforce the independence and neutrality of the SEC.
7. The participants stress the need to implement measures to ensure SEC independence (financial and administrative) in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the election law as enacted by the Parliament. They also stress that SEC needs a stable technical administrative body [e.g., a permanent secretariat or permanent staff] operating under SEC supervision at the central administrative level [in Sanaa] and at governorate headquarters to enable it to conduct its work throughout the year. The participants also call for a fixed annual budget to be allocated to cover the expenses

Recommendations:
The Independence and Neutrality of the SEC

of the SEC, its administrative and technical apparatus and election activities, since it is solely responsible for the overall election process.

8. The participants recommend that donor countries and organizations provide material, moral, and technical assistance to the SEC to strengthen its ability to carry out its duties and maintain its independence. Such assistance should include the areas of training, staff development, voter education, and information systems.
9. The participants express their full appreciation for the role of civil society organizations, especially human rights and democratic development organizations, in election monitoring activities and their effective participation in training the public for monitoring work. The hope is that Yemeni civil organizations will upgrade their organizational structures and support ways of cooperation and coordination among themselves and offer opportunities to youth and women to participate effectively in public political life and thereby enrich elected councils at all various levels with new blood from these two sectors.
10. The participants value the role international organizations concerned with developing democracy have played in supporting the Yemeni experiment and in assisting domestic organizations with election monitoring. The participants call on similar Arab organizations to participate in turn. They stress the importance of all other international organizations playing a creative role in developing the election monitoring mechanism in Yemen, beginning with initial election procedures through the conclusion of its various stages, accompanied by a frank critical appraisal that confirms the credibility of these organizations and reinforces everyone's confidence in their fairness.

Working Group Five:

Voter Registration

Recommendations

When should registration be conducted?

1. There should be permanent registration during the first eight months of the Christian calendar (1 January through 31 August).
2. Permanent committees at the constituency [electoral district] level should conduct registration. Each committee should include a technically competent employee of the Supreme Election Commission (SEC) who is neutral and independent in his work, together with three representatives of registered political parties taking part in the election process as members. They should be assisted by SEC administrative employees.
3. The makeup of such voter registration committees should not include any two members from a single party. The political weight of these parties should be observed in the selection of party representatives to the committee. When there are numerous applications for inclusion by the small parties, these parties together should be represented by one of the small parties. The parties should provide to the SEC the names of their nominees to committee membership. The SEC should select committee members from among them on a fully paid basis for a four-year period [the length of the SEC term].

How can everyone entitled to vote be reached?

4. The number of registration centers should be increased to be quickly and easily reachable by voters.
5. Vehicles should be outfitted with the equipment needed for registration, so they can reach remote locations to register residents on the spot.
6. The SEC should provide a comprehensive computer network throughout the Republic at the level of each parliamentary district.

The process of posting and purging the voter lists

7. The preliminary voters lists should be posted on the first day of the ninth Christian month (September 1). The preliminary lists are those lists that have been neither approved nor challenged by voters and interested parties. They should remain posted until the last day of the twelfth month (December 31).

8. The final lists should be posted on the first day of the first month of every Christian year and should remain posted until the 31st day of the twelfth month of the same year. The final lists are those lists that have been approved or amended following challenge.

The voting card

9. The voting card should carry the photo of the male or female voter. Neither the SEC nor its affiliated committees should retain a copy of the voter's photo. The only photos should be those on the voting card retained by the voter.
10. Voting cards should be made of plastic or some other special material to protect them against forgery.
11. Voting cards should be issued at the district offices immediately upon application or at the specially equipped vehicles that go to remote areas.

Appeal procedures

12. The working group recommends approval of Article 16 of the draft General Election and Referendum Law, and the provision of draft Paragraph 16.A delegating a full-time judge from the Court of First Instance under whose jurisdiction the electoral district is located to hear the appeals during the first three months following posting of the preliminary lists, from September 1 through November 30 of that year.
13. The working group recommends that a period of time be specified for filing appeals with the delegated judge from the Court of First Instance from the date of posting of the preliminary lists through the end of October of the same year. From then on no appeals could be filed with the judge from the Court of First Instance. However the period for submitting appeals to the Appeals Court would be extended to November 15, the purpose being to give the Voter Registration Committee a full month (the month of December) of every year to purge the voter lists by adding anyone missing, deleting, completing, or amending the lists. This would allow the Committee to post the final lists on January 1 of the next year.

To whom should copies of the voter register be issued?

14. The working group recommends that Article 18 of the draft General Election and Referendum Law be changed whereby only three copies of the final voter lists would be printed. They would be retained by:
 - The Electoral District Office
 - The SEC branch in the Governorate

Recommendations:
Voter Registration

- **The SEC**

The working group feels there is no reason for the Parliament or the Supreme Court to retain a copy of a general register of the final voter lists.

The lists should be posted in prominent locations in the electoral districts and the governorates. The SEC will give a free copy of the lists to each registered participating party as soon as they are posted. They will be sent to the parties by registered mail or hand-delivered and marked as received. SEC's obligation to provide a copy of the lists should be deemed a legal obligation for which they are legally answerable. Every citizen, male or female, and every interested party should be entitled to obtain a copy of these lists at their own expense based on an application submitted to the SEC.

Resolving the problem of consistency between electoral districts and *mudiriyyas* [local administrative districts], revising parliamentary districts, and division of the *mudiriyya* into local election districts

15. The working group recommends that there be coordination among the SEC, the Supreme Commission for Administrative Division, and prominent individuals with expertise when election districts are drawn up.

The SEC should make field visits to familiarize itself with locations assigned as registration centers, so as to select locations that are appropriate in terms of their appearance and centrality.

In determining whether there has been an increase or decrease in the number of residents for electoral districting purposes, the percentage of variation should be increased from five to ten percent.

Working Group Six:

The Election System

The election system working group reviewed the following election issues related to the election system:

1. The best election system for Yemen.
2. The right to candidacy, controls on candidacy, candidate nomination, fees, application submission and documentation.
3. Filing appeals against candidates.
4. Candidate withdrawal.
5. The party composition of election committees.
6. The party composition of polling place committees.

Working group participants were:

1. Muhammad Es-Senoussi Mnaa, Member of the Moroccan Parliament, Facilitator
2. Rashad al-Rasaas, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Legal Affairs
3. Abdo Ali Othman, University of Sanaa
4. Qaid Muhammad Tarboush, University of Taizz
5. Abd al-Rahman Saif Ismail, Ministry of Local Government
6. Taha Abdullah Muhammad, Yemeni Parliament
7. Ahmad Muhammad Abd al-Ghani, Yemeni Center for Strategic Studies
8. Ahmad al-Sufi, Yemeni Institute for Democratic Development
9. Faris al-Saqqaf, Center for Future Studies

The participants began with a general discussion of the components of their topic. They evaluated the Yemeni democratic experiment to date and expressed its importance to the current phase of political development in the Republic of Yemen. It is a young experiment that requires careful attention if it is to succeed, continue, and expand.

The participants emphasized the positive aspects of this experiment and expressed the hope that any contradictions or negative features marring it can be redressed in a manner suited to the characteristics of Yemeni society by benefiting from the experiences of others, especially in terms of the culture of democracy.

The participants' discussion emphasized that genuine democracy is not solely a matter of legal provisions. Genuine democracy requires the actual application of the laws regulating the exercise of democracy and the electoral process to ensure they are free and fair. They stressed that theory must be tied to practice to implant democracy and strengthen democratic mechanisms and institutions in Yemen. The working group carried out its activities in a democratic atmosphere of free discussion. All participants were given the opportunity to present their verbal comments and some submitted relevant papers on the topic.

The participants approved by unanimous consent a number of recommendations related to the development of election administration.

Recommendations

Preferred Election System

1. The participants emphasize that the appropriate election system for parliamentary and local council elections in Yemen at the current stage is the single [non-transferable] vote relative majority system and that the single vote two-stage (i.e., first stage and run-off) absolute majority system is the appropriate system for presidential elections. The participants recommend these systems be adopted.

The participants also recommend that the SEC and all political actors present in the arena take part in upgrading the election process and taking measures to prepare for a future transition to another appropriate election system, either single vote absolute majority or list proportional representation.

2. The participants emphasize the need to adhere to and work for SEC neutrality and independence. The Army and security forces must not be used to influence specific electoral districts, but they have the right to vote at the locations where they are registered in accordance with the provisions of the election law.

The Right to Candidacy

3. The participants recommend that emphasis be placed on the conditions and guarantees contained in the draft general elections law as they pertain to the right to candidacy, the controls regulating candidacy, the nomination process, and adherence to submission of the documents required for candidacy.

Financial Controls

4. The participants recommend that the electoral campaigns of licensed political parties taking part in the parliamentary election process be funded from public funds, distributed in the following manner:
 - Twenty-five percent to be distributed to all licensed political parties taking part in the elections.
 - Seventy-five percent to be distributed based on various standards of measurement, which when met will result in an increased share of financial support to the party, including:
 - The number of practical abilities the party candidates have.
 - The number of women candidates in the parties.
 - The percentage of valid ballots received by the party following the tally.

- The percentage of winning candidates of the political parties.
 - The percentage of the number of candidates of the party.
5. The participants recommend that a specific financial ceiling be set for each candidate to meet the financial burdens of the election campaign, with the SEC developing the standards that would make it possible to set an amount that is the maximum ceiling and the controls to ensure the ceiling will not be violated.
 6. The participants recommend that each candidate be required to submit accounting documentation related to his/her election campaign expenditures to the Central Organization for Control and Accounting within a period of time to be determined by the SEC.

Candidate Appeals

7. The participants support the legal requirements related to methods of candidate appeals, and emphasize the following:
 - An independent article must be inserted in the elections law whereby anyone seeking to be a candidate whose candidacy has been denied, as well as any voter challenging a candidate he feels does not meet the conditions required under the law, has the right to appeal to the relevant judicial body.
 - The legislative branch must institute controls to minimize fraudulent appeals and enact judicial procedures regarding issuing rulings.

Candidate Withdrawal

8. The participants recommend the amendment of Article 56 of the draft election law setting 20 days prior to the voting date as the maximum for candidate withdrawal from the race [the law currently allows ten days before the election as the last day for withdrawal].
9. The participants recommend the amendment of Article 56 of the draft elections law that it is the right of the political parties to submit an alternate candidate for a deceased or withdrawn candidate within three days or during the period of applying for candidacy, if application for candidacy is still open.

Encouraging Women Candidates

10. The participants commend the practical measures taken by SEC to encourage women voters and candidates. The participants stress that new initiatives need to be undertaken to support the role of women inasmuch as they represent half of society and are an effective force for economic and social development. In this regard, they recommend the following initiatives be undertaken:

- The participants recommend that the state provide special material and moral support to women's associations and encourage women to establish new associations.
- Intensive campaigns to combat illiteracy among women must be initiated in towns and villages.
- Awareness campaigns must be conducted concerning the political, economic, and educational role of women in society.
- Political parties must be called upon to devote attention in their programs to including women and energizing their role.
- Enactment of the Childhood Law must be accelerated in view of its close relationship to women's function in society.
- The participants recommend that the number of women candidates be considered an additional factor when distributing financial support allocated for party election campaigns.

Formation of Polling Station Committees

11. The participants value the presence of candidates' representatives as their delegates at the ballot box and during the tally. The participants reaffirm that this measure should be retained.
12. The participants recommend that formation of any polling station committee from a single political party be banned.

APPENDIX III

**Invitation to
the First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen
(sent to participants and invited guests)**

The logo is circular with a thick black border. Inside the border, the text "الملتقى الأول لتطوير إدارة الانتخابات" is written in Arabic script along the top arc, and "الملتقى الأول" is written along the bottom arc. In the center of the logo is a stylized illustration of a ballot box with a slot on top, set against a background of a map of Sudan. Below the ballot box, the text "The First Colloquium on the Dev. of Election Admin. (Wamrah Shury Binham)" is written in English. At the bottom of the logo, the dates "من ١٥ - ١٨ مارس ١٩٩٩" and "Sudan from the 15th to the 18th March 1999" are written in Arabic and English respectively.

**Under the Sponsorship of H.E. Ali Abdallah Saleh
The President of the Republic**

The First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen will be held from the 15th to the 18th of March 1999.

The Colloquium aims to generate recommendations for the strengthening of Yemen's democratic election system.

On this occasion The Supreme Elections Committee and the International Foundation for Election Systems are pleased to invite you to attend the opening and closing ceremonies to be held at the Central Organization for Control and Audit, at the intersection of Baghdad St. and al Siteen Ring Rd..

Opening Ceremony: 9:00am – 12pm Monday 15th March 1999
*Opening addresses, overview of Colloquium,
Reception following ceremony*

Closing Ceremony: 9:00 am – 12pm Thursday 18th March 1999
*Presentation of recommendations by Colloquium discussion group participants; closing
remarks*

RSVP: (215649)

The Colloquium is funded by the United Nations Development Programme – Sana'a.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

رئيس الجمهورية

برعاية فخامة الأخ / علي محمد الله صالح

ينعقد الملتقى الأول لتطوير إدارة الانتخابات في اليمن من 15 إلى 18 مارس 1999م
يهدف الملتقى إلى بلورة سلسلة من المقترحات لدعم مسيرة الديمقراطية وتطوير الإدارة الانتخابية في اليمن

وبهذه المناسبة يرأس اللجنة العليا للانتخابات والمؤسسة الدولية للأنظمة الانتخابية (IFES) دعوتكم لحضور حفلتي الافتتاح والاختتام
بقاعة الجهاز المركزي للرقابة والمحاسبة، شارع الستين.

جلسة الافتتاح من الساعة التاسعة صباحاً إلى الساعة الثانية عشر ظهراً من يوم الاثنين الموافق 1999/3/15م

جلسة الاختتام من الساعة التاسعة صباحاً إلى الساعة الثانية عشر ظهراً من يوم الخميس الموافق 1999/3/18م

وفي حال الاعتذار يرجى الاتصال بـ (215649)



APPENDIX IV

List of Participants, Moderators and Rapporteurs by Working Group

List of Participants by Working Group

First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen

March 15-18, 1999

<u>Name and Residence</u>	<u>Party Affiliation (if known/applicable), Position</u>
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Working Group 1: Election Administration and Training

Moderators: Dr. Ronald Wolfe (US), Dr. Rafael Lopez-Pintor (Spain)

Rapporteur: Imtinan Abdul Quddos Al-Medwahi

Abdelkarim No'man, Dhamar	Member of governorate elections committee, Dhamar
Ahmed Abdelrahman Shuja, Sanaa	Islah Party, Ministry of Planning
Ahmed Haidera, Sanaa	Independent, current SEC member
Ahmed Qarhash, Sanaa	Former Head, Septemberist Party, former SEC member, '93
Ahmed Sharafeddin, Sanaa	Al Haqq Party, former SEC member, '93
Ali al-Saeedi, Sanaa	GPC, current SEC member
Amin Ali Amin, Sanaa	Islah, former SEC member, '97
Kawkab Mohamed, Hodeida	GPC, former district committee member, Hodeida
Raufa Hassan, Sanaa	Indep, Head, Women's Studies Center, Sanaa University
Samir al-Abdali, Sanaa	GPC, Center for Research and Studies
Shada Nasser, Sanaa	Independent, lawyer, Elections Monitoring Committee
Sultan Hazim, Sanaa	Nasserite, Current member of Parliament
Mohamed al-Kibsi, Sanaa	GPC, Current Member of Parliament

Working Group 2: Voter Awareness and Education

Moderators: Nader Said (Palestine), Amb. Nicholas Veliotis (US)

Rapporteur: Salwa Ali Qasim al-Muayyad

Amat al-Aleem al-Suswa, Sanaa	General People's Congress (GPC) Party, Deputy Minister of Information, head of National Women's Committee
Ahmed Saleh Nasr, Aden	Independent, Political Scientist, Aden University
Ahmed Sharaf Saeed, Sanaa	GPC, Journalist
Ezz al-Din Saeed, Taiz	Independent, Head of Human Rights Studies Center
Mansour Ahmed Sayf, Sanaa	Independent, Current SEC member
Mohamed Abdelghani, Sanaa	Islah, Yemeni Campaign for the Eradication of Illiteracy
Mohamed al-Wada'i, Sanaa	Independent, Ministry of Education
Noor al-Harazi, Taiz	Member of district election committee, Hodeida, '97
Saeed al-Hakimi, Sanaa	GPC, former SEC member '97

Yahya al-Kohlani, Sanaa	Independent, head of Labor Union Syndicate (election monitoring)
Fatima Hamza, Sanaa	GPC, Director, Union of Yemeni Women

Working Group 3: Election Day Operations

Moderators: Dr. Walid Mubarak (Lebanon), Hon. Jean Jacques Blais (Canada)

Rapporteur: Jamila Saleh Saif

Abdelrahman Mahyoob, Sanaa	Baath Party, Supreme Elections Committee (SEC) member 1997
Hamoud al-Dharihi, Sanaa	Islah Party, former SEC member, '93
Jamal al-Hakimi, Taiz	Member of Supervisory Committee, '97
Khalid Abdelaziz, Sanaa	Independent, Current SEC member
Yaseen Abdo Saeed, Taiz	Nasserite Party, former SEC member, '93
Abdel Fattah al-Baseer, Sanaa	Nasserite Party, former SEC member, '97
Hafed Fadl, Sanaa	Independent, head of Arab Democratic Institute
Ahmed al-Kibsi, Sanaa	Independent, Political Scientist, Sanaa University

Working Group 4: The Neutrality and Independence of the SEC

Moderators: Hani al-Hourani (Jordan), Dr. Michael Hudson (US)

Rapporteur: Afrah Mohammed Saad

Abdallah al-Hakimi, Sanaa	Nasserite Party, Former SEC member, '93
Abdallah Barakat, Sanaa	GPC, Chairman, current SEC
Ali Abdelkhaliq, Sanaa	GPC, former SEC member, '93
Hilal Mohamed, Socotra	Member of district election committee, Socotra
Jafaar Showtah, Sanaa	Independent, Sanaa University
Khadija al-Haisami, Sanaa	GPC, Sanaa University Center for Women's Studies
Mohamed Ghalib, Sanaa	Yemeni Socialist Party, former Member of Parliament
Mujahed al-Ashmawi, Sanaa	YSP, Arab Center for Strategic Studies
Hassan Ba Zarea, Sanaa	Rabita Party, former SEC member, '93

Working Group 5: Voter Registration

Moderators: Dr. Mohamed Kamel (Egypt), Michael Meadowcroft (Great Britain)

Rapporteur: Iman Seif Qassim

Adbelkarim al-Madhaji, Sanaa	GPC, General Manager, Ministry of Local Administration
Ahmed Shamsan Mughlis, Ibb	Member of branch committee, Ibb
Hussein al-Ahjuri, Sanaa	Member of district election committee, al-Mahwit
Mabrouk Mahdi, Hadramout	Member of district election committee
Mohamed Dammaj, Sanaa	Islah, Vice Chairman, Current SEC

Mohamed Ali Yasser, al-Mahra
Muwaffaq Abu Bakr, Abyan
Ali Hamdi Nathiri, Sanaa

Member of basic committee, al-Mahra
Member of basic committee, Abyan
GPC, former Member of Parliament

Working Group 6: The Election System

Moderator: Mohamed Es-Snoussi Mnaa (Morocco)

Rapporteur: Amat al-Razzaq Gabar

Abdu Ali Othman, Sanaa
Abdelrahman Ismail, Sanaa
Ahmed Abdelghani, Sanaa
Ahmed al-Sufi, Sanaa
Faris al-Saqqaf, Sanaa
Qaid Tarboush, Taiz
Rushd al-Rasas, Sanaa
Taha Abdallah, Aden

Independent, Political Scientist, Sanaa University
GPC, Ministry of Local Administration
Islah, Head, Yemeni Center for Strategic Studies
Independent, Elections Monitoring Committee
Islah, Head, Center for Future Studies
Independent, historian of Yemeni elections
GPC, Ministry of Legal Affairs
Independent, current member of Parliament (election law committee)

Total number of participants in attendance: 59 (all but one attended both days)

Total number invited: 66

APPENDIX V

List of International Moderators

International Moderators

First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen

March 15-18, 1999

Mr. Jean Jacques Blais, Canada. Lawyer. Former MP (Liberal Party), Solicitor General, and Minister of National Defense. Member of seven UN and Commonwealth election observation missions. Deputy Chairman of Provisional Election Commission for Bosnia and Herzegovina (1998).

Mr. Hani Hourani, Jordan. Founder and Director of the New Jordan Center, a leading research institute in the Arab world. Published in fields of Jordanian elections, democratization in Jordan.

Dr. Michael Hudson, US. Professor of International Relations and Arab Studies, Georgetown University. Leading specialist in Arab politics, with expertise in Yemeni affairs. Observed 1997 elections in Yemen.

Dr. Mohamed Kamel, Egypt. Lawyer and PhD. Founder of Kamel Law Office, one of Middle East's leading law firms. Involved in drafting of Saudi and Yemeni investment laws. Former only elected independent member of Shura Council (Egyptian Senate).

Dr. Rafael Lopez-Pintor, Spain. Professor of Sociology and Political Science, Autonomous University of Madrid. Published expert on election systems, elections and governance, post-conflict elections, opinion research. Directed and/or participated in numerous election observation and assistance missions in Central America, Africa, Middle East (including Yemen).

Mr. Michael Meadowcroft, United Kingdom. Former MP (Liberal Party). Former Chair of Electoral Reform Society. Leader or member of 33 election missions to 19 countries, including Yemen. In 1998, headed European Commission Technical Assistance Mission to Cambodian elections.

Mr. Mohamed Es-Snoussi Mnaa, Morocco. Lawyer. Member of Parliament since 1994 (USFP Party; member of USFP Central Committee). Member, Moroccan Organization for Human Rights. Author of weekly national political column in al-Ahdath paper.

Dr. Walid Mubarak, Lebanon. Professor of Political Science and Chairman of Sociology Department, Lebanese American University. Specializations: human rights, democratization in the Arab world, Gulf politics.

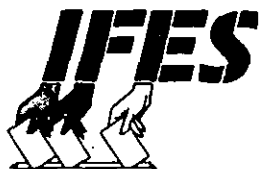
Dr. Nader Said, Palestine. Director, Development Studies Program, Bir Zeit University, Ramallah, West Bank. Former head of Survey Research Unit, Center for Palestine Research and Studies, a leading Palestine research center. Directed CPRS polling related to 1996 Palestinian elections, including Arab world's first official exit poll.

Ambassador Nicholas Veliotis, United States. Retired US Diplomat. Former Ambassador to Egypt and Jordan; former US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs.

Dr. Ronald Wolfe, United States. IFES/Yemen Project Manager, 1993, 1996-1997, 1998-99. Expert in Arab legal and commercial issues; Arabic linguist. Observer, 1993 and 1997 Yemeni elections. 30 years of experience in Arab world.

APPENDIX VI

Informational Letter Sent to International Moderators by IFES



International Foundation for Election Systems

1101 15th STREET, N.W. • THIRD FLOOR • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 • (202) 828-8507 • FAX (202) 452-0804 • WWW.IFES.ORG

March 1, 1999

Dear Moderator:

With about a week and a half until you travel to Yemen for the conference, I'm writing you with more specific information about your trip. We are looking forward to having you with us in Yemen! Please review the following information carefully.

- **Contacting IFES between now and your departure:** Dr Ronald Wolfe, IFES Project Manager, and I will be departing for Yemen on the evening of Tuesday, March 2 and arriving in Sanaa the night of March 3. Through close of business on March 2, I can be reached at IFES/Washington at the usual contact numbers: telephone: 202.872.5036 (direct); fax: 202.452.0804; e-mail: amy@ifes.org. On March 3, while we are in transit, please contact my assistant Mutale Chilangwa at 202.828.8507 or the fax number above. Once Ron and I are in Yemen, we can be reached at the Taj Sheba Hotel, tel. 967.1.272.372; fax: 967.1.274.129 (please mark our names clearly on any faxes to ensure they get to us quickly). You can also contact Mutale at IFES/Washington if you have any trouble getting through to us at the Taj.
- **Ticket:** Your airline ticket to Yemen was sent to you by Federal Express on February 27 or will be sent tomorrow, March 2. You should have already received your itinerary, which was faxed to you along with your contract. **Please contact Mutale Chilangwa immediately if you have not received your ticket by Friday, March 5.**
- **Transportation:** You will be met directly upon your arrival at the Sanaa International Airport by a representative of the Supreme Elections Committee and/or IFES, processed through the VIP arrival lounge, and taken directly to the hotel. Once in Yemen, all conference-related transportation will be provided by IFES and the SEC. This includes transportation to and from the conference venue, all other conference activities, and your trip to the airport upon departure.
- **Accommodations:** We have reserved a room for you at the Taj Sheba Hotel. Your room will be paid for directly by IFES. (Please note, however, that if for any reason you choose to extend your stay past the return date of the itinerary IFES has made for you, you will be responsible for extending your reservation with the hotel and for covering your room charges.) The Taj is a very comfortable 4-star hotel, centrally located in downtown Sanaa. All basic hotel facilities are available: two restaurants, a swimming pool, a small gym, a small garden, etc.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS		Judy A. Black	Lesley Israel	William R. Sweeney, Jr.	DIRECTORS EMERITI
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- For your reference, the full address of the hotel is:

Taj Sheba Hotel
Ali Abdolmoghni Street
Sanaa, Republic of Yemen
Tel. 967.1.272.372
Fax. 967.1.274.129

- **Per Diem:** Your room reservation includes free breakfast. Once you arrive in Yemen, you will receive a stipend of \$45 per full day you are in-country (and a portion of that for partial days) to cover your other meals, phone calls, laundry and other miscellaneous expenses. For expenses charged to your hotel room, the hotel will keep an account, which you will be responsible for settling before you depart.
- **Immunizations:** If you have not done so already, you may want to consider having immunizations for Hepatitis A & B.
- **Medical Care:** IFES will provide you with Medex, medical evacuation insurance coverage, for your stay in Yemen. **Please make sure that you have adequate medical insurance for your time in Yemen,** as Medex insurance does not cover treatment itself, only the cost of transport out of Yemen for medical care.

For your reference, your Medex number is: _____.

- **Weather:** The temperature in Sanaa in March is ideal. If the weather is typical this year, you should expect temperatures in the high 70's and low 80's Fahrenheit (25 to 27 degrees Celsius). Sanaa is at a high altitude (7600 feet/2,345 meters above sea level) so be sure to drink plenty of water while there.
- **Honorarium:** As indicated in your contract, you will receive a \$1,000 honorarium for your participation, hard work, and contribution to the improvement of the Yemeni election process. Prior to your departure for Yemen, please let IFES (either me or Mutale Chilangwa) know if you prefer the honorarium to be given to you in cash (USD) in Yemen, or by a USD check issued from IFES Washington within 30 days after the conference. We will provide the original copies of your IFES moderator contract in Yemen.
- **Briefing Materials:** A briefing book is on its way to you by Federal Express; you should receive it this week. It includes background information to help you prepare for the conference and for your time in Yemen, including:
 - the election law
 - observer reports from the 1997 parliamentary elections
 - IFES reports on Yemen's election process and election administration structure
 - political background

***Please review as much of this information as possible before your travel to Yemen, particularly the election-related materials. While we will make every attempt to brief you as**

thoroughly as possible once you arrive, the more background you can absorb beforehand, the better prepared you will be.

***Please note that the SEC has not yet finalized the exact topics to be covered by the working groups, so IFES has not yet been able to assign each of you to a particular working group. Attached is a list of the topics likely to be covered; we will contact you from Yemen regarding your specific assignment, and will provide you with material on the topic once you arrive.**

- **Conference Schedule:** Moderators will be arriving in Sanaa from March 10 through March 14, with the majority of you arriving on March 12. For those of you arriving during the day on March 12, you will have time to relax and continue reading your background materials. We will also meet with you on that day to go over the program.
- **March 13 and 14:** We will spend both full days in an orientation and briefing session at the hotel, led by Dr. Ron Wolfe. The program will include both group meetings and individual sessions to go over the structure of the conference and to prepare you for your assigned working group.
- **March 15:** Opening ceremonies of the conference, 9 am - noon, at the Central Organization for Control and Auditing ("COCA") in Sanaa. Attending the opening ceremonies will be the 70 Yemeni **participants** invited by the Supreme Election Committee. The participants are drawn from current and past election commissions, political parties, the Parliament, district-level election administration, and civil society organizations. (The full participant list will be provided upon your arrival.) Also attending will be **invited guests**, who will include Yemeni officials, foreign diplomats and representatives of international organizations resident in Sanaa, other dignitaries, and the media. The opening ceremonies will be followed by a reception at COCA. Registration for participants will also begin on this day. In the evening, we will work with moderators in preparation for the working group sessions.
- **March 16 and 17:** Working group sessions, 9:00 am to 12:30 pm and 5:00 pm to 8:30 pm, at COCA. The working group sessions will be closed to all but participants, moderators and rapporteurs. As described to you previously, each working group will be assigned a particular election topic or topics; the goal of each group will be to arrive at recommendations for the strengthening of the electoral process in its assigned area.
- **March 18:** Closing ceremonies of the conference, 9 am - noon, at COCA. Participants and invited guests will attend. A spokesman from each working group will present his group's findings and recommendations. The closing ceremonies will be followed in the afternoon by a luncheon banquet, at a restaurant in Sanaa, for moderators, participants and VIPs selected by the SEC.
- **March 19-20:** Moderators depart Sanaa.
- **List of Moderators:** Attached is a list of the international moderators who have confirmed their participation as of today. We will provide the final list upon your arrival in Sanaa. As you see, we have quite an impressive group so far.

If you have any questions about any of the above, please feel free to contact IFES/Washington or Ron Wolfe and me in Sanaa after March 3.

We look forward to greeting you in Sana'a. Again, we are extremely pleased about your participation in this important event. We know you will make an excellent contribution.

Sincerely,



Amy Hawthorne

Middle East Program Officer

Attachments: List of Confirmed Moderators
List of Proposed Discussion Topics

APPENDIX VII

Schedule for Moderators in Sanaa, March 13-19, 1999

(organized by IFES)

Schedule for Moderators
First Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen
March 13-18, 1999

Saturday March 13	IFES Background Briefing at Taj Sheba Hotel, Omar Khayyam Room (off hotel lobby)
11:30 am - 12:00 pm	Welcome and Introductions
12 pm - 1 pm	Overview of Conference Structure
1 pm - 2 pm	Break for Lunch
2 pm - 5 pm	Background: Political Overview Structure of Election Administration in Yemen Conference topics
Sunday March 14	IFES Background Briefing Taj Sheba Hotel, Omar Khayyam Room (off hotel lobby)
10 am	Security Briefing by UNDP Security Officer Suleiman Khoury
10:30 am - 2 pm	Techniques in Moderating and Facilitating workshops Continuation of discussion group topics
2: 30 pm - 5: 30 pm	Individual meetings with moderating teams and Dr. Ron Wolfe and Amy Hawthorne -30 minutes per team
6:00 pm	Meet in Taj Sheba Lobby Depart for Reception at US Ambassador's Residence
6:30 - 7:30 pm	Reception for moderators at US Ambassador's Residence
7:45 pm	Depart for Supreme Elections Committee's headquarters
8 pm	Reception for moderators hosted by SEC

9 pm Return to Hotel

Monday March 15 Opening Day of Conference

8:00 am Meet in Lobby

8:15 am Depart for Conference Site (Central Organization for Control and Auditing)

9:00 am - 10 am Reception for invited guests at COCA

10 am Conference opens at COCA Auditorium

Scheduled remarks:

Dr. Abdallah Barakat, Chairman, Supreme Elections Committee

Mr. Khalid Alloush, Deputy Resident Representative, United Nations Development Program/Sanaa

H.E. Victor Henderson, Ambassador of Britain

Mr. Ishita, Charge D'Affairs, Embassy of Japan

Dr. Ronald Wolfe/IFES (introduction of moderators)

H.E. Vice President of the Republic of Yemen

11:30 am End of opening ceremonies (expected)

12 pm - 1 pm Registration of participants
Meeting of working groups in their assigned rooms
Distribution of materials; introductions

7 pm IFES Dinner for Moderators, al-Bustan Restaurant
Meet in Lobby at 7 pm for transportation

Tuesday March 16 Working Group Meetings at COCA (closed to the public/press)

8:00 am Meet in Hotel Lobby

8:15 am Depart for COCA

9 am - 12 pm Morning session - working groups
30 minute break half-way through the session

12:30 pm Return to Hotel

4:00 pm Meet in Hotel Lobby for return to COCA

4:30 pm - 8 pm Afternoon session - working groups
30 minute break half-way through the session

Wednesday March 17 Working Group Meetings at COCA (closed to the public/press)

8:00 am Meet in Hotel Lobby

8:15 am Depart for COCA

9 am - 12 pm Morning session - working groups
30 minute break half-way through the session

12:30 pm Return to Hotel

4:00 pm Meet in Hotel Lobby for return to COCA

4:30 pm - 8 pm Afternoon session - working groups
30 minute break half-way through the session

Thursday March 18 Closing Ceremonies of Conference - at COCA

8:00 am Meet in Hotel Lobby

8:15 am Depart for COCA

9 am - 12 pm Closing Ceremonies
Presentation of Working Group Findings and Recommendations

Closing Remarks:

Dr. Amat al-Aleem al-Suswa, Deputy Minister of Information and
conference participant (keynote speaker)

Mr. Mohamed Hussein Dammaj, Vice Chairman, SEC

Dr. Ronald Wolfe, IFES

1:30 pm

Luncheon for conference participants, moderators, rapporteurs, and
invited guests
Al-Khayma Restaurant

Friday March 19

Debrief with moderators
Moderators begin to depart Sanaa

APPENDIX VIII

List of IFES Team Members and Staff

List of IFES Team Members and Staff

I. IFES Project Team, July 1998-April 1999

Dr. Ronald G. Wolfe, Project Manager (Washington and Sanaa); IFES consultant
Ms. Amy Hawthorne, IFES Middle East Program Officer (Washington and Sanaa)
Mr. Mazen Luqman, Local Representative (Sanaa); IFES Consultant
Mr. Keith Klein, IFES Director of Programs, Africa and the Near East (Washington)
[through December 1998]
Mr. Thomas Bayer, IFES Director of Programs, Africa and the Near East (Washington)
[January – April 1999]
Ms. Monique Bryant, IFES Contracts and Grants Administrator (Washington)
Mr. Mutale Chilangwa, IFES Senior Program Assistant for Africa and the Near East
(Washington)
Ms. Emily Nolte, IFES Logistics Specialist (Washington)

II. Rapporteurs (March 1999)

Dr. Neguiba al-Mahdi (head rapporteur)
Ms. Emtinan Abdul Quddous al-Medwahi
Ms. Iman Seif Qassem
Ms. Amat al-Razzaq Gabar
Ms. Selwa Ali al-Moayyad
Ms. Jamila Saleh Saif
Ms. Afrah Mohamed Saad

III. Typists (for typing of rapporteurs' notes) (March 1999)

Ms. Lula Abdullah al-Shari
Ms. Huda Abdallah
Ms. Ekram al-Ademi
Ms. Fatima Mohid Abbas
Ms. Razeqa Nasser Gobran
Ms. Eman Hassan
Ms. Bilqis Hassan

IV. Short Term Assistants (March-April 1999)

Dr. Neguiba al-Mahdi (administrative assistant as well as rapporteur)
Mr. Hafthallah al-Gabali (administrative assistant)
Mr. Owsan Jubran (driver and gopher)
Mr. Sultan Hajib (SEC staff; assistance in secretariat during conference)
Mr. Hisham Barakat (SEC staff; assistance in secretariat during conference)

APPENDIX IX

IFES Press Release



Press Release

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTION SYSTEMS

1101 15th Street NW, 3rd Floor - Washington, DC 20005 USA - (202) 828-8507 - Fax (202) 452-0804 - www.ifes.org

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE

CONTACT: Torie Keller/Washington, +1-202-872-4822

March 14, 1999

Amy Hawthorne/Sanaa, +967-1-272-372

Yemen Holds National Conference on Elections

SANAA, YEMEN — The first official election-related conference in the Arab world to include governmental and non-governmental actors opens Monday in Sanaa. Yemen boasts the only multi-party system on the Arabian peninsula and leading Yemenis involved in the country's election process will be participating in the *National Colloquium on the Development of Election Administration in Yemen*.

The *Colloquium* will focus on technical and organizational issues with the aim of strengthening Yemen's election process prior to the presidential election likely to take place later this year. Participants will hear different perspectives, take part in problem solving, and help build a national consensus on election issues. The *Colloquium*, sponsored by Yemen's Supreme Elections Committee, will be held at the Central Organization for Control and Audit through March 18.

"This dialogue is particularly momentous since it is taking place as Yemen anticipates its first presidential election as a unified country," stated Amy Hawthorne, Program Officer for the Middle East at the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES). "IFES commends all *Colloquium* participants for their commitment to improving the election process, as it is a key element of Yemen's democratic transition."

The *Colloquium* is designed to give political party representatives, election officials, members of Parliament and leaders of non-governmental organizations a unique forum for public discussion. Participants will examine in-depth topics such as voter education, election day operations, election training, and candidate and ballot issues. Twelve distinguished moderators from the Arab world and other regions will facilitate these discussions. The moderators bring to the *Colloquium* significant expertise and experience in Arab affairs, elections and political liberalization issues.

"Through these discussions, election officials will explore ways in which they can facilitate a more transparent election process. In turn, other participants will gain a better understanding about the challenges of election administration," said Ms. Hawthorne.

IFES has provided programmatic and organizational support for the *Colloquium*. The British Government, the United Nations Development Programme/Sanaa, the Embassy of Japan/Sanaa, the Canadian International Development Agency and Elections Canada have generously contributed funding for the conference.

#

Since its inception in 1987, IFES has provided nonpartisan assistance to develop or refine election systems in more than 100 emerging and established democracies worldwide.



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