



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**The Carter Center Welcomes Completion of Tunisia’s Voter Registration; Highlights Additional Steps Needed to Ensure Successful Polling**

A Carter Center statement released today noted that Tunisia’s voter registration process was conducted smoothly, but important operational challenges remain for the High Independent Authority for the Elections (ISIE), particularly the allocation of voters to polling stations and a campaign to disseminate voter information to the public. The Center recommends intensified public outreach by the ISIE and other bodies to assist Tunisians in the electoral process. A credible and successful electoral process will be a key step toward democratic transition and stability in Tunisia.

Voter registration started on July 11 for an initial period of three weeks and was later extended through Aug. 14, a positive step to increase participation. Approximately 1,000 registration centers, including mobile teams, operated under the supervision of the ISIE and its branch offices in the 27 electoral districts. Tunisians residing abroad had the opportunity to register at consular and diplomatic missions until Aug. 28.

Despite numerous challenges, including initial technical problems with the online registration system, tardy designation of Regional Independent Authority for Elections (IRIE) members, late start of the outreach campaign, and inconsistencies in the implementation of procedures, in particular regarding the requirement that individuals personally register, the voter registration process was conducted peacefully across the country. According to the ISIE, 3,882,727 citizens registered in Tunisia, representing approximately 55 percent of the estimated voting population.

Voters were not required to register as a prerequisite to be included on the provisional voters list generated from the database of national identity cards. Instead, the voter registration process was implemented as a “passive” exercise, with registrants given the opportunity to update their data and to select a polling station nearest to their intended location on polling day. Since approximately 45 percent of the voting population did not participate, the Center encourages the ISIE to consider additional steps and appropriate mechanisms to ensure that all voters can identify the location of their polling stations. Reports in the Tunisian press regarding a recent ISIE announcement indicate that eligible voters who did not participate in voter registration will be permitted to select the location of their polling station from Sept. 4 – 20. While further information is required to confirm the mechanisms that will be utilized, the Center encourages and welcomes these efforts.

The Carter Center also noted the dedication of the election management body in carrying out its responsibilities. However, the Center underlines the importance of the ISIE taking action to ensure the Technical, Administrative and Financial Body (OTAF) is adequately staffed to strengthen its capacity to prepare for and administer electoral operations and better coordinate between the national and regional offices.

The low turnout in the initial phase of the voter registration was even more discernable during the exhibition and challenges period when voters were given the opportunity to inspect the provisional voters list from Aug. 20-26. In light of this, The Carter Center encourages the ISIE to launch timely voter information campaigns and to provide specific messages tailored to each phase of the electoral process.

The Center appreciates the cooperative approach demonstrated by the election authorities toward international observers, including the timely provision of accreditation. We encourage the ISIE to facilitate this process for Tunisian observers, given their important role in increasing transparency and public confidence. To further strengthen transparency, The Carter Center encourages the electoral authorities to pursue regular consultations with all relevant stakeholders and make all official documents widely accessible, particularly by posting on the ISIE website.

**Background:** The Carter Center received a letter of invitation from the ISIE to observe the electoral process in mid-July, followed by official accreditation on Aug. 4. The Center observed voter registration, deploying 10 long-term observers who visited 191 voter registration centers in all of the state's governorates, and met with election officials, political parties representatives, and civil society organizations.

The Carter Center will remain in Tunisia to observe the candidate registration period, campaign period, polling day, counting and tabulation processes, and resolution of electoral complaints for National Constituent Assembly elections. The Center's long-term observers will be joined by 40 short-term observers from various nationalities in the lead-up to election day. The objectives of the Center's observation mission in Tunisia are to provide an impartial assessment of the overall quality of the electoral process, promote an inclusive process for all Tunisians and demonstrate international support for this ambitious democratic transition. The elections will be assessed against the Tunisian legal framework, as well as Tunisia's international obligations for genuine democratic elections.

The Center's observation mission is conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct that was adopted at the United Nations in 2005 and has been endorsed by 37 election observation groups. The Center will release periodic public statements available on its website: [www.cartercenter.org](http://www.cartercenter.org).

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## **THE CARTER CENTER INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATION MISSION TO TUNISIANATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS**

**Sept. 1, 2011**

The present statement provides an assessment by The Carter Center of the voter registration process in Tunisia as well as preliminary findings on the exhibition and challenges to the provisional voters list. In its concluding section, the statement offers detailed recommendations to stakeholders involved in the electoral process.

The Carter Center noted that the registration process was conducted smoothly, with more than half of the estimated voting population turning out to confirm their registration data. Nonetheless, important operational challenges remain for the High Independent Authority for the Elections (ISIE), particularly in regards to the allocation of voters to polling stations and a campaign to disseminate voter information to the public. The Center recommends intensified public outreach by the ISIE and other bodies to assist Tunisians in the electoral process. A credible and successful electoral process will be a key step in the democratic transition and stability in Tunisia.

Voter registration started on July 11 for an initial period of three weeks and was later extended through Aug. 14, a positive step to increase participation. Approximately 1,000 registration centers, including mobile teams, operated under the supervision of the ISIE and its branches in the 27 electoral districts. Tunisians residing abroad had the opportunity to register at consular and diplomatic missions until Aug. 28.

Despite numerous challenges, including initial technical problems with the online registration system, tardy designation of the Regional Independent Authority for Elections (IRIE) members, late start of outreach campaign and inconsistencies in the implementation of procedures, in particular regarding the requirement that individuals personally register, which was inconsistently applied, the voter registration process was conducted peacefully across the country. According to the ISIE, 3,882,727 citizens registered in Tunisia, representing approximately 55 percent of the estimated voting population.

### *Election administration*

The ISIE is in charge of preparing and supervising electoral operations in Tunisia.<sup>1</sup> It is composed of 16 members who were appointed on May 18 by the High Authority for the

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<sup>1</sup> Article 4, Decree-Law 27 adopted on April 18, 2011

Realization of the Goals of the Revolution, Political Reform and Democratic Transition.<sup>2</sup> Members are drawn from the judiciary, academia, civil society, and also include a notary, bailiff, accountant, IT expert and a journalist.

The ISIE structure includes 33 regional branches (IRIE) covering 27 election districts in Tunisia and 6 expatriate districts.<sup>3</sup> IRIEs in Tunisia are composed of 14 members, while those abroad have a minimum of eight and up to 14 members.<sup>4</sup> A Technical, Administrative and Financial Body (OTAF) assists ISIE,<sup>5</sup> but is not yet fully staffed and does not yet have an Executive Director.

The Carter Center noted the dedication of the election management body in carrying out its responsibilities. However, the Center underlines the importance of the ISIE taking action to ensure that OTAF is adequately staffed so as to strengthen its capacity to prepare for and administer electoral operations and better coordinate between the national and regional offices.

IRIE members in the electoral districts of Tunisia were appointed just a few days before the start of the voter registration period, allowing little time for in-depth staff induction training. IRIE staff faced the challenge of setting up their structures while simultaneously supervising registration operations. Notwithstanding the lack of sufficient training, Carter Center observers appreciated the dedication of IRIE members in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

The central election authority has progressively strengthened its relationship with its regional branches. However, there is still room for improving cooperation and communication. The ISIE has recently responded positively to a request for meetings by several IRIEs and convened all IRIE presidents and secretary-generals to debate the lessons learned and challenges encountered by IRIE staff during the registration exercise and to prepare for the next phase of the electoral process. The Center supports the ISIE's stated intention to hold similar meetings in preparation of the upcoming phases of the electoral process.

The Center noted that both ISIE and IRIE members are predominantly male. Among female members, only a nominal number hold senior-level president or vice-president positions within the election management body. This notable lack of representation contrasts with the high rate of educated and professionally active women in Tunisia.

To further strengthen transparency, the Carter Center encourages the electoral authorities to pursue regular consultations with all relevant stakeholders and make all official documents widely accessible, particularly by posting on the ISIE website.

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<sup>2</sup> Decree 546 adopted on May 10, 2011

<sup>3</sup> Article 22, ISIE Internal Rules of Procedures

<sup>4</sup> Article 24, ISIE Internal Rules of Procedures

<sup>5</sup> Article 27, ISIE Internal Rules of Procedures

### *Voter registration*

The legal framework governing the Constituent Assembly elections, promulgated in Decree-Law 35<sup>6</sup> and later amended by Decree 72<sup>7</sup>, provides the general principles for voter registration. According to Article 2, all Tunisians, both men and women, aged 18 or more on the day preceding the elections, and enjoying their full civil and political rights are entitled to vote. Article 3 provides for the ISIE to establish registration procedures and to disseminate them as widely as possible. Article 6 stipulates the voter lists be established based on information contained in the database of national identity cards. As per the same article, voters are allocated to polling stations as per the residency address indicated in their voluntary registration request.

The Carter Center notes that the late decision of the ISIE to change the voter registration system from one of active to passive in character created a degree of confusion, particularly in the absence of a clear voter information campaign to explain the process to the electorate, civil society organizations and political parties.

Voters were not required to register as a prerequisite to be included on the provisional voters list generated from the database of national identity cards. Instead, the voter registration process was implemented as “passive” exercise, with registrants given the opportunity to update their data and to select a polling station nearest to their intended location on polling day.

The Center notes that the public outreach strategy developed by the ISIE focused mainly on mobilizing prospective voters and could have included more specific messages with information on the purpose of the registration exercise and its importance to ensure the accuracy of the voter registry to facilitate the smooth participation of voters on election day.

Given approximately 45 percent of the voting population did not participate in the exercise, the Center encourages the ISIE to consider additional steps and appropriate mechanisms to ensure that all voters are allocated to their appropriate polling stations and can easily identify its location. Reports in the Tunisian press regarding a recent announcement by the ISIE indicate that eligible voters who did not participate in voter registration will be permitted to select the location of their polling station from Sept. 4 – 20. The ISIE has established a call center for the purpose of assisting voters with this process. While further information is required to confirm the mechanisms that will be utilized, the Center encourages and welcomes these efforts, which aim to alleviate potential confusion on polling day.

Voter registration was launched on July 11 with the registration system and procedures being largely unknown by the general public and electoral stakeholders such as civil society organizations, political parties and observer groups. On Aug. 9, The Carter Center

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<sup>6</sup> Adopted on May 10, 2011

<sup>7</sup> Adopted on August 3, 2011

obtained, upon request, a copy of the manual on registration procedures produced by the ISIE.

In advance of the launch of the registration operation, a pilot test that was conducted to check the online registration system proved inconclusive. Technical problems with the online registration system affected the process at its inception, and it took two to three days for the system to become operational throughout the country. Following initial difficulties, the system performed well with only short and rare interruptions of the Internet connection.

Registration staff scanned the bar code appearing on the back of each voter's national identity cards to access the registrant's file, which was linked by Internet to the national identity cards database managed by the National Center of Computer Science (CNI). Registrants were given the opportunity to choose a polling station nearest their intended location during the upcoming election. Registrants were provided a receipt, noting their name, address and selected polling station.

Registration center staff was mostly welcoming and cooperative with registrants and operated efficiently. Women were well represented among registration staff. The Center observers noted that most IRIE staff actively performed their supervisory role over registration centers, maintaining constant communication with registration staff and visiting registration centers on a regular basis.

Carter Center observers reported, however, inconsistencies amongst IRIE and registration center staff in applying registration procedures. Proxy registration represented the widest spectrum of inconsistent application of procedures, where some registration centers allowed proxy registration and others even within the same governorate prohibited family members or others from registering other eligible voters. In some cases receipts were issued for proxy registrations; in other cases, people registered by proxy had to visit the center in person to obtain their receipt. IRIE staff also expressed different explanations for these practices, some allowing proxy registration due to the distance from registration centers in rural areas.

The ISIE manual on registration procedure explicitly states that registration is a personal process and therefore cannot be handled by delegation.<sup>8</sup> Observers noted however that the manual on registration procedures was not always available at registration centers and registration staffs were not always aware of its existence, presumably due to the development and distribution of the document relatively late in the process.

According to the ISIE, a minimal number of registrants, representing less than one percent of the total, were refused by the online registration system because of expired identity cards,<sup>9</sup> mismatched numbers between the date of issuance recorded in the

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<sup>8</sup> ISIE Manual of registration procedures, para. 3.3.1.

<sup>9</sup> ISIE officials reported that a few months ago the authorities broadcasted radio and TV spots asking old ID cards holders to replace it with the new one. The number of old ID cards is reportedly between 200,000 and 400,000.

database and the one appearing on the card, and discharged military and security personnel who were still recorded as on active duty.<sup>10</sup>

While there were minor differences among registration centers in procedures for handling refusals – some required voters to fill out manual registration forms, for example, or issued special forms for military personnel – observers reported that registration staff accurately oriented registrants to the appropriate IRIE, and, in case of expired ID cards, to the police for renewal.

According to the ISIE, a total of 21,860 cases were filed at the IRIE level as of the close of the registration process. As of Aug. 24, only some 5,000 were processed. At least some 16,000 cases have therefore not been included on the provisional voter list. The Center was informed that registrants whose cases are processed are informed of the outcome only verbally and do not receive formal written notification.

In response to the initial low turnout – roughly 16 percent of eligible voters had confirmed their registration details as of July 30 – the ISIE extended the registration period through Aug. 14. The number of registration centers was also increased, including dedicated centers to accommodate Tunisian citizens residing abroad who were visiting Tunisia during the registration period. In addition, mobile teams were introduced to facilitate registration in remote rural areas. Observers reported that IRIEs were prompt in realizing that mobile registration centers are most effective when citizens are informed in advance about the venues of the teams. To this effect, IRIEs increased public outreach through methods including equipping vehicles with loudspeakers and airing public service advertisements on local radio stations to announce the locations of the teams. Some IRIEs also deployed mobile teams adjusting to people’s daily habits and needs, including in hospitals, workplaces, in seaside resorts, weekly markets and coffee shops post-Iftar during Ramadan. The Center commends efforts by election authorities to reach out to the largest number of citizens.

#### *Exhibition and challenges on the provisional voters list*

The exhibition of the provisional voters list provided an opportunity for the public to inspect information contained on the list and challenge irregularities such as the omission of eligible voters or the inclusion of ineligible voters, and to correct mistakes on the list.

Article 7 of Decree-Law 35 provides that the provisional voters’ lists are delivered to IRIEs, municipalities (*Baladiya*), districts (*Mu’tamadiya*), sectors (*Imada*) and Tunisian diplomatic or consular missions abroad (hereafter referred to as “exhibition venues”). The same article also foresees the posting of the lists on the ISIE website. Under Article 8, the Chair of the IRIE, the mayor, the district commissioner, the head of the sector and the head of the diplomatic or consular mission are responsible for posting the lists. These

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<sup>10</sup> Active military personnel, civilians doing their military service and the Internal Security Forces are not entitled to exercise their right to vote as per Article 4 of Decree-Law 35.

provisions reflect Tunisia's obligation to fulfil the right to access to information,<sup>11</sup> which entails, among others, the right to check the electoral list.

At a press conference on Aug. 16, the ISIE announced that the period for exhibition and challenges on the provisional list would run from Aug. 20-26 in line with the anticipated electoral timetable. It was also announced that the voters list would be available online, and that an SMS service would be put in place for confirming one's presence on the voters list and location of polling stations.

The low turnout in the initial phase of the voter registration was even more discernable during the exhibition and challenges period when few voters inspected the provisional voters list. In light of this, the Carter Center encourages the ISIE to launch timely voter information campaigns and to provide specific messages tailored to each phase of the electoral process.

Carter Center observers reported that the provisional voters lists were printed in book format and in two separate volumes: one showing prospective voters who actively registered, the other showing prospective voters who were automatically included on the registry from the identity cards database. Prospective voters have been listed in Arabic alphabetic order, without reference to allocated polling stations, noting their names, father's name, and grandfather's name.

In a significant number of cases, only the lists with actively registered voters were available on Aug. 20, the first day of the exhibition period, while the lists including automatically registered voters were delivered with one or two days of delay. Some elections officials pointed out that they were still unable to make the lists available for scrutiny in a limited number of Imadas burnt during the revolution or that are not unaccepted by the population due to association with the old regime.

It is noteworthy that exhibition venues were officially open the same hours as the Baladiyas, from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM only and often closed on Sunday, thus leaving little time to the public to inspect the list. Observers underlined that citizens' turnout at exhibition venues was extremely low, in most cases less than five to 10 persons a day.

Instead of posting the provisional voters' lists on its website as required by Decree-Law 35, the ISIE offered a search engine to check one's presence on the lists. This tool was made available on the website on Aug. 25, but was still not functioning on Aug. 26. The Center considers that the posting of the provisional voters' lists would have strengthened transparency, especially by allowing political parties access to the full list, and encourages the ISIE to consider doing so.<sup>12</sup> The SMS service, a commendable and user-friendly initiative by ISIE, became effective mid-way through the exhibition and challenges period.

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<sup>11</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 19(2)

<sup>12</sup> In line with best practices, political parties in particular should have an opportunity to access the voter list. See OSCE, Existing Commitments for Democratic Elections in OSCE Participating States, p. 61 and 61; EU, Handbook for European Union Election Observation, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, p. 43.



According to the electoral law, disputes related to the provisional list shall be submitted to the IRIEs within seven days by means of a registered letter with acknowledgement of receipt.<sup>13</sup> The IRIE has then eight days to decide on the matter<sup>14</sup> and shall provide the plaintiff with a reasoned decision in writing.<sup>15</sup> The concerned parties and administrative authorities can file an appeal against this decision before the territorially competent Court of First Instance, which shall rule on the matter within five days.<sup>16</sup> Its decision is final.

Decisions by IRIEs in charge of expatriate election districts shall be challenged before the ISIE,<sup>17</sup> thus depriving Tunisians residing abroad from a judicial appeal. The Center stresses in this respect that all prospective voters should be granted an equal right to effective remedy.<sup>18</sup>

Observers reported significant variations in assistance and guidance provided to citizens at exhibition venues on how to submit a complaint. Some lists were unaccompanied, others were left to the care of Baladiya staff and still others still had former registration staff re-assigned to this new task by the IRIEs. The last group was more knowledgeable and connected to the IRIEs, and was therefore better able to assist citizens either by helping them file complaints directly or by orienting them to the IRIEs for complaints.

The Center's observers also noted different practices in submitting a complaint regarding the exhibited lists. Sometimes, where exhibition venues was staffed by former registration officials, complaint forms were available and the staff helped citizens fill them out, in addition to forwarding the forms to the relevant IRIE on behalf of citizens. While some IRIEs accept direct delivery of forms by citizens of forms, others requested the documents be sent by registered letter. By Aug. 26, several interviewed IRIEs reported without exception having received only very few complaints, although additional were expected to come in by mail.

### *Voter Information and Education*

The fulfillment of the international obligation of universal suffrage<sup>19</sup> is partially dependent on the success of adequate voter education. The ISIE conducted a voter information campaign through billboards, insertions in newspapers, as well as radio and TV spots, designed to mobilize eligible voters to register. This outreach campaign only kicked off on the starting day of voter registration, limiting therefore its initial effectiveness. Moreover, the voter education campaign appeared to lack sufficient information on voter registration procedures and objectives of the registration drive.

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<sup>13</sup> Article 13, Decree-Law 35

<sup>14</sup> Article 12, Decree-Law 35

<sup>15</sup> Explanatory manual on procedures for challenges related to the provisional voters' list (ISIE document, not dated).

<sup>16</sup> Article 14, Decree-Law 35

<sup>17</sup> Article 14, Decree-Law 35

<sup>18</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 2(3)

<sup>19</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 25

Observers reported that citizens had varying and limited understandings of the process, including on the necessity to register to be able to vote.

ISIE officials contributed to this situation by giving confusing statements as to the purpose and necessity of the registration. Hence, registering was presented as a proof of “citizen act” that would “facilitate voting,” but without explaining the importance to make sure that everyone is aware of the location where he/she is supposed to cast the vote. The ISIE announcement about automatic registration for any identity card holder, regardless of their active participation to the process, precisely when the process was extended with the intent to achieve a higher registration rate, added to the confusion in public opinion.<sup>20</sup> Strikingly, public outreach by the ISIE to mobilize citizens to check the provisional voters’ list during the exhibition and challenges period has been barely visible.

The Center recommends intensified public outreach by the ISIE and other relevant bodies to assist Tunisians in the electoral process. A targeted and effective voter information campaign should address key issues including voter eligibility, documents required to cast a ballot, and how, when and where to vote on polling day. A complementary education campaign could provide the public with a foundation to understand important information regarding the election, such as the closed list proportional representation electoral system and the mandate of the Constituent Assembly. Both would serve to alleviate potential confusion, and increase public confidence and the integrity of the electoral process.

### *Civil Society and Political Parties*

A limited number of civil society organizations (CSOs) conducted voter education to encourage eligible voters to register. These efforts were commendable, particularly in light of limited official communication between the ISIE and national CSOs. Observers recounted that political parties only became visible in the final stages of the process, when a small number of parties started distributing leaflets, posting signs or organizing public meetings encouraging voter registration.

The Center welcomes recent efforts by the ISIE to meet with political parties and civil society representatives, in a view to share information regarding the status and challenges of the electoral process. This is a good practice to insure that all electoral activities are conducted in a wholly transparent manner,<sup>21</sup> including through consultations on a regular basis with interested parties.<sup>22</sup> The picture at local level appeared more contrasted, with some IRIE staff willing to organize information-sharing meetings with political parties and CSOs, and at times even complaining about limited interest shown by these

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<sup>20</sup> “Jendoubi: le vote est ouvert aux Tunisiens détenteurs d’une carte d’identité et non seulement aux inscrits”, Tunis Afrique Presse (TAP), 4 août 2011

<sup>21</sup> Human Rights and Elections: A Handbook on the Legal, Technical, and Human Rights Aspects of Elections, para. 102

<sup>22</sup> International IDEA, International IDEA Code of Conduct: Ethical and Professional Administration of Elections, p.12-13

stakeholders, while other IRIEs seemed resistant to the idea of holding briefings with political parties for fear of losing independence.

### *Specific categories of voters*

The Center acknowledges endeavors by the election authorities to accommodate specific categories of eligible voters such as illiterate and disabled persons. In addition, the ISIE has been responsive to concerns expressed by CSOs with regard to the original Article 61 of the Election Decree-Law, allowing illiterate voters or voters clearly suffering from a disability to be assisted by a voter of their choice. To avoid possible vote buying or influence, ISIE initiated an amendment of this provision. However, the revised Article 61 has been phrased in very general terms; the ISIE should issue regulations to provide further details so that the law meets the intended objectives.

Regarding prisoners, the law provides that only those persons sentenced to more than six months of imprisonment for committing honour-related felonies or misdemeanours and who have not yet regained their civil and political rights<sup>23</sup> are deprived from their right to vote. However, the fact that no registration was conducted in prisons may lead to the effective disenfranchisement of all prisoners. The Center urges the ISIE to make all possible efforts to accommodate all voters, including detainees in accordance with Tunisia's obligations to guarantee universal suffrage and the right to vote.<sup>24</sup>

### *Observer Accreditation*

The Carter Center appreciates the ISIE's cooperative approach toward international observers and the timely provision of accreditation to the Center's observers, ensuring no delay in observer deployment. Meanwhile, networks of domestic observer groups have started to organize and plan training for observers, some in cooperation with international NGOs. The Center encourages the ISIE to extend similar support in accreditation to other national and international organizations, in line with best practices regarding transparency in the election management process, including through the presence of duly accredited observers.<sup>25</sup> Nonpartisan domestic observation is a meaningful exercise and provides an important avenue to enable Tunisian citizens to participate in the electoral process.

### ***Recommendations***

Based on its preliminary observations, The Carter Center offers the following recommendations:

To the Electoral Management Body (ISIE):

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<sup>23</sup> Article 5, para.1, Decree-Law 35

<sup>24</sup> UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment no. 25, indicates that persons who are deprived of liberty but have not been convicted should not be excluded from exercising the right to vote.

<sup>25</sup> IPU, Inter-Parliamentary Union Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections, art. 7

- Establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure that all voters are able to find the location of their polling stations;
- Launch a targeted voter information campaign to educate voters on polling day procedures, the electoral complaints process and other issues central to the conduct of the elections. Share information and public outreach materials proactively, and continue to hold regular consultations with political parties, CSOs and media outlets, at national and local levels;
- Ensure that the OTAF, the Technical, Administrative and Financial Body is adequately staffed, so as to strengthen the capacity of the ISIE to prepare for and administer electoral operations;
- Plan sufficient time to organize and conduct training on specific procedures, so as to ensure accurate and consistent implementation by election officials at all levels;
- Increase transparency by making relevant electoral legislation, regulations and operational procedures publicly available, including by posting information on the ISIE website.

To Civil Society Organizations:

- Train and deploy domestic observers to monitor the next phases electoral process;
- Undertake voter education activities to raise awareness on the mandate of the Constituent Assembly.

To Political Parties:

- Sign, promote and ensure respect for the Code of Conduct for political parties, a voluntary initiative recently undertaken by the ISIE;
- Engage further into the electoral process, including maintaining regular consultations with the election authorities and civil society organizations, and reaching out to potential supporters.

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*The Carter Center received a letter of invitation to observe the electoral process from the ISIE in mid-July, followed by official accreditation on Aug. 4. The Center observed voter registration in Tunisia in preparation for the National Constituent Assembly elections scheduled for October 23. The Center deployed 10 long-term observers who visited 191 voter registration centers in all of the state's Governorates, met with election officials, political parties representatives, civil society organizations and other key stakeholders.*

*The Carter Center will remain in Tunisia to observe the candidate registration period, campaign period, polling day, the counting and tabulation processes, and the resolution of electoral complaints for the National Constituent Assembly elections. The Center's long-term observers will be joined by 40 short-term observers from various nationalities in the lead-up to Election Day. The objectives of the Center's observation mission in Tunisia are to provide an impartial assessment of the overall quality of the electoral process, promote an inclusive process for all in Tunisia and demonstrate international*

*interest and support for the country's democratic transition. The elections will be assessed against the Tunisian legal framework, as well as Tunisia's international obligations.*

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