



Code of Conduct of International Election Observers

The National Electoral Board has issued this Code of Conduct, in conformity with Article 102 of the Federal Constitution, Proclamation No. 111/1995 (as amended) and international guidelines governing the conduct of election observers, with the view to enabling the conduct of free and fair election in Federal and State constituencies and creating conducive environment for observers closely to follow up the conduct of elections in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

1. Scope

This Code shall apply to all International Election Observers.

2. International Election Observers

"International election observer" refers to representative of a state or international organization which is invited by the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to observe elections in Ethiopia. It does not include members of diplomatic missions accredited to Ethiopia.

3. Rights of Election Observers

Election observers shall enjoy the following rights during the conduct of their election observation:

- a. access to election official at all levels,**
- b. observe any polling stations, counting venues and other areas related to the election process,**
- c. ask election officials, political party representatives and other observers any questions inside polling stations, as long as that does not obstruct the election process,**
- d. attend meetings organized by the Secretariat or other relevant government bodies for briefing of election observers,**
- e. attend campaign rallies by political parties.**
- f. establish a unit for the coordination of the observation activities and shall inform the Secretariat the structure and mode of operation.**
- g. Election observers may bring to the attention of election officers at the polling stations or counting venues any irregularities they might have observed. However when such irregularities are not properly handled at such level, or when the matter is beyond the ability or competence of these officials, election observers shall bring the matter to the attention of the National Electoral Board.**

4. Obligations of Election Observers

In addition to their obligation to fully respect the code of conduct of their missions, election observers shall demonstrate high-level of competence, impartiality, objectivity and professionalism during the election process. In particular, they shall:

- a. fully respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, its national laws and regulations and the rights and cultures of its people,**
- b. follow in good-faith lawful instructions given by security and election officers,**
- c. show respect and courtesy to election officers and voters and shall never give instructions whatsoever,**
- d. maintain strict impartiality in the conduct of their duties, and shall at no time express any bias or preference in relation to parties, candidates, such as by wearing or displaying any partisan symbols, colors or banners, or with reference to any issues in contention in the electoral process,**
- e. undertake observation visits in person to polling stations, counting venues and other election-related areas to which he or she is assigned,**
- f. refrain from deploying unaccredited persons,**
- g. put on the Observer's identification card or badge during election observation, and must present it to election officers and other interested national authorities when requested.**

- h. disclose to the Secretariat any relationship that could lead to conflict of interest regarding the performance of their duties as observers or with the observation of assessment of the election,**
- i. inform the Secretariat or other national authorities the address of their stay during the election,**
- j. not accept any gifts or favor from political party, organization or person in the election process,**
- k. not carry weapons of any kind,**
- l. at all times during the mission, including during leisure time, each election observer should show the fullest respect to this code of conduct and refrain from engaging in overt or covert activities that undermine the credibility of the election process.**

5. Public Declaration of Opinion

- a. Election observers shall issue no public pronouncements regarding the election, either within or outside the country, at all times during the entire period of the election process, that presuppose the winner or the loser in the contest or that are likely to influence the electorate or the election until the National Electoral Board declares the result of the election. However, they may provide general information, through a designated person, about the nature of their activities as observers.**
- b. Election observers shall provide a comprehensive report objectively based on well-documented, factual and verifiable**

evidences to the Secretariat. They shall refrain from reporting or making public announcements about the Election based on hearsay or second hand source.

6. Breach of Code of Conduct

- a. The Secretariat may withdraw accreditation of observers who violate this code of conduct and may take appropriate legal action that could entail the expulsion of such individuals from the country.**

This Code of Conduct is issued on the 25th day of February 2005.

**The National Electoral Board of the
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
Addis Ababa**

