



JPIC-OIPAS PRELIMINARY DECLARATION ON PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS - 21ST MAY 2023

24th May 2023

Dili, Timor Leste

First of all, JPIC-OIPAS would like to congratulate the Timorese people who have exercised their right to vote on 21st May 2023, as a realization in the process on the nation building. We would also like to congratulate electoral management authorities such as STAE and CNE that had successfully undertaken their roles though some improvements necessary in the future. We would like to thank PNTL officers who had enforced laws and maintained stability during the process of campaign and on Election Day. We thank the government for supporting the voters in transporting them to their respective municipalities to manifest their political and civic rights.

Based on the reports by 28 long term observers (LTO) and 1460 short term observers (STO) who were deployed by JPIC-OIPAS that the political campaign taking place well and peaceful aside of some minor incidents occurring in the municipalities of Baucau, Viqueque and Dili. The long term observers identified that the campaign containing insults of political adversaries would bring negative precedence impacting future elections. The high rates of involvement of the children participation in the campaign remained tangible without any interventions from the political leaders to address.

On the day of election, 21st May 2023, the JPIC-OIPAS observers observed that the elections taking place very well, transparent, fair and reliable. The electoral brigades performed their tasks and responsibilities professionally without any major breach identified and so do the electoral supervision officials of CNE.

The observers also identified that some voters bringing the copy of their electoral cards to vote and immediately intervened by the polling staff on the spot. There were also some voters tried to rub their index finger by oil and adhesives before casting their votes to prevent the indelible ink. In this case, we presume that these voters had the intention to vote again.

The observers also identified that people with disabilities specifically on wheel chairs were finding difficulties in accessing to the voting centers due to lack of accessibility

at most of the voting centers. Therefore, we recommend the STAE in providing appropriate voting centers accessible to people living with disabilities as well as necessary ballot papers in the future. Nonetheless, the people with disabilities still manifest their commitment in casting their votes with the help of the family members and the polling staff.

It is reported by the JPIC-OIPAS observers that the political party agents undertook their task and responsibilities very well in all the voting centers. This is a worth following achievements to be kept maintained in the future for the development of democracy in Timor-Leste.

It is also observed that the attributes of the political parties such as flags and symbols spreading in the public places days before and during elections without any measures taken by the competent electoral bodies. There are also some voters and the agents of the political parties bringing and wearing their attributes at the voting centers without notification from relevant authorities.

Finally, JPIC-OIPAS would like to congratulate the Timorese citizens who had exercised their rights to vote during the general elections on 21st May 2023.

Taking into consideration that with the ongoing national tabulation of the votes, JPIC-OIPAS would like to advise all the voters to peacefully follow the process and accepting the outcome wholeheartedly. It must be taken into account that the forthcoming ninth legitimate government is a common victory and achievement by the people of Timor-Leste in a more democratic way.

The JPIC-OIPAS observers undertook their roles and responsibilities outstandingly well because of the support from the Timorese Episcopal Conference (CET), the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the Catholic Relief Services (CRS).