NEC Inconsistencies and Suppression Persist on the Third Day of Voting

Contact: Osman Hummaida, Executive Director at
Phone: +447956095738
E-mail: osman@acjps.org

(14 April 2010) At the close of what was initially intended to be the last day of elections, the same technical irregularities and mistakes by the NEC as noted in the first two days continued.

The African Centre for Justice and Peace studies documented the following violations which occurred in both yesterday and today's voting. The violations followed patterns similar to those observed in the first two days, including:

- **Irregularities in the voter rolls**: In Omdurman, West Rural Area, a child who appeared to be about 11 was observed voting. The NEC official at the polling station assisted him in casting his vote for the National Congress Party (NCP). When the observers inquired as to his age, they were told by the man escorting him that the boy was 20 years old. A candidate in Khartoum state, Mr. Alsadig Ali Hassan, announced his withdrawal from the elections after he complained to the NEC over the presence of two separate voter lists in his constituency. One of these lists was issued by the NEC at the national level, and the other by the NEC committee for Khartoum State. The state level committee's list included 2,828 names not on the national list. Mr. Mohamed Abdullah Aldouma, a candidate of the fifth geographic constituency of Habila in West Darfur, announced his withdrawal on 12 April over allegations that 1,000 non-Sudanese individuals were found in his constituency's voter rolls. In Selailab, the ink from a voter's finger disappeared minutes after he voted when he washed his hands, raising concerns that certain voters may have the opportunity to vote more than once.
- **Irregularities in ballot papers**: In Rubak, West White Nile State, in Oum Almoamenien School of Constituency 8, Voting Centre 23, the Director of the Voting Centre, Alhadi Gasem Alseed, used the ballot cards of the political parties' candidates for national assembly rather than state legislature after the latter reportedly ran out. He rewrote the political parties and candidates on the ballots by hand. When an independent candidate for the legislature complained, Mr. Gasem Alseed reportedly asked her "do you want to teach us how to do our duty"? Voting with these cards continued through closing on Monday. Voters in state constituency 38, voting centre of Amar Ibn Yasir Algoaz area, have used the ballot cards for constituency 39 since the first day of elections. In the first zone of El Fashir, North Darfur, the symbol of an independent candidate was changed from a lock to a drum. In Arabic, the same word – *tabla* – is used for both objects, but the substitution could cause considerable confusion – not least for non-Arabic speaking communities. The NCP candidate for Governor of South Darfur was not able to find his symbol in a large number of polling centres. In Port Sudan, electoral zone 11, the independent candidate, Hashim Awhaj's, symbol was switched from a bell to a bicycle on the ballot. A complaint was filed with the NEC, but no response has so far been made. Four individuals in Jimai'abi Centre, Diam al Noor, square 2 of Constituency 8 of North State complained that when they arrived to vote, found that their names had already been used.
- **Lack of access to the polls:** In Abu Shouk and ZamZam IDP camps in North Darfur, IDPs have boycotted the elections from the outset. Elections in Al Salaam IDP camp in North

Darfur began a day late. The *Janjaweed* in El Geneina attacked a voting centre, refusing to allow citizens to vote. In the Dumair area of South Darfur, the polling process began on 13 April, two days after the polling had begun throughout Sudan. In Luri polling Centre, six kilometres north of Juba, hundreds of registered voters conducted a peaceful protest demanding that ballot boxes be delivered. They have not been able to vote since the beginning of the elections.

- **Irregularities in the handling of ballots**: The transferring of ballot boxes has not been secure in many areas. Private taxis and drivers have been used without being accompanied by election officials. In El Fashir, North Darfur, at Altaahiel Altarbawi, the ballot box was found to have been torn open with a sharp instrument. When political party representatives complained, a police officer stated that an election monitor accompanied by two others had arrived the previous night on the premise that they had forgotten something inside, implicitly blaming the monitors. A report was filed and all of the ballots from the first day cancelled. Officials noted that they would have to repeat the first day of the voting process, though it remains unclear if that specific constituency will receive an extra day to carry this out or how voters will be informed. In Um Shajara, Zone 2 of El Fashir, an individual was observed to be carrying a number of ballots that had been all under the possession of the voters' registrar. The NEC has refused to allow representatives of candidates to spend the night in voting centres, and has only authorised the police to do so.

- **Security harassment and arrest**: On 10 April in Aldoaim of White Nile State, Izz Aldein Altegani, an independent candidate, was setting up a tent near a voting centre (such tents are typically used as mobile offices) when a NCP candidate, Aljaily Ali Alodied, requested that Mr. Altegani move his tent. When he refused to do so, he was struck in the face by Mr. Alobied. Around 8:00 PM in the evening, Mr. Altegani was stabbed by ten men near his home, and is currently in the hospital. Witnesses to the attack have filed a complaint. On 13 April in Constituency 7 of Alamir Oumbada area, Ahmed Khider Yagoub, and his colleagues of the Democratic Unionist Party were taken away by the security detail of a National Congress Party candidate and beaten. He filed a complaint against the police. A candidate by the name of Abd Allah Abo Fatima from Port Sudan in eastern Sudan was also threatened by the NCP, and one of his representatives was beaten. A director of the voting centre in central Halfa Aljadeeda was tortured and beaten by national security forces after being incited by an NCP leader, who claimed that the director refused to hand over the centre to a NCP member. A communist party candidate, Isam Salih Alobied, was arrested by national security forces in Almanagil area for distributing a statement encouraging constituents to boycott elections in accordance with his party's policy. Police squads beat and harassed journalists with the *Al-Arabia* network, hindering their coverage. Correspondents from *Radio Miraya* have reported that in one polling centre in Malakal, security agents arrested a member of the SPLM-Democratic Change party, alleging that he was coercing voters to vote for his party. A clash occurred after an electoral monitor in El Fashir, North Darfur, directed voters to cast their ballots for President Bashir. On 13 April in Alradom Constituency in South Darfur State, security services arrested Gerbil Yousef, Gafar Hager, and Khalil Rageb, members of the National Congress Party. In Ibrahim Batal Centre in Constituency 5 of Port Sudan, three pick up trucks dropped off 30 members of a student-led group belonging to the NCP and Islamic Union. The group proceeded to create chaos inside the centre, leading to the suspension of the electoral process for more than one hour without any interference from the police designated to

the center, who refused to take any action claiming the absence of a police procedural application form called "Ornaik 7". The NEC closed the Centre.

Following the third day of voting, patterns of manipulation indicating systemic mechanisms to confuse the electorate and hinder engagement, such as the switching of symbols and manipulation of the registration list, are beginning to emerge. The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies denounces these violations and urges international and national observers to thoroughly investigate these and other reported abuses.