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**REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES TO THE
GENERAL ELECTIONS IN GRENADA**

This document is being distributed to the permanent missions and
will be presented to the Permanent Council of the Organization.

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL

SG/UPD-219/99

March 10, 1999

Excellency:

I have the honor to submit to Your Excellency the report of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in Grenada and to kindly request its distribution to the members of the Permanent Council. The report reflects the activities undertaken by the Mission during the observation of the general elections in Grenada, held on January 18, 1999.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

César Gaviria

His Excellency
Lionel Alexander Hurst
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of Antigua and Barbuda
Chairman of the Permanent Council of the
Organization of American States
Washington, D.C.

**Electoral Observation Mission
of the Organization of American States
to the General Elections in Grenada
January 18, 1999**

**THE ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
TO THE GENERAL ELECTIONS IN GRENADA
JANUARY 18, 1999**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 6, 1999, the Government of Grenada invited the Secretary General to observe the electoral process that culminated with the election of 15 members of the House of Representatives on January 18. The Secretary General sent a letter to the Prime Minister on January 7 confirming that an electoral observation mission would be sent to Grenada to cover the electoral processes and designated Dr. Joseph E. Edmunds as the Chief of Mission. Ambassador Christopher R. Thomas, the Assistant Secretary General, led the Mission on election day.

Eight observers from five countries comprised the Mission. During their stay, they conducted extensive interviews with political party leaders, electoral officials, civil society activists and other citizens involved in the electoral process. They were also present at a number of campaign activities organized by different political movements and training sessions for polling officials. From its observations, the Mission can attest that campaign activities in which OAS observers were present were peaceful, polling officials and party agents were well trained and the Parliamentary Elections Office was well prepared for election day.

On election day, the observers were present in approximately 80 percent of the polling stations in the country, interviewing the polling officials and party agents about the electoral preparations and the overall environment in which voting took place. Observers noted at these stations that with very few exceptions, voters who went to the polls found their names on the voter registry and cast their ballots without incident. The electoral officials counted the ballots and tallied the results efficiently and accurately. The police provided the necessary security without interfering in the work of the electoral officials.

After reviewing the information collected by the observers before, during and after election day, the Mission concluded that the results of the elections accurately reflected the will of the Grenadian population. The following report briefly describes the context in which the general elections took place and details the Mission's activities and observations. As is customary in electoral observation mission reports, the Mission also suggests some recommendations for improving the electoral process in Grenada.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The OAS Electoral Observation Mission greatly appreciates the cooperation given by the Government of Grenada and the Supervisor of Elections, the political parties, representatives of civil society and the people of Grenada in facilitating the Mission.

The Mission wishes to thank the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom for their financial assistance and the former for making personnel available to the Mission.

The Mission expresses its appreciation to the Director of the OAS Office in Grenada, Mr. Francis McBarnette, for his invaluable assistance in making all the necessary arrangements for meetings with the political leaders and the social partners and in the coordination of the activities of the Mission at very short notice.

INTRODUCTION

On January 6, 1999 the Prime Minister of Grenada, the Dr. the Honorable Keith Mitchell invited the Secretary General of the Organization of American States to observe the general elections scheduled for January 18. The Secretary General responded on January 7, informing the Government of Grenada that an OAS Electoral Observation Mission comprised of six observers, would be sent to Grenada as soon as possible to observe the different phases of the electoral process. (Appendix I, Letter of Invitation and Appendix II, Letter of Response.)

Shortly thereafter, the Secretary General designated Ambassador Joseph Edmunds to serve as Chief of Mission and the Assistant Secretary General, Ambassador Christopher R. Thomas would lead the Mission on election day. Ambassador Edmunds and a specialist from the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy arrived on January 12 to begin preparations for the mission's operations in Grenada. By January 15, the remaining observers had arrived in the country. On election day, the Mission totaled eight members, including two officials from the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados.

Upon their respective arrivals, the Chief of Mission and the Assistant Secretary General met with the Prime Minister, the Commissioner of Police, candidates from the major political parties, electoral officials, members of the media and representatives from civil society. (Appendix III, Schedule of Activities.) During the first meeting, the Supervisor of Elections assured the Mission of complete and unimpeded access to the Parliamentary Elections Office, the Returning Offices and the polling stations. (Appendix IV, Agreement with the Office of Parliamentary Elections and Appendix V, Credentials for OAS Observers.)

The Mission leadership took particular note of the concerns of the opposition political parties and relayed these concerns to the Supervisor of Elections. Before election day, the observers were present at numerous rallies organized by different candidates, noting the overall political environment.

Before 6:00 a.m. on election day, the OAS observers arrived at selected polling sites to witness the opening of the polls. Throughout the day, observers were present in every one of the 15 constituencies, recording their observations regarding the preparations and the conduct of the voting. The observers also remained in selected polling sites to monitor the closing of the polls and the subsequent vote tabulations.

Afterwards, the observers accompanied the presiding officers as they delivered the ballot boxes and the preliminary results to the constituent offices. Lastly, observers were in the Constituent Offices, where the returning officers were transmitting results, and in the Parliament Building, where the results were being received and announced to the general public.

Members of the observer team met after the transmission of the preliminary results in the office of the OAS General Secretariat in St. George to compare observations. The following day, the Chief of Mission and the Assistant Secretary General issued a statement detailing the observations of the Mission.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Three islands comprise Grenada: Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. The total population of the three islands is approximately 96,000 with 8,000 residing in Carriacou and 600 in Petite Martinique. The economy of the islands depends primarily on light manufacturing, tourism and agriculture, particularly the export of spices. Grenada produces nearly a third of the world's supply of nutmeg.

In 1650 the French first settled in Grenada, which up until that time had been inhabited by the Carib Indians. Throughout the 18th century, France and Britain took possession of the island at different periods, until in 1783 the Treaty of Versailles awarded Grenada to Britain. Nevertheless, French influence remains: Catholicism is the predominant religion, African-French patois is still spoken by some and many geographical names have a French origin.

The granting of adult suffrage in 1951 marked the beginning of self rule in Grenada. It was also during this year that Eric Gairy, a trade union leader, won his first election with overwhelming support of the working classes. Gairy lost the elections in 1962, but he and his Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) returned to power in the 1967 elections and ruled continuously for twelve years. In 1967, Grenada became an associated state within the British Commonwealth and achieved full independence in 1974.

On March 13, 1979, reacting to a situation of deteriorating governance and in Gairy's absence from the country, a small group from the New Jewel Movement (NJM) led by Maurice Bishop seized power and created the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG). Bishop became Prime Minister and began to cultivate ties with the Soviet Union and Cuba. In 1983, a faction within the PRG placed Bishop under house arrest. A large crowd freed him and he and his supporters took refuge in a nearby colonial fort. After a bloody battle that left more than 60 people dead, the army took control of the fort and executed Bishop and seven of his advisors, including some members of his cabinet. The Revolutionary Military Council assumed power. Five days later, at the request of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, the United States landed military forces to assist in restoring order.

In December 1984 elections were held and the newly formed New National Party (NNP) assumed power. Herbert Blaize was named Prime Minister and led the Government until his death in December 1989. Ben Jones took over until the March 1990 elections transferred power to the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The NDC formed a coalition government with Nicholas Braithwaite as Prime Minister. In 1995, the

NNP, led by Keith Mitchell, regained power winning eight of 15 seats in the House of Representatives.

After the defection of two ministers of the Mitchell Government, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, eliminating the ruling Government's parliamentary majority, the Prime Minister dissolved parliament and called for new general elections to be held on January 18, 1999.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Four political groups and two independent candidates participated in the 1999 general elections. The parties and candidates are as follows:

New National Party (NNP). The New National Party was created in 1984 as a loose coalition among the principal opposition to the People's Revolutionary Government of Maurice Bishop. The NNP, led by Herbert Blaize, won 15 seats in the general elections in 1984. In 1988, Blaize left the party and Keith Mitchell assumed its leadership. The NNP won only two seats in the 1990 elections, but regained power in 1995 winning eight seats. The NNP was the only party to field candidates in all 15 constituencies for the 1999 general elections.

Grenada United Labour Party and United Labour (GULP/United Labour). Formerly called the Grenada People's Party, GULP was created in 1951 from a faction of the Manual and Mental Workers Union. With overwhelming support from the working class, Eric Gairy and GULP won the 1951 elections in Grenada, the first elections after adult suffrage was granted. From 1950 to 1972, GULP won five of seven general elections held. GULP won one seat in 1984, four seats in 1990 and two seats in 1995. For the 1999 elections, GULP formed an alliance with United Labour led by Raphael Fletcher, the Foreign Minister of the Mitchell Government who resigned in late 1998. GULP/United Labour fielded candidates in nine constituencies.

Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM). The MBPM was created after the Revolution and represented the left of the political spectrum in 1984. The MBPM participated in the 1984, 1990 and 1995 elections, but did not win any seats. The MBPM is led by Dr. Terrence Marryshow and fielded 7 candidates in the 1999 elections.

Good Old Democracy (GOD). Justin McBurnie, a journalist, created the GOD, which first participated in the 1995 elections. For the 1999 general elections, it fielded three candidates.

Two independent candidates ran in the 1999 elections, Dorset Charles in the constituency of St. George South and Claude DeCoteau in the Town of St. George.

The Social Partners, an alliance of nine civil society organizations including unions, professional associations and church groups drafted a code of conduct for the political parties. The code of conduct included an agreement to focus on issues related to national concerns and avoid using personal attacks in the campaign. The code also stipulated, among other things: respecting hours of religious services during campaign activities, refraining from defacing public and private buildings and promising to end campaign activities before 10:00 p.m. The signatories of the code of conduct included NDC, GULP/United Labour,

MBPM, GOD and the two independent candidates. (Appendix VI, Declaration of Political Conduct.)

ELECTORAL STRUCTURE

The Constitution of Grenada follows the Westminster system of government, with elections being held within three months of the dissolution of the House of Representatives. The Members of the House can serve for a maximum of five years and are elected to each constituency with a simple majority ("first past the post"). The Constituency Boundaries Commission Order determines the number and boundaries of the Constituencies in accordance with Article 56 of the Constitution.

In accordance with the Representation of the People Act of 1993, the Governor General appoints the Supervisor of Elections who administers and supervises the conduct of the elections through the Parliamentary Elections Office. With the recommendation of the Supervisor of Elections, the Governor General also appoints returning officers in each constituency. In addition to organizing and administering the elections in the constituencies, the returning officers are also responsible for receiving registration requests and inputting other changes in the electoral registry during the claims and objections period. The returning officers appoint the presiding officers and the poll clerks, who administer the polling stations on election day. Political parties may also appoint no more than one agent to be present at the polling stations on election day.

At the present time, there are 15 Constituencies in the country. (Appendix VII, Map of Constituencies with Number of Registered Voters in Each Constituency.) Within each constituency there are polling divisions. Each polling division has a voting center in which there are one or two polling stations. Schools, community centers, churches and private businesses serve as voting centers. For the 1999 general elections there were 136 voting centers with 206 polling stations.

VOTING PROCESS

As previously mentioned, the presiding officer administers the polling station. A poll clerk, appointed by the returning officer, assists the presiding officer. Political party agents may also be present at the polling station. Each polling station has at least one police officer in charge of security. Polling stations open at 6 a.m. and close at 5 p.m. Any voter in line at 5 p.m. is allowed to vote.

When the voter enters the polling station he or she announces his or her name, residence and occupation so that the poll clerk and the political party agents can locate the person on the voter registry. The voter presents his or her voter identification card to the presiding officer to verify the information. If the voter does not appear on the voter list, he or she cannot vote at that station.

If the voter does not have his or her card, the presiding officer will search the "polling station card" of the voter on file in the polling station. The polling station card has the voter's photograph, name, voter identification number and occupation. The presiding officer then compares the information from the polling station card with the voter registry. If the information corresponds, the voter is allowed to vote, unless a

political party agent at the polling station requests that he or she take an oath as to the accuracy of the information.

After verifying the voter information, the poll clerk enters the name, address and occupation in the poll book. The entries in the poll book are numbered consecutively. The ballots at the polling station are removed individually from the books in which they are bound and given to each voter upon arrival at the polling station. Before removing the ballot, the presiding officer writes the voter number and initials the counterfoil of the ballot. (Appendix VIII, Sample Ballot.) The officer also explains the correct ballot procedure to the voter. The voter walks to a private booth with a pencil to mark the ballot. Upon returning to the polling station, the presiding officer removes the counterfoil. The voter dips his or her finger in the indelible ink and places the ballot in the box. The presiding officer places a sticker on the back of the polling station card to indicate that the person has voted and the poll clerk enters the word "voted" in the poll book opposite the name of the voter. If a voter does not correctly mark the ballot, he or she may request another one from the presiding officer. As mentioned below, the spoiled ballot is placed in an envelope.

CLOSING, COUNTING AND TRANSMISSION

At 5 p.m., or after the last person in line at 5 p.m. has voted, the presiding officer, in the presence of the poll clerk and the party agents, declares the polling station closed and counts the names in the poll book. The presiding officer makes an entry on the line immediately below the name of the last voter, writing "the number of voters who voted at this polling station is (and state the number)" and signs.

The presiding officer then counts the spoiled ballots and places them in an envelope, seals the envelope and writes the number on it. He then counts the unused ballots and places them in an envelope, indicating the number on the envelope.

The presiding officer, in the presence of the polling clerk and the party agents, empties the contents of the ballot box and begins counting the ballots. The presiding officer should allow the party agents to examine the ballots to ensure the intention of the vote. The polling clerk keeps count on a tally sheet provided to the polling station. The number of used, spoiled and unused ballots should equal the total number of ballots supplied to the polling station. The results are recorded on a statement, one of which is sealed in a special envelope to be delivered to the returning officer of the constituency. The presiding officer retains a copy and places a third copy in the ballot box. The envelopes containing the ballots and the other materials from the polling station are placed in the ballot box, locked and sealed. The presiding officer, accompanied by a police officer, delivers the statement and the ballot box to the returning officer.

Immediately after receiving the statement, the returning officer transmits the results to the Supervisor of Elections via telephone and then by fax. The results received on election day, and made public by the Supervisor of Elections, are preliminary results. The day immediately following the elections, the returning and presiding officers open the ballot boxes and recount the ballots. The results recorded at this time are considered the official results.

OBSERVATIONS OF THE OAS MISSION

Pre-electoral period

Upon arrival in Grenada, the Chief of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission met with the representatives and candidates of the principal political movements to hear their concerns about the electoral process, and with key electoral officials, including the Supervisor of Elections, and the returning officers to monitor the logistical preparations of the elections. Additionally, the Mission met with journalists, independent analysts and civil society leaders to learn their perspective of the period leading up to elections. (Appendix IX, Statement by Dr. Joseph Edsel Edmunds, Chief of Mission.) OAS observers also attended training sessions for presiding officers and political party rallies of most of the political movements participating in the elections.

One of the concerns brought to the attention of the OAS Mission was the voter registry. The registry had 73,673 names for a total population of fewer than 100,000, which could leave the impression that various names that appeared were those of deceased citizens or citizens who had migrated. The basic information of the voter's list was collected in 1984, with annual reviews since then. In 1994, in anticipation of the general elections the following year, the Parliamentary Elections Office conducted a house-to-house enumeration of the voter registry. In 1998, as it does every year, the Elections Office received new registrations from January 15 until March 31, 1998, followed by a period of claims and objections from April until September. During the claims and objections period, the political parties received copies of the preliminary lists to verify the names and to request changes or removal of any discrepancies.

Political party leaders noted to the Mission that the timing of elections was unexpected and thus, they did not closely review the list during the 1998 claims and objections period. They further claimed that many Grenadians who had just reached the voting age of 18 years did not register during this period believing that they would have another opportunity before elections would be held. The Parliamentary Elections Office also informed the OAS Mission that, as stipulated by law, it was going to conduct a complete enumeration of the voter list in 1999, but cancelled these plans when elections were called.

Candidates and representatives of the opposition political movements also complained of a disparity of resources between them and the candidates of the ruling party. They claimed that because of its resources, one political party was able to purchase most of the prime-time space on the radio and television. They further added that some stations raised their advertising rates in anticipation of the elections, making it prohibitively expensive to air campaign ads. Both opposition candidates and leaders from civil society expressed concern that there does not exist any legislation governing the raising or spending of campaign funds.

The pre-electoral period was short due to the fact that the elections were not anticipated until at least a year later. As previously noted, elections were called on December 2, leaving only 47 days for campaigning during which Christmas and New Years were celebrated. Nevertheless, the political party rallies monitored by the OAS

observers were well attended ranging from about 100 supporters to several thousand when the campaigns formally closed on the Sunday before election day. OAS observers also noted that the rallies were peaceful and had a festive atmosphere. Police officers were present at these rallies and conducted themselves professionally. The OAS Mission did not witness any arrests or violence at the rallies.

Some political party representatives alleged that supporters were often given money in order to ensure their vote. While the Mission does not dismiss the possibility of such payments, it did not witness any such action in the rallies it observed, nor did it receive any evidence to substantiate this claim.

OAS election observers were present at a training session for presiding officers and poll clerks in Carriacou. The election officials from the Parliamentary Elections Office also transported the ballot boxes and the materials to the returning officers. During the session observed, a high ranking representative from the Parliamentary Elections Office provided a detailed explanation of the duties of the presiding officer and the poll clerk and the voting, closing and counting procedure to be followed at the polling stations on election day. Presiding officers attended three training sessions with the Supervisor of Elections or his representative as well as one with the returning officer of their respective constituencies.

While the training of the officers was complete and the preparations orderly, observers in some of the constituencies noted that the ballot boxes and the materials arrived late. In the constituency of St. David, for example, the ballot boxes, duly accompanied by the police officers, arrived at 12 midnight the night before elections. Presiding officers kept the boxes at their homes, but party agents were allowed to examine the contents of the ballot boxes before voting began.

On Friday, January 15, the Chief of Mission and the Assistant Secretary General hosted a press conference to inform the public about the observations in the pre-electoral period. (Appendix X, Statement by Ambassador Christopher R. Thomas, Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States.)

Election Day

The eight members of the Electoral Observation Mission met on Saturday, January 16, to discuss the methodology for observing the procedures on election day. During the session, they reviewed the procedure for opening and closing the polling station, voting and counting, and transmitting the results. The observers also reviewed the forms that would be used for recording their observations of these procedures. These forms corresponded closely with those used in other OAS observation missions, but were modified in accordance with the Grenadian electoral procedure. (Appendix XI, Electoral Observation Forms.)

To maximize the coverage throughout the country, each observer was assigned two or three constituencies with an average of 25 polling stations per observer. (See Appendix XII, Deployment of OAS Observers.) The observers arrived at a selected polling station at about 5:45 a.m. to observe its opening. After recording the observations about the opening procedures, the observers visited other polling stations,

noting the process by which the voters cast their ballots and the polling officials completed their tasks.

Using the OAS forms as a guide, the observers interviewed the presiding officers, poll clerks and the party agents in each polling station. (In voting centers where there were two or more polling stations, the observers conducted interviews at all the stations.) Questions pertained to the delivery of electoral materials, the arrival of the electoral officers, the hour at which the polling station opened and the accuracy of the voter list (i.e. were any voters turned away and why). OAS observers conducted interviews in 106 of the 136 polling stations in the country, representing 79.5 percent of the polling stations and 81.5 percent of the voting population. The observers spent up to 30 minutes in some of the polling stations. The results of the information obtained from the observer forms is summarized below:

Election Day Observations

General Elections in Grenada

January 18, 1999

<p><i>OPENING</i></p>	<p><i>VOTING</i></p>
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<i>Constitu ent</i>	<i>Total N u m b e r o f V o t i n g C e n t e r s</i>	<i>Num b e r o f V o t i n g C e n t e r s V i s i t e d</i>	<i>Cent e r s o p e n e d l a t e</i>	<i>Cen t e r s w i t h P a r t y A g e n t s</i>	<i>Parties repre sented</i>	<i>Ce</i>	<i>Corr e c t l y f o l l o w e d p r o c e d u r e s f o r c l o s i n g a n d c o u n t i</i>	<i>Use d i n d e l i b l e i n k</i>	<i>Nu m b e r V o t e r s N o t a b l e t o v o t e a t P o l l i n g C</i>	<i>Mai n t a i n s e c r e c y o f b a l l o t</i>	<i>Offi c i a l s a p p e a r p r o p e r l y t r a i n e d</i>	<i>Cen t e r s w i t h a l l n a t e r i a l s</i>

ST DAVIDS	11	10	02	10	NNP NDC MBPM GULP INDP.	1 0 1 0 0 0	10	10	10	04	10	10	10
TOWN OF ST GEORGE	10	07	01	07	NNP NDC	7 7	07	07	07	00	07	07	07
ST GEORGE SOUTH	08	08	02	08	NNP MBPM GULP/UL INDP.	8 1 8 5	08	08	08	03	08	07	08
ST GEORGE SOUTH EAST	10	10	02	10	NNP MBPM GULP/UL GOD	1 0 0 1 0 0	10	10	10	04	10	10	10
ST GEORGE NORTH EAST	09	05	01	05	NNP NDC MBPM	5 4 0	05	05	05	04	05	05	05
ST GEORGE NORTH WEST	07	05	00	05	NNP NDC GULP/UL	0 5 0 5 0 5	05	05	05	02	05	05	05
CARRIACOU & PETIT MARTINIQUE	11	11	00	11	NNP NDC MBPM	1 1 1 1 1	11	11	11	08	11	11	11
ST JOHN	09	07	02	07	NNP GULP/UL MBPM	7 7 2	07	07	07	02	07	07	07

ST MARKS	06	04	00	04	NNP NDC	4 4	04	04	04	05	04	04	04
ST PATRICK EAST	06	05	00	05	NNP NDC GULP/UL	5 5 5	05	05	05	01	05	05	05
ST PATRICK WEST	09	06	00	06	NNP NDC	6 6	06	06	06	02	06	06	06
ST ANDREW NORTH EAST	07	05	00	05	NNP NDC GULP/UL MBPM	5 5 5 0	05	05	05	02	05	05	05
ST ANDREW NORTH WEST	07	06	00	06	NNP NDC GULP/UL	6 6 6	06	06	06	01	06	06	06
ST ANDREW SOUTH WEST	14	09	01	09	NNP NDC GULP/UL	9 9 9	09	09	09	08	09	09	09
ST ANDREW SOUTH EAST	10	09	04	09	NNP NDC GULP/UL	9 9 8	09	09	09	09	09	09	09

In the majority of cases observed, polling stations opened on time. Those that were late, opened within one half an hour of the 6 a.m. start time. The reasons given for the delay included inclement weather and the late arrival of some of the electoral officers. All of the stations observed received the election materials, including the poll book, indelible ink, voter registry, envelopes and seals. At least two political party agents were present at every polling station observed.

In a few cases, the OAS observers noticed that some polling centers did not have adequate space to accommodate the polling stations. In some of these stations, the presiding officers and party agents had to stand during the voting process and the privacy of the vote was not always guaranteed. Also, in a few cases, the observers noticed that no special provisions had been made for elderly and disabled voters.

It should be emphasized that the presiding officers and poll clerks were extremely well trained and conscientious. They meticulously followed all of the procedures to ensure that every qualified citizen could vote, and tried to ensure and that the vote was secret, despite some cramped conditions. Whenever there was a doubt or a logistical problem, the presiding officer could call the returning officer on a telephone, which was installed each polling station. In the case where the voters did not appear on the list at the polling station, the presiding officer usually called the returning officer to locate the correct station. In nearly all of the polling stations observed, the electoral officers conducted the voting in an efficient, courteous and professional manner.

Likewise, the political party agents appeared to have been well trained. In all of the polling stations observed, the party agents were afforded the access needed to complete their functions. The Mission was particularly impressed by the collegial manner in which the party agents, using their own lists, worked with the electoral officers, often assisting the poll clerks to identify the name of the voter on the registry.

The efforts of the police force also deserve mention. Police officers aptly maintained the security of the polling stations and treated the voters with respect. For their part, the voters followed the instructions of the police officers and were courteous to them. Most importantly, the police officers respected the authority of the presiding officer and in no way interfered with the voting process.

With few exceptions, the polling stations closed promptly at 5 p.m. Those that remained open past the designated time did so because voters were still in line. As during the opening, presiding officers closely followed the procedures for closing and quickly counted the ballots. The results were properly recorded and the ballots sealed in the ballot boxes. OAS observers accompanied the presiding officer to the office of the returning officer where the majority of the polling stations reported the results by 6:30 p.m. The last boxes arrived at about 9:00 p.m. The returning officers transmitted the results to St. George by telephone and again by fax.

The day after the elections, the Assistant Secretary General and the Chief of Mission issued a statement summarizing the observations of the Mission. (Appendix XIII, Statement by Ambassador Christopher R. Thomas and Ambassador Joseph E. Edmunds.)

Post Election Period

Observers visited the offices of the returning officers on Tuesday, January 19 to observe the official vote count. In some offices the count, scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m., began an hour or two late. The delay was probably due to weariness from working 18 hours the previous day. Party agents were present in all of the returning offices observed and the official count was completed about 2:00 p.m. In nearly all of the counts observed, the official results corresponded with the preliminary results reported by the presiding officers on election day.

Political party candidates appear to have accepted the results of the elections. No complaints regarding the accuracy of the results, official or unofficial have been brought to the OAS Electoral Observation Mission. Supporters of the winning candidates celebrated soon after the polls were closed and the Mission did not observe any cases of violence.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Electoral Observation Mission wishes to congratulate the people of Grenada for peacefully accomplishing their civic duty. Many citizens enthusiastically participated in the campaign events. They went to the polls and patiently waited to cast their ballots. According to the official results, 56.5 percent of the registered voters cast ballots, although the actual participation rate was probably greater due to the high number of names on the voter registry. (Appendix XIV, Final Results.) It is the view of the Mission that the results accurately reflect the will of the people of Grenada.

Likewise, the Mission commends the seriousness and professionalism of the personnel of the Office of Parliamentary Elections, and in particular, the Supervisor of Elections, Mr. Victor Ashby. Before election day, all of the parties with whom the Mission met expressed their utmost confidence in him. From its observations on and after election day, the Mission can attest that this confidence was well placed. Returning and presiding officers and poll clerks were well trained; electoral materials at the polling stations were complete; ballots were accurately counted and the results were efficiently transmitted. In the days before the voting and on election day itself, electoral officials worked tirelessly to ensure that the Grenadian citizenry was afforded its right of franchise.

Political parties, too, contributed significantly to the process. The Mission commends those who signed the Declaration of Political Conduct and believes that such efforts help focus the campaign on the issues that face the country. The campaign events observed by the OAS observers were peaceful and in general celebrated the democratic system of the country. During election day, the political party agents closely cooperated with the electoral officials to ensure transparency and increase the efficiency of the voting.

Finally, the Mission recognizes the efforts of the police force under the leadership of Commissioner Fitzroy Bedeau. The officers manning the polling stations instilled confidence in the voters and election officials. They kept order and always respected the authority of the electoral officers. As stipulated, they ensured that the ballot boxes were properly guarded and returned to the returning officers. They were well briefed on the

presence and function of the OAS observers and always granted them access to the polling stations.

As is customary in the final report of the OAS Election Observation Missions, the Mission wishes to offer some recommendations to improve the electoral system of the country. It is the hope of the members of the Mission that these suggestions will be taken in the constructive manner in which they are intended. Furthermore, the OAS, through its Unit for the Promotion of Democracy, offers its good offices if so requested in any of the topics mentioned below or in any other way deemed appropriate.

1. The Government of Grenada and the Parliamentary Elections Office should consider a system of continuous registration to ensure that the voter registry is up-to-date and accurate. The number of registered voters on the list (73,673), when compared to the total population of approximately 96,000 appears high. Moreover, by implementing a continuous registration system, those voters who reach voting age before elections could be more easily included in the registry. A continuous registration system would facilitate the publication of an updated voter's list regardless of the date of elections. The civil registry, if integrated with this system, could also serve as a useful source of demographic information for social and economic policy and planning.
2. While time did not permit the OAS Electoral Observation Mission to conduct an analysis of media access during the elections, it believes, however, that a systematized allocation of media time positively contributes to the electoral process. The political parties in the country should study the options available to them to implement a system that assures at least minimal access to prime air time.
3. Civil society should play a proactive role in supporting the campaign process. As previously mentioned, the Mission applauds the efforts of the Social Partners in formulating a code of conduct for the elections. Other activities could include voter motivation "get-out-the-vote" campaigns or candidate debates.
4. Political and civil society leaders should address the issue of campaign financing. Currently, there does not exist any legislation governing raising or expending funds during a campaign. Legislation could provide for greater transparency and may offer some equilibrium in the access and distribution of resources among the political parties.
5. In order to consolidate democracy and contribute to good governance, there is need to strengthen civic education programs at all levels in the school system.
6. There is need to standardize the physical layout of voting stations in order to expedite the voting process.
7. Special consideration should be given to the needs of the elderly and the disabled voters.

In conclusion, the Mission wishes to congratulate all of the actors of the electoral system and is satisfied that voters were granted to opportunity to exercise their franchise and that their will was accurately reflected in the results of the elections.

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