



# THE IRAQI ELECTIONS: *Initial Results*

*"Our expectations have been exceeded."*

– Dr. Farid Ayar, Commissioner, Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq

*"Today the people of Iraq have spoken to the world, and the world is hearing the voice of freedom from the center of the Middle East."*

– President George W. Bush



**I**N LARGE NUMBERS AND AT GREAT PERSONAL RISK, the Iraqi people demonstrated their commitment to democracy during elections on January 30. In a historic accomplishment,

they voted for a Transitional National Assembly, provincial councils, and a Kurdistan regional government. Iraqi officials organized the election and Iraqi security forces protected the polling places.

## Voting Highlights

- 5,216 polling centers were opened on election day.
- The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq has announced it will release results within 10 days.
- More than 265,000 Iraqis participated in the Out-of-Country Voting (OCV) program, held in 14 countries worldwide. This figure represents nearly 94% of those who registered to vote outside of Iraq.
- The election was transparent. Voting centers allowed local observers from non-governmental organizations, political organizations, and parties to observe voting and the counting of ballots.
- The ballots have been counted in local polling centers and the vote tally sheets are being transferred to Baghdad where election staff are verifying and inputting the results.
- After the results are certified and the winners declared, the Transitional National Assembly will be seated to start the process of drafting Iraq's new constitution.
- According to the Preliminary Report of the International Mission for Iraqi Elections, "Iraq's Electoral Commission has prepared and put in place a framework for an election that generally meets

recognized standards in terms of election law, planning, and preparations."

## Continued Assistance

- The January 30 elections were a first step in a year-long process to set up a new government, ratify a constitution and hold elections for a constitutional government later this year.
- Iraqis continue to face many difficult challenges, but the United States and its Coalition partners are committed to supporting them in their efforts.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

### February - March 2005

- A 275-member Transitional National Assembly (TNA) will be seated.
- Transitional National Assembly elects the Presidency Council - a President and two Vice-Presidents.
- Presidency Council unanimously selects Prime Minister.
- Cabinet ministers will be appointed by the Presidency Council at the recommendation of the Prime Minister.
- The Transitional National Assembly, by a majority vote, will approve the Prime Minister and his or her cabinet.

### October 2005

- National referendum on new permanent constitution drafted by Transitional National Assembly.

### December 2005

- Iraqi people elect new government under the permanent constitution.