

## Transcript

I will try to give you a very general idea about the Commission that the election, the first election in Iraq. It was the first election, after practically 50 years of dictatorship that year. Because the last elections were happening in Iraq in 1940, I'm sorry, 1954.

So, between 1954 and 2004 was about exactly fifty years. And so, I, before coming to the elections in Iraq, I was with the UN working in Haiti and different countries. I was also in Lebanon and Yemen and Bahrain. And so, I have periodic ideas about directions. When I started with the Commission, what we did during the first Commission in Iraq, which was named Iraqi Independent Commission Election Independent Electoral Commission, Iraqi and Iraq, I mean IECI. That was created in the middle of 2004. So, after the notification there were practically 3 elections, or more exactly, 5 elections. During this year, during 2005, the first was in 30 of January, 2005. There were 3 elections at the same time the election of the, I mean the cost, the temporary Parliament, which was in charge to try the Constitution for Iraq, because before there was no constitution at all. And then, at the same time, there were elections for the 18 Governorate, and the to elect also, especially in Kurdistan, that Parliament of KRG. Of course there were, apparently before, but it was the second. But the first real elections in Iraq and on 15 October we have the referendum for the new Constitution of Iraq. There that admin it was the first time, and according to the Constitution, the new Constitution, it has to be elections, and the end of the app according to the Constitution. So, the last election was in the 15<sup>th</sup> December, and also second of 2005 to elect the current Council of Representatives in Iraq.

So, to start from the beginning. After the ratification of the permanent constitution and by certifying on the results of electing the first legislative authority (the current Council of Representatives) in Iraq on 2/10/2006, the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq has accomplished all its legal electoral tasks entrusted with during the Transitional Period.

The IECI carried out the three events successfully despite the difficult security conditions and the extraordinary hardships on the logistic, technological and political levels due to the nature of the transitional period itself and the shift from an oppressive dictatorship regime, to occupation first, and then to a federal, multilateral democratic system. This system is based on the constitution, respect of freedoms and political rights, and respect of general human rights.

The accomplished tasks based on strict adherence to law, adoption of transparency and professionalism, and respect of the international standards were represented by three big electoral events on the national level. They were highly commended by the whole world.

Supervised by the Board of Commission, the events were implemented by thousands of Iraqis working in the operations, logistic, technical divisions and the other sections of the Electoral Administration distributed all over the country. It started with the TNA elections on 1/30/2005 which was then tasked with drafting the permanent constitution of the country. It was followed by the referendum on the constitution on 10/15/2005 during which the Iraqi people accepted the constitution.

The final step was the election of the Council of Representatives when about 12,191,133 people from 15,568,702 registered voters went to the ballot boxes to cast their votes in 31,348 polling stations (PSs) distributed all the governorates. Nearly 200,000 staff members worked in these PSs. They were monitored by more than 370,000 monitors from the Political Entities (PEs) agents and local and international monitors. The election was freely covered by pressmen from all over the world. The voters went to elect 275 representatives from 7,655 candidates. They were distributed on 307 PEs lists amongst which there were 19 coalitions registered to win the seats of the new Iraqi Council of Representatives.

The IECI was established in terms of the Coalition Provisional Authority Order No. 92 on 5/31/2004 to be the only Iraqi authority responsible of organizing and implementing the general elections during the transitional period that starts on 6/30/2004 and terminates on 5/20/2006. On this date the Council of Representatives gave its confidence to the first Iraqi government based on permanent constitution as stipulated by item No.2 of the Iraqi state administration law for the transitional period.

According to law, the IECI is a professional and impartial institution of the Iraqi state institutions. It is a self-run institution independent from the three legislative, executive and judicial authorities. It is authorized to implement the electoral laws and issue the regulations and enforce them with the power of law in relation to elections during the transitional period. The dates of implementing the elections were selected as in the following:

On 1/30/2005: The TNA election in terms of paragraph (D) of item No.30 of the mentioned law and the Governorates Councils elections all over Iraq and also the election of the Kurdistan National Council according to paragraph (B) of item No.57 of the same law which stipulated their execution on the same date of implementing the TNA election.

On 10/15/2005: The general referendum on the constitution in terms of paragraph (B) of item No.61 of the Iraqi government administration law and in execution of item No.5 of the referendum law No.2 of the year 2005 issued by the National Assembly.

On 12/15/2005: The election of the Council of Representatives in terms of paragraph (D) of item No.61 of the Iraqi government administration law and after the draft constitution was approved through general referendum.

As for the laws and regulations that governed those electoral processes, they are mentioned in the following:

1. The Iraqi Government Administration Law for the transitional period
2. IECI Law
3. TNA Election Law
4. PEs Law
5. Kurdistan National Council Election Law

6. Referendum Order No.2 for the year 2005
7. Council of Representatives Election Law issued on 12/9/2005
8. Permanent Constitution of Iraq
9. IECI Rules and Regulations

At the same time of announcing the establishment of the IECI, and in response to the Iraqi Governing Council and its approval, the UN selected a BoC of seven Iraqi members. They are entitled to vote, make decisions, supervise, direct and appoint the directors of the divisions and their deputies in the IECI Headquarters and the governorates electoral offices (GEOs).

The other two members of the BoC were executive ones but they were not entitled to vote or take decisions. The first is the Chief Electoral Officer of Iraqi nationality, whereas the other is an international expert in elections of a foreign nationality chosen by the UN Secretary General. The BoC, consisted of nine members, is the higher board of the IECI.

According to the law, the IECI was entitled for issuing and implementing the rules, regulations, procedures and decisions that are necessary for carrying out its tasks including the direct financial and administrative supervision. It was also entitled of referring any legal litigation to the competent authorities if there were enough evidence of law breaches that hurt the fairness of the electoral process. It also has the right of making decisions regarding the electoral grievances and challenges. An electoral legal jury independent from the IECI (composed of three judges directly appointed by the Supreme Council of Law) was entitled to appeal against any final decisions made by the IECI and take the final decisions regarding the challenges if there were any.

In order to consolidate the independence of the IECI and for making it act swiftly to achieve its goals, it was officially announced that the financial resources of 250 million US dollars will be given to the IECI. Not all the money will be spent as a principle budget for the IECI within the general budget of the Iraqi state for the year 2004. Therefore, it will be devoted only for carrying out the first electoral event on 1/31/2005. The Iraqi authorities will then have to provide the funds necessary for implementing the referendum on the constitution and the Council of Representatives election on 10/15/2005 and 12/15/2005 consequently. It should also include the execution of the Out of Country Voting Program (OCV) within the TNA election and then the Council of Representatives election.

The IECI, establishing a register for the ais that cover all the Iraqi voters without expect and should be upgradable. The implementation should be transparent, and there, should be. For focusing on winning the support of the Iraqi people. The electoral process, and similarly, the IECI as a professional national institution, both should when the credit of Iraqi people. So, there is other. in fact, other as of a task. But we finally moving forward for the effective electoral regulation and utilizing the experience of the UN international expert. The DoC work persistently on issuing and distribution 30 special regulations. If you will not need any copy, we have it, and a series of institution instruction, sorry directions and release.

They focus on clarifying and determining all the pay, the proper role issue. And the producer really went to the elections. Starting from the internal system of the DoC passing through voter legislation candidate and PS certification organizing the electoral campaign and observers' accommodation. So this is an idea general about what's happened.

Finally, we have a lot of problem with the tourism and fact at that time. We have a lot of people killed also, about 18 Iraqi. I mean Anthony from the Commission were killed during this period killed by the terrorists, of course.

And finally, the election was very successful. There were, despite all the problems, the E-day, 30 January 2005 became a historical day. In fact, in the history of the New Iraq. On that day more than 8,500,000 million people out of 14,600,000 people registered voters went to cast. They went to the, to the center to cast their vote and the for the elections.

The number of the PS competed, and the election elections reached about 223, including 35 questions, and about sorry, exactly 48 independent candidate sfor the elections of 30<sup>th</sup> of January, 2005. The number of candidates of the 3 elections all over Iraq reached 17,000 candidates. 7,761 of them competed to win that 275 seats of the TNA Assembly in Iraq. The rest completed either to win the 111 seats of Kurdistan National Council. All the 748 seats of the Governorate Council, which were 41 seats for each governorate, and only for Baghdad there were 51 seats for Baghdad, in which the registered voters were number of voters in Baghdad it was 3.7 million.

As for the PoC, approximately 300,000 voters registered themselves in 75 PoC Center and 14 countries, they were Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Iran, Jordan, Holland, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, UAE, UK, and the U.S.A.

So, the PoC firmly faced all the all the call for post funding the TNA elections, the constitutional referendum, or council of representative elections. It confidently declared for the Iraqi people all the political powers, the international community and UN, and that it's finished all the preparation to carry out all the elections without any change.

From the beginning, the Doc warrant against using the state or institution, or authorizing that it's media and the military and installation. It clearly stated that the issue of religious symbol and really just Fatua and the electoral campaign contradict with the code of conduct signed by all PEs and the coalitions participating in the directions. The IECI received many complaints concerning the base, the use of the religious symbol, and Fatua by some of the candidates and list and their electoral campaign.

The IECI considered such attitude as incompatible with the code of conduct and the principle of democratic elections. It is trust on the fact that voting is a personal right, and that all the candidates and head of the competing electoral at least must respect the principal of ensuring the right of each Iraqi to vote to choose freely and independently.