



The legitimacy of the Election Requires a Change of Approach by the Electoral Parties

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Almost two and a half months have passed since conduct of the election. The last anticipated date in electoral timeline has also expired. The political, economic and social situation of the country is in chaos and inflation, and the public opinion is very anxious and concerned. Prolongation of the announcement of the primary results has become more complex and insecure rather than reaching to a desirable outcome. These issues, and the IEC's interaction with the electoral process and stakeholders, are of major concern. It was expected that the IEC's joint meeting with the electoral stakeholders on December 8, would result in an acceptable solution for all, through an effective technical deliberation and comprehensive and thoughtful engagement, which unfortunately did not happen. IEC has failed to properly manage this opportunity. The ECC, neither in the meeting nor overall, has been able to properly practice and play its legal authority and role in exiting the current electoral deadlock. The meeting, as stated by the commissioners, was an informative and reporting session, provided opportunity for the commissions to talk, and for the electoral stakeholders to listen. However, the meeting has been useful and effective in illuminations of the public understanding.

FEFA believes that continuation of the current approaches, whether by the IEC or by the protesting candidates, can change the current electoral deadlock to a full-scale crisis. Therefore, it is strongly expected that all parties, especially IEC and ECC, as implementers and organizers of the election process, are not to fall outside the boundaries of law and prudence, and has to take, the interests of the country and the grief and hardship of the people, into account. The IEC has jurisdiction to announce primary and final results of the election, but the legitimacy and credibility of the results depending on the credibility of the commissions and the responsible conduct of the electoral processes.

FEFA with a deep understanding of the current situation, and having serious concern about the election moving in a wrong direction, and to help avoid dragging of the country into crisis, proposes the followings:

1. All involved parties, including electoral organizers and candidates and their supporters, shall put the relevant laws of the country as stranded of action in their technical, political and social interactions.
2. FEFA believes that, involvement of the ECC and reference of candidates to it, with the complaints after the announcement of the primary results, is one of the solutions, on which ECC could provide legal and further clarification for justification of the public and involved stakeholders' expectations. Meanwhile, for a comprehensive and acceptable resolution on disputed votes, including the valid and invalidated ones, a special re-audited, in presence of all parties, is recommended. Candidates must stop calling the vote's invalid, and the IEC must also stop calling it valid, before the audit.
3. The ECC is required to get out of the passive position and to deal with the aforementioned issues and challenges decisively and actively, using its legal jurisdiction.
4. Illusive stances, disturbing public mind, and provoking a climate of distrust has to be stopped, and all parties should act cautiously in public and in private.

Using its legal and professional status and provide a framework for agreement based on its proposals, FEFA is ready is ready to help EMBs resolve the problem, with full impartiality, in line with the laws of the country. FEFA requests to focus efforts on legitimization and validation of the process, therefore it recommends all parties cooperation, especially the United Nations to help overcoming the problem.

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