

International Foundation for Electoral Systems

1620 I STREET, N.W. • SUITE 611 • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006 • (202) 828-8507 • FAX (202) 452-0804

PN-ABQ 704
174 2623

ELECTIONS IN CONGO: THE WINDING ROAD TO DEMOCRACY

A Report on the Legislative and Presidential Elections
in Congo, June and August 1992, compiled from the reports
of members of the IFES election observer delegations.

Compiled by Keith Klein
Director of Africa Programs
IFES

September 1992

*This report was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development.
Any person or organization is welcome to quote information from this report if it is attributed to IFES.*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS	F. Clifton White Chairman	Patricia Hutar Secretary	James M. Cannon	Jean-Pierre Kingsley	Randal C. Teague Counsel
	Charles Manatt Vice Chairman	David Jones Treasurer	Richard M. Scammon	Joseph Napolitan	Richard W. Soudriette Director
			Robert C. Walker	Sonia Picado S.	

ORGANISATION ADMINISTRATIVE



- Capitale d'État
- Chef-lieu de région
- Chef-lieu de district
- Poste de contrôle administratif

NB : Les communes ont été soulignées

CENTRE DE RECHERCHE GÉOGRAPHIQUE ET DE PRODUCTION CARTOGRAPHIQUE - CERGEC
Avenue de l'O.U.A. - B.P. 125 - Brazzaville

a

THE INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) is a private, nonprofit foundation established in September 1987 with a mandate to analyze, support, and strengthen the mechanics of the election process in emerging democracies and to undertake appropriate education activities which contribute toward free and fair elections. The Foundation fulfills its objectives through programs in technical election assessment; on-site technical assistance; poll worker training; citizen education in democracy; and election day activities.

IFES' program activities have expanded dramatically since the worldwide shift toward democratic pluralism and the ever-increasing demand for technical support services in the area of election administration. In the past five years, IFES has sent over 30 pre-election survey teams to five continents and provided on-site technical assistance to the election councils of Albania, Angola, Bulgaria, Comoros, Congo, Haiti, Guinea, Guyana, Mali, Mongolia, Romania, Venezuela, and many other countries. Election related material and equipment have been shipped to countries in Africa, East-Central Europe, and Latin America. IFES election observers have produced comprehensive reports on 15 elections on five continents, and post-election analysis reports have been completed for eleven countries in Latin America, Asia, Central Europe, and North Africa.

IFES houses a Resource Center containing a library and database of a wide range of information relating to elections, available for any nation seeking expert assistance in developing a sound election process. IFES serves as a clearinghouse for sharing information about any technical aspect of electoral systems, including names of those expert in these systems and the materials essential to administering democratic elections.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
I.	CONGO: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	3
II.	MAJOR EVENTS IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD, MAY 1991 TO AUGUST 1992	5
III.	IFES' ACTIVITIES IN CONGO	11
IV.	OBSERVATION MISSION #1: LEGISLATIVE ELECTION, ROUND 1	13
V.	LEGISLATIVE ELECTION, ROUND 2	20
VI.	OBSERVER MISSION #2: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ROUND 1	21
VII.	OBSERVER MISSION #3: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ROUND 2	35
VIII.	CONCLUSION	40
IX.	MEMBERS OF THE IFES OBSERVER DELEGATIONS TO CONGO	41

APPENDICES

- A. STATEMENT OF IFES DELEGATION FOLLOWING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (ROUND 1)
- B. BALLOTS (LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, ROUND 1)
- C. BALLOTS (PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ROUND 1)
- D. BALLOTS (PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ROUND 2)
- E. INSTRUCTIONS TO POLLWORKERS (PRIOR TO PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, ROUND 2)
- F. INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING "JOURNEE VILLE MORTE"
- G. ELECTION OBSERVERS' REPORT FORM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Republic of Congo's transition to multi-party democracy began with the convening of a National Conference in March 1991 and reached a culmination on August 31, 1992 with the inauguration of President Pascal Lissouba. In between those two dates, the challenges of transition from a one-party centralized state to a pluralist democracy, especially when accompanied by economic restructuring, became painfully clear to the Congolese people. They saw the three branches of the transition government squabbling with each other to the point of near gridlock. They experienced a coup attempt and a military mutiny. They waited for months as the government struggled to organize multi-party elections. Through this year, the people of Congo went to the polls six times. They ratified a new constitution. They elected municipal and local leadership. They chose a national legislature from among 1700 candidates affiliated with dozens of political parties. Finally, in August 1992, two months past the deadline set by the National Conference 14 months before, they elected a president.

Elections were a crucial part of this transition to democracy. They were benchmarks along the way. They were the moments when all citizens could express their will regarding national direction and leadership. They also proved to be a tremendous challenge to organize well in Congo. The goal of any electoral system is to allow parties and candidates to campaign openly and freely, to effectively enfranchise all eligible voters, to guarantee the security and secrecy of each individual's vote, and to assure everyone that his or her vote will be counted without fraud or partisan manipulation. In the end, Congo attained that goal, with perseverance, with practice, and with assistance from external supporters.

The U.S. Embassy in Congo called on the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) four times during this period to provide assistance to the government of Congo in its task of preparing for and holding elections. IFES sent a pre-election assessment mission to Congo in October 1991, and sent election equipment in November of that year. In March, three election consultants provided guidance and recommendations to the government as Congo began its series of elections in earnest. Finally, in June and August 1992, IFES sent delegations to observe the legislative and presidential elections.

These observer delegations were recruited and briefed by IFES. Funding for their expenses came from the U.S. Agency for International Development (A.I.D.). They went to Congo as the American presence on a larger international team of election observers. Support in Brazzaville was provided by the U.S. Embassy. Coordinating their deployment in-country was the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) office in Brazzaville. The UNDP also acted as the observer teams' liaison with the government of Congo, and presented the teams' findings to the government.

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

This report is a compilation of the observations of the American election observers who went to the legislative and presidential elections under the sponsorship of IFES. The bulk of this report consists of those observers' individual reports to IFES on their first-hand election-day observations in various regions of Congo. Their general findings and recommendations are also included.

The findings of the three IFES observer delegations can be summarized as follows:

1. The elections were free and fair by international standards at the observed grassroots level. Voting was secret, procedures fair and effective, and vote tallying reconciled openly and redundantly in the presence of party representatives. Given the administrative and logistical constraints in the Congo, the elections were remarkably efficient.
2. Problems remained through all the elections with compiling and maintaining accurate voters lists. Some legitimate voters were disenfranchised because of inaccuracies in the lists used at the local polling places. Similarly, some citizens were unable to vote because of the lack of a voter's card, or of a second form of identification. Constraints both administrative and logistical hindered the government's ability to distribute the necessary identification to all eligible voters.
3. The Congolese military were conspicuously visible at the polling places. Under an authorized mandate to maintain order, uniformed personnel screened voter documents and rejected those who did not qualify. Presidents of polling places followed a liberal practice of authorizing or not objecting to the presence of military personnel within the polling stations, possibly in contravention of Interior Ministry guidelines. However, the military presence was seen by the IFES observers as neither intimidating nor influential, but helpful. At the same time, reliance on a strong military presence at the polls is not considered advisable in future elections.
4. The use of multiple ballots was effective and efficient within the context of Congolese experience and practice.

The international observers were granted high visibility by the media in Congo. It is safe to say that a majority of Congolese were aware of their presence at the time of elections. It is more difficult to assess the impact of the observers' presence. It was the belief of the IFES observer delegations, and in this they echo the sentiments of the U.S. Embassy, that international observers, even in small numbers, played a perceptible role in reassuring the Congolese that their elections were credible and that the international community was cognizant of the challenges faced and successes attained by them in this transition period.

CONGO: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Congo is a small country in terms of population with a total of about 2.5 million people. Its geographic area is 132,047 square miles (about the size of California). Until very recently, Congo's limited economic opportunities and its Marxist orientation left it largely unknown or ignored by the West with the exception of France, its former colonial ruler. Current changes on both the economic and political fronts have brought increased Western involvement in the economy and its recent political actions may provide opportunities for other forms of cooperation.

Congo's borders touch Zaire, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Gabon, and Angola. Its links to its neighbors are enhanced by both the railroad, which goes into neighboring Gabon, and the river which brings goods to its railhead from both the interior of the Congo and Zaire.

In recent years major export earnings have come from petroleum (exploited by U.S., French, and Italian companies), supplemented by small amounts of timber, diamonds, and coffee. About one third of the population is involved in agriculture, much of it subsistence. The major ethnic groups are the Vili, Kongo, Teke, M'Bochi and Sanga. Almost half the population lives in two major cities, Brazzaville and Point-Noire. A railroad, designed to extend the 1000 miles of navigable water on the Congo River (called the Zaire by others) to the coast, runs between the two cities. The road transportation network is limited, and in some regions, like Likouala, people and goods move primarily by boat or plane.

The Republic of the Congo became an independent State on August 15, 1960 after two years as an autonomous entity within the French Community. At independence, the Prime Minister, Abbé Fulbert Youlou became President, achieving extensive presidential powers after the constitutional revisions of 1961. In 1963, President Youlou proposed a one-party state, an effort which provoked mass demonstrations in Brazzaville, wide-spread unrest and eventually his replacement by a provisional government headed by President Alphonse Massamba-Débat. The government had the strong support of the labor union leaders. By 1964 it had developed a radical character moving to a Marxist one-party state dominated by the MNR (Mouvement national de la révolution), which soon had its own "peoples militia" and political machine. After conflicts with the army, the MNR was suspended. By 1969 politics came to be dominated by a new Marxist-Leninist party, the Parti congolais du travail (PCT) which was highly centralized and controlled by a central committee. In 1970 the country changed its name to the People's Republic of the Congo. During this period the army became increasingly involved in politics, working closely with the PCT for the next twenty years.

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

In 1979 Denis Sassou-Nguesso was appointed President. Legislative elections were held by the Marxist regime in September of 1989. Most of the 133 candidates on the single list presented to the electorate were members of the ruling PCT. In February 1990 a committee was appointed to look into the implications of changes in Eastern Europe for the Congo. By April President Sassou-Nguesso conceded that the idea of a single ruling party was not beyond question. He also announced a number of measures designed to liberalize the economy. At a Central Committee meeting of the CPT later that year it was announced that a national conference would be convened in 1991 to consider the possibility of a multi-party system. Nonetheless, the socialist character of the state continued to be emphasized.

The National Conference was opened in February 1991 by President Sassou-Nguesso who called for a review of electoral procedures, relevant sections of the constitution, and the possibility of multi-party elections. One hundred and forty one organizations were represented in the National Conference. After an initially shaky start, opposition leaders, with strong public support, gained control of the proceedings. They declared the National Conference "sovereign" and moved to rethink the whole structure of politics in the Congo. Although the army had threatened to intervene if basic institutions were touched, they suddenly proclaimed their neutrality, and efforts by the CPT and President Sassou-Nguesso to derail this reform effort failed. Lacking army support, Sassou-Nguesso was left to preside over a Conference he no longer controlled. By the end of the Conference in June, an open multi-party framework had been established, preparations had been made for a new constitution, an interim government had been formed with a "Conseil Supérieur" to act as a kind of legislature, electoral reform was begun, and the special security forces were disbanded.

Over the next few months the Constitutional Commission prepared a new draft constitution which was to be put before the electorate at the end of November. During the course of their deliberations, public forums were held throughout the country to solicit input on the constitution. While the success of these efforts was mixed, it represented an important effort to include input from the people in the constitutional process.

MAJOR EVENTS IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD, MAY 1991 TO AUGUST 1992

1991

- May 24 The National Conference adopts an election schedule:
- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Constitutional Referendum | November 30 |
| Local/Municipal Elections | January 1992 |
| Legislative Elections | March 1992 |
| Presidential Elections | June 1992 |
- June 6 Mgr. Ernest Kombo, President of the National Conference Presidium, is elected President of the Conseil Supérieur de la République (High Council of the Republic - CSR). The CSR, with 153 members, is created to implement the decisions of the National Conference and to carry out the legislative role in the transitional period.
- June 8 Andre Milongo, former World Bank administrator, is elected by the National Conference as Prime Minister of the transitional government, narrowly defeating Pascal Lissouba. The Prime Minister is given many of the former powers of President Sassou Nguesso.
- June 10 National Conference adjourns and Congo embarks on a 12-month transition period to multi-party democracy.
- June 14 Prime Minister Milongo announces the formation of a transitional government with 20 ministers and 5 secretaries of state.
- September 16 The CSR begins its first regular session, with friction and complaints already emerging between the three institutions of the transition: the CSR, the Prime Minister and his cabinet, and the presidency.
- September 20 Original date for the beginning of the electoral census. The census doesn't actually begin until October.
- November In the midst of the national census, Congo expels more than 20,000 Zairians. Over 145 political parties have been organized. Two party coalitions emerge, the Forces de Changement (Forces for Change - FDC) and the Alliance Nationale pour la Democratie

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

(AND). Prominent in FDC is Bernard Kolélas and former president Joachim Yhombi Opango. FDC takes a hardline opposition stance to Milongo's government. Representing the "pragmatists", the AND includes Pascal Lissouba among its leaders.

November 25 Referendum, scheduled for November 30, is postponed in an announcement by Milongo, citing the need for 2 billions francs CFA for election expenses.

December Draft electoral law presented to the CSR. Constitution approved by CSR. Referendum date is set for late December, later postponed to January. French newspapers report a coup attempt foiled by French counter-espionage agents.

1992

January 15 A military "mutiny" occurs in Brazzaville, following Milongo's announcement of a shake-up among top military leaders and the appointment of a new Secretary of State for Defense, Michel Gangouo. Soldiers take over the TV center and the airport. Some deaths occur when soldiers fire on pro-Milongo demonstrators. The CSR and Presidency press for dialogue with military. Milongo is briefly "in hiding."

January 23 Brazzaville returns to normal. A new election schedule is announce by the CSR:

Referendum	Feb. 7 (later, the 16th)
Local/municipal	March 8
Senatorial	March 22
Legislative	April 26, May 10
Presidential	June 14, June 28

January 27 The Secretary of State for Defense resigns. Under pressure from CSR, Milongo reshuffles cabinet, reducing the number of ministers from 25 to 18. A parliamentary commission investigating the December coup attempt accuses Interior Minister Alexis Gabou of complicity.

Early Feb. Referendum postponed again.

February 21 Le Front pour la défense de la démocratie, a coalition of 60 parties in opposition to Milongo, denounces the electoral census and election preparations, noting voter's cards had not been fully distributed, the voter's lists had not been posted for inspection, and

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

the draft constitution had not been publicized. They demand the replacement of the President of the Electoral Commission, Patrice Nzoala, with the Minister of Defense Damase Ngollo.

Late Feb. A new electoral schedule is announced:

Referendum	March 15
Local/municipal	March 29
Legislative	April 26, May 10
Presidential	June 14, June 28

Milongo announces his candidacy for president, with the support of the FDC (Forces of Change coalition).

March 15 Constitutional Referendum is held:

Registered voters:	1.23 million
Yes votes:	832,115 (96% of votes cast)
No votes:	31,774
Participation rate:	70.9%

March 25 CSR announces new election schedule, to allow time to correct "mistakes" identified at the time of the referendum:

Local/municipal	April 26
Legislative	May 10, May 24
Senatorial	May 31
Presidential	June 14, June 28

March 28 CSR removes Minister of Interior Gabou from position of Chairman of Election Commission, replaced by Milongo. In reaction to problems with referendum, CSR announces a recall of all voter's cards to be replaced by new cards. The Armed Forces are called upon to assist with election operations.

April 23 The government announces 121 seats in future National Assembly (and the number of voting constituencies). The number of voting booths is set at 2,809, an increase of 1000.

April 24 Municipal and local elections postponed from April 26 to May 3, citing problems in transporting electoral equipment and supplies (particularly new voting cards and ballots) to the interior.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

- May 3 Local and municipal elections
- May 4 President Sassou-Nguesso denounces elections for fraud and inefficiency, citing lack of full distribution of voter's cards. Some of those employed to distribute voter's cards refused to complete their task until they were paid overdue salaries.
- May 16 CSR announces new election schedule:
- | | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Legislative | June 21, July 5 |
| Senatorial | July 12 |
| Presidential | July 19, August 2 |
- CSR relieves government of election organizing responsibilities and places the National Election Commission under the CSR. The government questions the legality of this and other CSR actions, and asks the Supreme Court for a ruling.
- June 5 Legislative campaign officially opens, with 1700 candidates vying for 123 seats (at least 13 candidates in each constituency).
- June 15 CSR President Kombo says that elections will be held as scheduled. A coalition of opposition parties says that June 21 elections "cannot take place" because of irregularities in the voter registration.
- June 18 First round of legislative elections postponed from June 21 to June 24, for "administrative reasons."
- June 24 First round of legislative elections take place with organizational problems, particularly in Brazzaville. Elections are denounced by Sassou Nguesso, saying "I want it to be clearly understood that the presidency of the Republic did not participate in the management of the transition." Kombo issues statement, saying there is a "network of elections saboteurs" in the country. The vote is cancelled in some Brazzaville districts.
- July 17 Presidential campaign begins for August 2 election.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

July 19 Second round of legislative elections. Results (Number of seats won of total of 125):

	<u>1st Rnd</u>	<u>2nd rnd</u>	<u>Total</u>
UPDAS (Lissouba)	31	8	39
MCDDI (Kolélas)	18	11	29
PCT (Sassou-Nguesso)	5	13	18
RDPS (Thystere-Tchicaya)	5	4	9

July 26 Senatorial elections, in which the CSR elects 60 (6 per region) out of 176 candidates. The UPADS, Lissouba's party, wins 23 seats, and the MCDDI, Kolélas' party, wins 14.

August 2 Presidential election, round 1.

August 8 Results announced of round one voting:

Pascal Lissouba (UPADS)	35.89%
Bernard Kolélas (MCDDI)	20.32%
Denis Sassou-Nguesso (PCT)	16.87%
Andre Milongo	10.18%
Participation rate:	59.58%

August 11 Sassou Nguesso concedes, saying "In our emerging democracy, the people decide."

August 14 Sassou Nguesso endorses Lissouba.

August 16 Presidential election, round 2:

Pascal Lissouba	506,395 (61.3%)
Bernard Kolélas	310,396 (38.7%)
Participation rate:	61.61%

August 28 An opposition alliance is formed by Kolélas and several other party leaders, called the Union for Democratic Renewal.

August 29 Last session of the CSR adjourns.

August 30 Out-going Prime Minister Milongo says that the various elections cost Congo more than 7 billion francs CFA (US\$28 million). Foreign financial assistance

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

that had been promised had not yet been paid to the public treasury.

August 31

Pascal Lissouba is inaugurated as Congo's first president to be elected in multi-party, universal suffrage elections. Lissouba announces amnesty, giving immunity from prosecution, for Sassou Nguesso, Milongo, Kombo, and opposition party chiefs.

In his inaugural address, Lissouba says, "The 12 months provided for the transition were certainly not enough for achieving all the objectives of the Sovereign National Conference. However, we have all gone through a beautiful adventure for 14 months. This is a beautiful lesson on democracy which the Congolese people have just given to the entire world.

IFES' ACTIVITIES IN CONGO

IFES began discussions with the U.S. Ambassador to Congo, James D. Phillips, soon after the adjournment of the National Conference in the summer of 1991 regarding possible ways of providing assistance to the transitional government in its preparations for multi-party elections. The National Conference in Congo had established a year-long transition period and an ambitious schedule of elections, beginning with a Constitutional Referendum, originally set for November 1991. The U.S. Embassy in Congo set as an urgent priority the provision of technical and material assistance to the transitional government for organizing free and fair elections in this country where no multiparty elections had been held since independence.

As a first phase of election assistance, IFES, the U.S. Embassy and the government of Congo agreed that a pre-election assessment was needed, to analyze the current status of election preparations and to make detailed recommendations for assistance to be provided by the U.S. as well as other foreign donors. Consequently, IFES formed a team of election experts to travel to Congo in late October to carry out this diagnostic survey, supported by funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) The two assessment consultants were Dr. Fred Hayward, former professor of political science and African studies at the University of Wisconsin, and editor of the book Elections in Independent Africa, and Paul Landry, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer of the Canadian Province of New Brunswick.

The assessment team arrived at a time when the scheduled Constitutional Referendum was only a month away. One of the major findings of their assessment was that preparations had not proceeded far enough, in terms of both voter registration and voter information regarding the constitution, for an effective and legitimate referendum to be carried out at the end of November. They recommended that the referendum be postponed, for at least several weeks. Soon after the completion of the assessment mission, the referendum was rescheduled, first for December, then January, and finally for March.

A second major recommendation of the assessment team was that the U.S. provide immediate material assistance to the government of Congo, focussing on increasing the communication capacity of election administrators around the country and on facilitating the dissemination of information regarding the draft constitution. The U.S. Embassy and the government drew up a list of specific equipment that would be useful in those two areas, and in mid-November, the Embassy again turned to IFES, this time for the procurement and shipping of the requested assistance. Through IFES, again with A.I.D. funding, the government received 15 fax machines, 12 mobile (car-mounted) sound systems, and 20 megaphones.

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

In January, IFES received another request from the U.S. Embassy, this time for technical assistance to the Election Committee. IFES designed a project whereby three election consultants would work with the Committee at the time of the constitutional referendum and municipal elections then scheduled for mid-February and early March. The consultants would observe operations during the referendum, and in the two weeks between elections, assist the Committee in fine-tuning election procedures and in preparing an election administrators' guide. This guide would provide detailed advice and guidelines for administering elections at all levels, from the capital to the polling place.

This project was eventually implemented in March, after two more postponements of the referendum. The three advisors were Hilary Whittaker, an American elections consultant, Guerin Ouellet, a Canadian elections administrator, and Wencesias de Souza, a lawyer and democracy activist from Benin. During their three weeks in country, they worked closely with the two committees in charge of organizing the elections, one under the Ministry of Interior and the other under the Conseil Supérieur de la République (CSR). The team observed the Constitutional Referendum, and while finding no signs of fraud, did see many administrative weaknesses. Among the team's many recommendations were that Congo postpone the municipal elections to May 15 and that a single-ballot system be adopted, to replace the French-style multiple-ballot system. Subsequently, the government postponed the municipal elections, first to April and then to early May. The Government also adopted the single ballot recommendation, but reverted back to the multiple ballot system for legislative and presidential elections.

In early April, the U.S. Embassy and IFES began planning for sending observers to the legislative elections, scheduled for May 10 and 24. Two groups of three observers each were recruited. When municipal elections were moved back to May 3, the legislative schedule also moved back one week. The observers were rescheduled for May 17 and 31. However, following severe administrative problems with the municipal elections, the legislative elections were moved into June.

When two IFES-sponsored observers did travel to Congo for the June 21 legislative election (round 1), they learned en route that the date had been changed to June 24. Only one observer, David Aasen, was able to stay to observe this election.

The next IFES observer delegation was formed for the first round of presidential elections, on August 2, and the final delegation observed the presidential run-off election on August 16. All three of these observer delegations were recruited and briefed by IFES. Their travel was funded by A.I.D. and they were briefed in Brazzaville by the U.S. Embassy. Their deployment as observers was coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme in Brazzaville. The three American delegations each joined with their fellow international observers (from Europe and Africa) in providing information for the UNDP-issued statement on the respective elections.

OBSERVATION MISSION #1: LEGISLATIVE ELECTION, ROUND 1

In response to a request from the U.S. Embassy in Brazzaville, IFES arranged to send two teams of three members each to the first and second rounds of legislative elections scheduled for May 10 and May 24. In early May, however, the first round was rescheduled for May 17, with the second round kept at first on May 24, then reset for May 31. All six members of the two observer delegations were re-programmed to travel to Congo according to the new schedule.

On May 21, the CSR rescheduled the legislative elections again, setting the new dates as June 21 and July 5. One member of the IFES observer delegation for round one, Robert Sloan, was already en route to Brazzaville when the postponement was announced. He was reached in Europe, and returned to the U.S. without continuing to Congo.

In early June, IFES was requested by the U.S. Embassy to recruit two or three observers for the June 21 election. David Aasen and Robert Sloan, both from the original observer team, departed for Brazzaville on June 17. On June 18, the CSR announced the postponement of the election until June 24. Robert Sloan, because of a previous commitment, was unable to remain in Congo until the 24th. On June 22, he departed from Brazzaville, again without witnessing an election.

David Aasen was thus the sole U.S. observer for the June 24 election. The following report on the First Round of Legislative Elections is largely drawn from his report to IFES.

Legislative Elections in Congo, Round 1, June 24, 1992

Robert Sloan and I arrived in Brazzaville on Friday, June 19. We were met and briefed by officials from the U.S. Embassy. We toured Brazzaville, finding diverse party banners flying across major avenues and candidates' poster festooned wall space. Attracted by music from a live band and traditional dancing, we stopped at a party rally in the working-class Bakongo section of the city where hundreds of supporters were congregated. A motorcade for a rival party passed on the main road, an activity which a rally supporter called a provocation. Despite some shouting there was no engagement between the two groups.

By early evening rumors began to circulate that the elections might be delayed. At eight o'clock pm, Monsignor Ernest Kombo, President of the CSR made a televised announcement. He said the three

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

institutions of government had decided to delay the elections three days to June 24th. Monsignor Kombo said the delay was for logistical reasons but he also cited financial difficulties as a concern.

The next morning, Saturday June 20th, the thirteen foreign electoral observers met at the UNDP headquarters to assess the new situation. The meeting was chaired by Ragnar Gudmundsson, UN Resident Representative who acted as the observers' liaison to Congolese authorities. Many of the observers expressed concern that the delay was evidence of inadequate organization. Members of the French and European parliamentary delegations said that they were obliged to return to Europe on Monday evening to take up legislative business.

After this initial discussion, the observer delegation, accompanied by US, French, Italian, German and Portuguese envoys went to the Palais du Congres to meet with Monsignor Kombo, the Congolese Ministers of Defense and Interior and electoral aides. A representative of the President was invited to the meeting but was unable to attend.

Mgr. Kombo opened the meeting and said that he was "troubled and pained" by the delay. Just hours before the public announcement of the delay, with troops already waiting in railroad cars for election day deployment around the country, they realized that they did not have sufficient resources to proceed. Among the obstacles were funds to pay the printers and electoral workers. A helicopter was also needed to facilitate the distribution and collection of electoral materials.

Additional financial help was needed from foreign friends. Mgr. Kombo expressed his deep appreciation for the aid the international community had already provided for democratic elections. Congo, he said, was like a woman giving birth after a troubled pregnancy, and with help both the mother and child will make it. In closing, he said he regretted the trouble the delay had created for the observers, but that "your presence will provide the people with an extra measure of security. I hope that as many of you as possible can stay with us."

After the meeting, the observers returned to the United Nations compound. We held further discussion and agreed to a new plan. We would divide into small teams and spend Monday visiting electoral officials. This would give us a better sense of preparations and help demonstrate international support for the process. Five observers would be able to stay for the election. In order to have strategic focus, one group would stay in the capital region and the other would travel to Pointe-Noire, the second largest city and the center for oil production. Here several major parties had strong followings and the results were expected to be closely contested.

On Sunday morning, Mgr. Kombo hosted a reception for the observer delegation. A few ministers from

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

the transitional government attended. They said that logistical and financial problems remained but that the elections would be held according to the schedule. Despite this optimism, an atmosphere of uncertainty hung over the process.

The next day Robert Sloan and I visited the first and second districts of Brazzaville. In meetings with municipal officials, we learned that the final voting lists had just been posted that day. They had not received ballots although they were expected in the afternoon. There was concern about electoral personnel reporting for work in view of the fluid financial situation. Nonetheless, officials said they were comfortable with the legal and procedural aspects of the process. Having been through it before, they spoke of "learning through apprenticeship." Between 800 and 1,000 voters were listed for each polling station.

Later in the day, I toured the Poto-Poto district near the central market and observed an enthusiastic political march of several hundred people. They were singing party slogans and waving palm leaves. At the town hall of the district, I met up with a delegation of military officers who were meeting to coordinate local plans for "Operation Ville Morte", the election day restriction on all nonessential traffic. They expressed confidence that the elections would take place in a safe environment. "We will do our duty, just like the last time," promised one of the officers.

Congolese media covered the electoral observer mission in an interview on the national TV station with Mr. Gudmundsson and the Official Bulletin ran a dispatch. National radio and TV also broadcast several announcements explaining the voting process, but these did not fulfill the need for a civic education campaign.

Pointe-Noire

On Tuesday June 23, Jean-Claude Thomas, an administrator for the European Parliament who had stayed as the observer for the EEC, and I took a Linea Conga flight to Pointe-Noire. The UNDP made arrangements for the trip, prepared briefing materials, took care of credentials and provided the observers with excellent support. Pierre Fafard, a Canadian electoral official, and the ambassadors from Italy and Portugal serving as observers stayed in Brazzaville. They were joined by two members of a Zairian civic association.

We were met at the airport by Gerard Serre, the Consul General of France and two representatives of the Kouilou regional government. Mr. Serre took us to his home, where we met with the local representatives and discussed electoral preparations. We were provided with maps of the region and a report on the earlier elections. In order to maximize our coverage, Mr. Thomas and I decided to each

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

take a vehicle and to visit a cross-section of polling stations in Pointe-Noire and the surrounding area.

That evening, Mgr. Kombo in a televised speech to the nation said that approximately 1.28 million people were registered to vote. 1,700 candidates were running for 123 seats in the National Assembly. The Monsignor issued a strong warning against those who might seek to undermine the democratic process and turn citizens against each other by inciting regional or ethnic disputes.

He described election day procedures including the requirement that each voter must present a valid photo ID, such as a passport, in addition to their voter card. He also mentioned the lack of complete information on registration from certain areas of the country.

Election Day - June 24

The next morning we set out just after 5 a.m. when the polls officially opened. We were accompanied by the two representatives from the protocol service and our all-terrain vehicles had laissez-passer papers to permit freedom of movement during the "ville morte" voting period.

The polling stations were almost all located in school buildings with between six to twelve individual stations at each site. The stations seemed to be accessible to voters. Most of the polling stations were set up and ready for business by 6:45 a.m. The electoral officials and political party representatives were punctual. The lucite-faced wooden ballot boxes were shown to be empty before voting began. Voter lists were posted on bulletin boards outside of polling stations. In two cases I saw the lists had been partially defaced, allegedly by children.

Double file lines of several hundred voters formed outside each polling station from the time the polls opened. Army personnel were present at most voting stations and played a low-key role in facilitating crowd control. In some cases, soldiers did an initial check of voters' credentials before they were allowed to enter the polling station. Electoral officials did their own door check.

Only two or three voters were allowed to enter the polling station at a time. I did not see any bottlenecks in the movement of people through the process once they were inside the station. The stations were unlit classrooms. In the early morning hours and at night the electoral workers used flashlights, candles or hurricane lamps to see. Although they could have used more, there seemed to be enough to go around. The voting stations were set up according to the diagram in the IFES Election Administrators' Guide. In one case the arrangement had been drawn on the blackboard.

Once voters had entered the station, their names were checked against the master list. Voters were then

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

directed to pick out ballots from separate piles on a tabletop. A corner of the room was curtained with a blanket to create a private voting booth. After making their selection, voters put a ballot in an envelope and deposited it in the slot of the ballot box, set up next to the president in clear view of the party representatives. The voter then had his/her finger stamped and imprinted on his/her voter card. In most cases the procedure took less than ten minutes. Most voters discarded their unused ballots in a pile in the corner of the room. Later in the day electoral workers took this refuse outside and set it on fire.

At noon we met with the Prefet of the region and other military/civil authorities to discuss the terms of reference of our mission. Afterwards, the Prefet invited us to a luncheon which allowed for a wider discussion of the electoral process.

In the afternoon we continued our visits to polling stations until they closed at 8 pm. While we did not visit every polling station, we did visit sites in every district. We spoke to scores of officials and voters. Hundreds of voters saw us visit their stations and were aware of our mission.

That evening we were invited to appear on the national news broadcast of Congolese Television. During our respective interviews, Mr. Thomas and I described the situation we had observed in Pointe-Noire. We learned from the Brazzaville report of the problems in the capital. This broadcast was widely seen and helped raise the profile of the observer mission.

General Observations

I did not witness any case of electoral workers, party representatives, soldiers or anyone else attempting to influence or intimidate voters. Nor did I see anyone inquire how a voter had decided or see anyone publicly announce their choice. Voters seemed reasonably comfortable with the procedure and I did not see any "coaching."

There were no political party posters, t-shirts or demonstrations of any kind around polling stations or elsewhere on election day. The indelible ink verification procedure seemed effective. I did not see or hear of any attempts to circumvent this safeguard.

Each polling station was properly staffed with electoral officials. Everyone I spoke to seemed competent and committed to the task. Political party representatives, usually four or five, were present in every polling station we visited. They understood their role and contributed to the process. When questions arose, they discussed the issue with officials and worked out an agreement. I did not record a single case where a party representative had outstanding grievances about the process. Problems which did

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

occur were recognized by all concerned.

With the exception of the polling stations which had been deprived of ballots, most people had voted by mid-afternoon. I did not see or learn of any cases where people were waiting in line and prevented from voting.

Difficulties

The most frequent problem was the discrepancy between the handwritten voters list submitted by local electoral officials and the final list verified by municipal officials, which was used on election day. In some cases where voters had the same or similar names, the "duplication" was eliminated on the final list. There were only a dozen or so such cases in most polling stations. When voter had the proper credentials and were recognized by officials, they were usually allowed to vote if their name had been misspelled on the list. Questionable cases were referred to municipal authorities.

The restriction on election day travel and the lack of telephones in polling stations made it difficult to resolve these issues in an expeditious manner. Army personnel did not always have vehicles at their disposal nor were they willing to leave their duty post.

While there was justifiable concern about fraudulent voting cards, voters were also confused by conflicting announcements by some members of the Electoral Commission and Mgr. Kombo regarding proper credentials. Voters who left home early in the day with only their voter registration cards in hand often found it difficult to return for the required photo identification. I encountered several groups of vocal young people who claimed that they were unfairly prevented from voting. However, when questioned, they did not appear to possess the proper credentials.

The most serious problem I observed was in the Mvougou district of Pointe-Noire. Polling station #308 and several adjoining stations did not receive any ballots. Voters waited patiently throughout the day, hoping in vain that they would be delivered. Although this district was said to be a stronghold for one political party, it was not possible to determine if the shortfall was due to incompetence or malevolent intent.

Vote Count

In the evening, we set out to observe the vote count. We tried to visit additional polling stations to increase our coverage. In the dozen polling stations we visited, the vote count proceeded without difficulty or dispute. The ballot box was emptied on a large table, the results were read out and

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

tabulated on the blackboard. No political party representatives or electoral officials raised any questions about the procedure or the results. Most polling stations finished their counts by 11 p.m. Afterwards, army officers transported the president of the station and other officials with the ballot box and signed proces-verbaux to municipal offices.

At 11:30 p.m. we returned to City Hall and held final discussion with the Prefet and other authorities. They thanked us for our participation and encouraged a continuing relationship with international observers throughout the electoral process.

Brazzaville

The next morning we flew back to the capital. In Brazzaville we met with the other observers to discuss our findings. We were then invited to meet with Mgr. Kombo to report on election day experiences. Mgr. Kombo opened the meeting by thanking each of us for staying. Then we each reported on our activities. It seemed that the elections had gone smoothly in Pointe-Noire, particularly in contrast to the problems we heard about in Brazzaville. The morning after the election, it was still too soon to assess how many polling stations in Brazzaville had failed to receive ballots. However, the fact that the President and the Monsignor had been unable to vote affected the public perception that the problems were widespread. On election day, President Sassou-Nguesso said on television that "he had not been responsible for organizing the elections."

After listening to our presentations, Mgr. Kombo gave us his assessment. He said that some voters had been misled by conflicting announcements from members of the Electoral Commission concerning credentials. He reiterated the statement he made on television on election night that "a network of saboteurs had attempted to disrupt the elections." Fortunately, their efforts to cut off the electricity for a printing facility which was also an electoral computer center were unsuccessful. Mgr. Kombo said that an investigation had been launched to identify the saboteurs.

In preparing for the next elections, observers made several suggestions including use of a single ballot; nationwide use of computers to verify voter lists; provision the lists to local authorities earlier; improved communications with electoral officials; development and implementation a civic education program to explain procedures and enhance public confidence in the process; and continued consultation with international observers.

LEGISLATIVE ELECTION, ROUND 2

At the end of June, the CSR announced that the second round of legislative elections would be postponed until July 19, to allow for revotes in several districts of Brazzaville where first round organizational problems had led to invalid results.

The U.S. Embassy requested that IFES send four observers to the first round of presidential elections, on August 2, rather than provide observers for the July 19 vote.

The press and the U.S. Embassy reported that the second round of legislative elections was orderly, well-organized and peaceful on July 19. UPADS, Pascal Lissouba's party, won 39 of the 123 seats. MCDDI, the party led by Bernard Kolélas, came in second with 29 seats.

OBSERVER MISSION #2: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ROUND 1

The IFES observer delegation to the first round of presidential elections, held on August 2, 1992, was made up of four members, Ambassador Robert Fritts, Bernadette Oddiah, William Kuhn, and David Aasen. All four attended briefings at IFES and at the Department of State on July 29, and departed for Brazzaville that evening.

The four IFES observers issued a joint statement on August 4 before leaving Brazzaville which was transmitted by the UNDP to the CSR. This statement, in French, is included as Appendix A of this document. The following observers' report of the August 2 election is based on the individual reports written by the four observers and submitted to IFES.

Brazzaville Meetings

The IFES team of four observers arrived in Brazzaville the evening of Thursday, July 30. They were met at the airport by Cliff Sorensen, the U.S. Consul and our Embassy control officer, and briefed on the schedule for the days ahead. The IFES team met with U.S. Ambassador Philipps, Deputy Chief of Mission William Gaines and Cliff Sorensen the following day, for an overview of the political situation and climate leading up to these elections.

The Ambassador predicted that the vote would fall along party and ethnic lines, with the North going to the incumbent President, the South to his arch-rival Patrick Lissouba and the vote in the capital divided between the acting Prime Minister and the self-styled pro-U.S. candidate Bernard Kolelas. The Ambassador did not expect any trouble in this round of the elections (he thought that if there were to be problems they would most likely arise after the release of election results) and he noted that the low incidence of fraud reports in the previous legislative election augured well for the presidential elections.

Also in the morning of the first day the IFES team visited the Catholic church-owned St. Paul printing press in Brazzaville, printer of the large majority of ballots for the up-coming election. The manager gave them a tour of the adequate, but not very modern, facility. As he guided the group across the shop floor, pointing out functional linotype machines dating from the early years of the century, he said that the staff had been working around the clock to fulfill the election work order. At that time, they were planning on 288,000,000 ballots for 1.6 million voters and 18 candidates. (The number had been reduced to 16, after the withdrawal of 2 candidates before the election day.) Work on the ballots had been completed a week before and the manager assured the team that all the orders for the election had been filled and the ballots duly delivered to the electoral commission.

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

Next the team met with officials at the Ministry of Interior and the Electoral Commission. They said that preparations were proceeding normally; delays or disruptions were not anticipated. One official did acknowledge that communication, within regions and nationwide, remained the most significant logistical hurdle. Nonetheless, he said that he expected results within six days of the election.

The observers attended political rallies in the afternoon. It was clear from diverse party banners festooning the streets of the capital and enthusiastic demonstrators wearing partisan garb that election feeling animated Brazzaville. The election period built to a climax on the afternoon and evening of July 31. Several major parties organized rallies for thousands of their supporters. These gatherings were peaceful although there was reportedly some minor skirmishing between rival groups the previous night. The campaign period officially ended on Friday evening and all parties respected the deadline.

UNDP Preparation

The United Nations Development Program Executive Director (also U.N. Resident Representative in Congo) co-ordinated the activities of the 19 international observers and provided them with material as well as logistical support. The UNDP held an early meeting on the morning of Saturday, August 1 to welcome all observers. In addition to the IFES team, observers included diplomatic representatives from Canada, France, Italy, the European Parliament, a team from the Organization of African Unity, including Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and Cameroon, plus the UNDP Resident Representative to the Congo and his colleague from Mali.

The UN assigned each observer an electoral district (or sub-district) comprised of polling stations and a district headquarters, where election results would be tabulated. The UNDP took charge of our transportation to and from these points. To ensure our safe passage and personal security, we were issued special identification cards by the Congolese Foreign Ministry and a "laissez-passer," which we were instructed to show to the police and armed forces. All international observers were granted diplomatic status for the duration of their mission.

Following the UNDP briefing meeting and a protocol visit to the Foreign Ministry, the observers were deployed to locations where they would observe Sunday's election. The four IFES observers were each assigned to different regions of the country.

ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION

Ambassador Robert Fritts, Brazzaville

Brazzaville is composed of six sections - Makekeleki, Bacongo, Poto-Poto, MOUNGALI, Ouenzi and Talengai. In the course of the day, I visited 29 sites composed of about 87 polling stations. While visiting all six sections, I focused on Makekeleki and Talengai, which were more sensitive politically. The PCT (President Sassou-Nguesso) was favored in Talengai and the MDDCI (Kolelas) and (independent) Milongo were competing in Makekeleki. Overall, the 29 polling sites constituted about 18% of the Brazzaville total of 160. Assuming other observers would probably emphasize the city center, I generally roamed the "grass roots" - the so-called suburbs and rural areas, although all six sections were densely populated.

My general approach at each polling site was to pass through the military control, introduce myself to the President du Bureau, have a quiet discussion, look at lists and arrangements, watch several votes and, just before departure, meet specifically with the party representatives and solicit their comments or complaints. Within the polling station, persons were curious of my presence and welcomed questions. After departing, I usually delayed a short distance away to allow a voter or polling station person an opportunity for more private comment, if desired. The delay was important as the small size of the polling stations rendered any private conversation difficult, especially with the party reps. NO significant complaints were registered either inside or outside the polling stations.

Vote Staffing and Procedures - The voting process was organized with detailed written guidance from the Ministry of Interior. With one general exception, it was implemented faithfully by the various Polling Station Presidents. Each polling station was composed of a President, Secretary, several assessors, several political party observers, a Ministry of Interior representative, and Army personnel. In every polling site visited, the system was organized in a manner to ensure multiple-eyed scrutiny by the interested groups - government, parties and public.

Voters underwent with calm equanimity what Americans would regard as a gauntlet of checks, double-checks and triple-checks consisting of the following steps (not always in the same order):

- initial document verification screening by a uniformed soldier; further document screening and voter list verification (by name and number) by an assessor;
- confirmation by the President du Bureau; voter selection of all sixteen ballots and an empty envelope;

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

- single ballot selection in private behind a simple plywood screen;
- jettisoning of unused ballots (either by tearing and dropping on the floor or by deposit into a variety of ad hoc containers, i.e., sprinkling cans, cardboard boxes, etc.);
- fingerprinting the voter next to their name on the list (same list used in previous votes);
- stamping the enveloped ballot by the Interior Ministry rep and at some polling stations, a countersignature by the president; and
- public deposit of the enveloped ballot in a locked ballot box with two openly visible sides.

Vote Counting - I visited three polling sites (nine stations) during the hour-plus of vote counting (about 300-600 votes at each station) which began at 7 pm. Under the scrutiny of all participants, the ballot box was unlocked, its contents removed and separated into piles of ten by oral count. Each ballot was then opened and passed one at a time through the assessors to the President, who removed the ballot from the open envelope, showed it visibly and announced the choice. The vote was then noted simultaneously on a blackboard of candidate names, on the official tally sheet, and on duplicate informal tally sheets by the party representatives. At the end, reconciliation was verified with the official sheets, the blackboard, the party representatives and the number of ballots. The ballots, were returned to the ballot box and locked inside. The president completed his official tally report with countersignature. There were no disputes at the stations observed.

I visited three of the mayoral collection points (Makekeleki, Poto-Poto and Bacongo), but vote counting was still in progress at the polling stations located there, so only a few locked boxes had been delivered. My judgement was that it would be virtually impossible to fiddle with the vote count or the boxes (other than by stealing them outright) in the few hours before delivery to the mayoral offices.

Voter Identification - During the afternoon, Radio Congo reported a demonstration in Brazzaville by persons who stated they had been unfairly excluded from voting because of allegedly incomplete documentation. The police had dispersed the group (according to a secondary report) by firing guns into the air. My UNDP driver added that there had been rumors that the PCT was supporting resident and nonresident Zairian to augment its vote. I also heard that the military had orders not to permit anyone to vote who had not previously voted.

In subsequent visits to polling stations (and a chance encounter with the Mayor of Makekeleki) I probed

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

the issue through open-ended questions. I received assurances that properly qualified persons could vote for the first time if they were (a) on the list at the polling station, or (b) went to the special polling stations for first-time registrants (which I had previously visited). My spot checks at subsequent polling stations confirmed that at least some first-timers were voting.

This issue could obviously be exploited in various political ways bearing on the credibility of the elections. Based on my observations, even if some Congolese were unfairly excluded, either by directive or tacit understanding, they were not sufficient in number to be significant.

Role of the Military - The military were officially charged to ensure a calm and structured atmosphere at the polling place and did so. In practice, that also involved the initial screening of documents, which I viewed as potentially subject to abuse, either through ignorance or design. In addition, I was struck by the frequent operational role of military personnel within the polling stations, such as filling in for absent assessors, casually witnessing my and other conversations, and generally lounging around with firearms within the polling station. However, no Congolese seemed bothered or intimidated by the common practice. I chalked the military presence up to probable precedent, the small size of the polling stations (usually filled with as many as 20 officials), curiosity, boredom and a willingness to help out.

Subsequently, late in the day, I found by chance a copy of the Interior Ministry "Guidelines" to Presidents des Bureaux which specified inter alia that the military should "... stay outside the polling places except at the request of the President" and "... the President (has the authority) to ask the forces of order to enter the polling station."

I did not then challenge directly any presidents on the military presence because of the lack of any perceived problems, but I did elicit comments which could generally be interpreted as mild surprise that I thought the military presence mentionable. No President, even in private conversation, gave any indication that this was a problem.

I cannot say how many of the Presidents had explicitly "requested" the military presence in the polling places. Rather, it appeared to be a given. While theoretically objectionable, I do not believe the military presence in the Congo during this election was either intimidating or influential on votes at the polling stations I visited. Actually, it was probably helpful both in terms of normal crowd control and in administrative/logistical assistance. In addition, the interactions between military and voters was polite and respectful.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

Bernadette Oddiah, Nkayi, Bouenza Region

I traveled on Saturday afternoon to the town of Nkayi, 200 miles west of Brazzaville on an unpaved road, a journey of six hours. Upon arrival in Nkayi late in the afternoon, I met with the Mayor, who briefed me on the preparations that were underway for the elections. I was provided with the list and layout of all the 39 polling booths in N'kayi.

Early that evening, with my UNDP driver, I visited approximately 20 polling stations in order to see pre-election preparations that were in place. Most of the polling stations were located on school premises. A typical polling bureau was a classroom with an open space where two long tables and benches sat. At the far end of the room, in a small corner, a "parapara" mat was erected, and this area was reserved solely for casting votes. Next to the door sat a chair reserved for the military security officer. Out of the 20 polling stations I visited on that evening, a quarter of them lacked electricity. Most polling stations had more than one polling booth. Some had two while a few others had three.

On Sunday, August 24, when I arrived at the town hall at 4:45 a.m., with the day barely dawning, I found about 45 people already in line waiting for the opening of the polling station. One hundred yards away was located another polling station with about 20 people in line.

The polling station at the town hall was my first observation site. Inside the station, the voters' lists and other voting paraphernalia were arranged on one long table, behind which sat the President of the bureau, with one assistant in place to check voter identification against the list. On a second table, sixteen different piles of candidate ballots neatly arranged, with rubber stamp and envelopes. Behind the table sat three assistants, one of whom assisted voters in selecting the ballots while another was responsible for stamping the voters' hand to indicate that s/he had voted. At the far end of the room, facing the officials were six party representatives. Between the voting bureau and the outside door sat a young man in military attire, serving as the security guard.

It was now 5:15 a.m. and the polling station had not yet opened, because the president of the station was unable to open the ballot box-- he had the wrong set of keys. Since it was the town hall, the Mayor was present, who explained embarrassedly that in dispatching the ballot boxes to their respective stations, he accidentally sent off the keys for this particular box with a different ballot box. He further explained that because there were 39 ballot boxes which were already at their respective stations, it would be time consuming to run around in search of the right key for this particular box; consequently, the lock had to be broken. The lock was broken in front of the polling booth officials and the party representatives (about six of them) present.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

The station was officially opened at about 6:45 a.m., by which time the line of voters waiting outside had actually grown shorter. I observed the first voter cast her vote. She stopped in front of the president, presented her voter registration card, and her photo identification card. The president in turn checked the IDs against the face of the individual standing before him; checked the name on the voter list, passed the ID cards to one of the assistants seated beside him, and then sent the voter to the next table. At the second table, with the help of two assistants, the voter selected sixteen ballots and an envelope. She then proceeded into the back room where she cast her vote by selecting one ballot and inserted it in the envelope). She returned to the voting area, dropped the envelope in the ballot box, tore up the remaining ballots and dump them in the trash can. She returned to the first table where the back of her hand was stamped. She made a thumb print next to her name on the voter list, collected her identification card and, with a smile of satisfaction on her face, she exited the room.

Bureau de Vote #2 was just one hundred yards away. Upon my arrival, I immediately noticed two things: the room was arranged in the same way as bureau #1, having the same number of officials and representatives, but the size of the room was not quite half the size of bureau #1. Voters hardly had space to move around to pick up ballots or to get to the tiny room to cast their votes. Furthermore, there were also six party representatives, three squeezed on one chair in one corner of the room, while the other three squeezed on another chair at the opposite end of the room. Because the voters had no space to move around to pick up the ballots, the assistants had to select the ballots for them. The voting area was a tiny room, lit by a small kerosene lantern. Because of the lack of adequate lighting, each voter spent about five minutes casting his/her vote, thus slowing the process down tremendously.

The next ten polling stations I visited were mostly arranged like the first two. I spent 30 minutes at the bigger polling stations and about 15 minutes at the smaller ones. There were no apparent problems at the polling stations, although at most polling stations the time spent waiting in line to vote was quite long. The assistants sought to alleviate this problem by selecting the ballots for the voters. In point of fact, at some stations, the assistants already had the ballots selected and just handed them to the voters as they came in line. I asked one of the presidents why this was happening and he said that it was important to do so as the voters were taking a long time to select their ballots.

I returned to the town hall at 3 p.m., where voting had slowed down dramatically. Voters trickled in in fewer numbers, sometimes one or two, but not more than five people in the queue at a given time. At other polling stations, some of the presidents of the different polling stations complained about the low voter turnout.

At approximately 4:30 p.m. the Mayor informed me that they were heading for the general hospital to give the sick the opportunity to vote. I accompanied them. A polling station was set up at the doctor's

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

office where the patients trickled in to vote. About thirty people came in to vote in the 45 minutes we were stationed there. The doctor informed the Mayor that there were nursing mothers in the ward who were also registered voters. With the help of the polling officials, and four party representatives, we went from one room to another, thus enabling nursing mothers the opportunity to cast their votes.

The polls closed at 7 p.m. No one was sent away as there were no people waiting in line to vote. I observed counting begin at one polling station at approximately 7:30 p.m. The polling officials were in place, with the president and one assistant at the head of the table. There were also four party representatives present.

At the polling station at the town hall, I observed four polling station presidents coming in with ballot boxes (escorted by armed military officers). I asked what was amiss and was told that these were ballots from those stations where there was no electricity. They brought the ballots to the town hall to be counted.

I observed one controversy in the counting process that evening which points out a small problem with the multiple ballot system and also gives an example of election day problem solving. An envelope was discovered with two ballots, which normally would be declared a invalid vote, but in this case, they were stuck together and had to be torn in order to be separated, because of a printing error. The president wanted it nullified, but the candidate's representative disagreed. Other party representatives present, sided with the president, and agreed that it should be nullified, especially since some of their candidates had lost votes due to spoiled ballots. "This was not the case of a regular spoilt ballot," claimed the party representative. They all looked to me for guidance and resolution; of which I offered neither.

Since this was the polling station located in the town hall, the president, two party representatives went upstairs to see the Mayor, and I followed them. The Mayor decided that it was not a spoiled ballot because the ballots were stuck together and they had to be torn apart by the president. With that problem resolved, the count resumed. I witnessed at least ten more cases of multiple ballots of this nature before the end of the count. However, in light of the Mayor's decision, they were not considered spoiled.

N'kayi has a population of 46,000 residents, of which 26,000 were registered to vote. Only 12,400 (approximately 47% of the registered voters) actually voted, with 120 spoilt ballots. The general consensus was that the low voter turnout was due in large part to a lack of voter motivation.

William Kuhn, Owando District, Cuvette Region

I was assigned to the Owando district in the "Cuvette" (or basin) Region, the northern-most province covered by an international observer. The Owando district includes the incumbent President's home town of Oyo which, for practical and safety reasons, it was suggested we use as a base. Oyo is roughly 420 kilometers north of Brazzaville and 100 kilometers south of Owando. Though not given specific instructions, I was assigned to cover as many polling stations from Oyo to the north as could be reasonably reached, while the French observer was to cover Oyo and the electoral district in the "Plateau" to the south.

A French observer and I, each with our own car and driver, left for Oyo late Saturday morning. We had been given a briefing book, put together by UNDP, containing maps and more detailed information on the elections, including the general location and number of polling stations by voting district. We reached Oyo shortly after nightfall without incident.

On election day, I observed voting in twenty-nine polling stations in the Owando District, covering the area to the north of and including Oyo. My French colleague and I began observing at 6:00 A.M. in Oyo. We watched the opening of three polling stations and visited four more that were up and running, including a polling station in the local hospital. At approximately 7:30 A.M. we parted company; the Frenchman driving south, my driver and I heading north. For the rest of the day, I visited most of the polling stations from Oyo to Makoua, including 8 polls in Owando, as well as the District Headquarters there. On the way back from Makoua, I witnessed the counting of votes in two polling stations (one with electricity and one without) and met briefly with election officials at the District headquarters.

I observed some minor irregularities, but I would stress that they did not have an adverse impact on the free and fair nature of the election.

Ballots: Several polling places ran short of ballots for at least one of the sixteen presidential candidates. This occurrence did not seem to be intentional or systematic, but was rather the result of an oversight in the distribution of ballots around the area.

Electoral officials in Owando acknowledged that in one part of the district, there was a shortage of ballots for one candidate and assured me that more ballots were on their way. Fearing that they would completely run out of some ballots before the end of the day, however, they had decided to instruct polling stations throughout the city to retrieve and recycle used ballots. In these polling places, used ballots were being neatly sorted into piles, rather than being discarded face down into a waste paper basket. This practice, which was observed in a number of polling places in Owando, was disturbing in that it could have violated the secrecy of the vote and intimidated voters from freely expressing their

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

choice. The wait for additional ballots also caused substantial delays in some polls. Voters in one station in Owando, which I visited at 10:30 A.M., told me they had been waiting to vote since 6:00 A.M.

Voting Booths: Most polling stations made good use of the cardboard booths supplied by Elections Canada -- three-sided folding screens that can easily be erected on a table to give privacy to the voter -- but a few either failed to use them well or found some other creative use for them, such as window screens. A number of polls used adjacent rooms as the voting booths. These rooms were not always the most secure and inviting places. In some instances, cloths were hung from the ceiling in a corner, making for rather poor booths. But in the overwhelming majority of places, the ubiquitous Elections Canada screens were put to good use, fulfilling their purpose admirably.

Voting Procedures: As I moved from one voting place to another, I noticed that poll officials used different procedures to process voters. The variations did not appear to have interfered with the vote, nor did they appear to be indicative of a systematic problem. However, they could have left the door open for abuses. The most significant difference I saw was in the way votes were recorded. Many "bureaux de vote" did not follow the correct procedure of placing the imprint of the voter's thumb next to the voter's name on the list but rather recorded each vote with a simple check-mark. This, I was told, was done to avoid dirtying the list with messy ink and because the space provided on the list for the thumb print was simply not large enough.

The only other significant difference I noted that could have influenced the results was that in some polls the individuals handing out the ballots had taken the initiative of preparing sets of ballots for each voter in advance. Since there were so many candidates, it is conceivable that, intentionally or not, one or more of the sixteen could have been left out of the stack. This problem was observed in other parts of the country as well.

Military Presence The military were present in every polling place I visited. Their role was ostensibly to maintain law and order, and guarantee the security of the polling stations. On the whole, they did their job well... However, in a society where an armed soldier instills fear in the hearts of the civilians, it is not clear what effect the military may have had on voter turn-out. It was clear in some cases that they had overstepped their role. I witnessed soldiers inside many polls. In one poll a soldier stood behind the voting booth and, as I watched, obligingly helped an old lady insert her ballot into the envelope. In one instance, a sergeant had taken the initiative to re-organize the polling station, military-style, and was proud to point out that his method had allowed many more voters to vote than the poll next-door. Yet the attitude of the soldiers was positive, and they seemed to be every bit as much concerned with having free and fair elections as the poll officials.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

Election Expenses At one of the polls, a man with a large manila envelope entered spoke briefly with the president of the polling station and, after handing him a small envelope, left quickly. Upon inquiring, I learned that this was the paymaster for the electoral officials. The president of the polling station earned 10,000 CFA and the rest of the officials earned 7,000 CFA each for the day's work, equivalent to \$40 and \$28, respectively. These wages, worth about a week's pay for the average worker, were paid in cash. This might help explain the very low rate of absenteeism noted among poll officials.

Party representatives were supposed to be paid by the parties. In almost every poll I entered there was at least one PCT representative but hardly any from the other parties; they clearly could not afford to be represented. A rough calculation led me to conclude that with 2,000 polling stations Congo's elections cost \$800,000 just in manpower. This seemed like an expensive proposition, especially in view of the fact that this was one of four national elections to take place this year.

Voter Participation We found that as we drove further north the voter participation rate seemed to decline. Puzzled, I asked the official in Makoua, mid-way through our tour there, for an explanation. Quite simply, he told me, as this was the dry season, most of the men in the town have gone off to fish. The local economy depends heavily on fishing the extensive network of rivers connected to the Congo river. At this time of year, when the water is low and the fish are easy to catch, the fishermen go off for months at a time. Knowing that this would reduce the number of potential voters, the officials had requested that the elections be postponed, but to no avail. We did not see any polling station in Makoua with a higher than 50% participation rate. The same city had registered high participation rates in the earlier elections in June.

David Aasen, Pointe Noire

I was reassigned to Pointe Noire, where I had observed the legislative elections. Upon arrival on Saturday afternoon, my observer colleague, a French jurist, and I visited municipal, electoral and police officials. They briefed us on their preparations, including "Operation Ville-Morte", the freeze on non-official election day traffic. My French colleague and I planned our respective coverage for the next day to give us an economic and political cross-section of Pointe Noire and its outlying settlement.

My first polling station visits were in the center of town, where I found election personnel in place and start-up operations underway at 5:00 a.m. Within a half-hour they were open for the first voters. The voting procedure was the same as I had observed in June and did not vary from station to station. The

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

process usually took about eight to twelve minutes per voter. The voters seemed familiar with the procedure and did seem to be well-acquainted with the photo and party symbol of their candidate. None of the ballots appear to have been misprinted for this election. A calm, businesslike atmosphere characterized the proceedings.

The major area of confusion was the issue of proper identification for voters, which had continue to be the subject of last-minute policy changes by the Electoral Commission. I visited 27 rural polling stations outside of Pointe Noire. Mostly in one-room school houses, in the early morning fog, hurricane lamps illuminated the handwritten electoral lists and village elders watched as voters filed by. Even voters who were known to all and had electoral cards were not allowed to vote if they did not have national identification cards. Electoral officials said that enforcement of this requirement had reduced the turnout by as much as 40% compared to previous elections.

A late decision by the Electoral Commission to grant exceptions to senior citizens who participated in previous elections was slowly distributed and may not have gotten out in time to allow some voters to participate in this round. Rural voters were particularly affected because they found it difficult to spend the time and money to reach Point Noire where the regional office which issued ID cards was located.

In the middle of the day, after my return to Pointe Noire, I visited this office. A restive crowd of about 300 people milled about the yard waiting for a chance to present their applications or to hear their name called for their new ID. The director of the office took the time to explain the operation to me. He said that official notice of the ID requirement had been made public two weeks ago but that many people waited until the last minute to apply. The office staff had been working extra hours to try to meet this surge in demand, but there was still a backlog. He was not aware of any special plans or budget to send teams out to rural areas to register voters.

The prerequisites for a national ID card: an original birth certificate, two photos, and 100 CFA (around \$50), were not insurmountable. The difficulties lay in public awareness, access and state resources. The concern about the circulation of fraudulent voting cards was a reason for the ID requirement.

In the afternoon, I traveled south to Nzassi, a market town on the Angolan frontier. In this area which is considered to be a military zone, the armed forces had a higher profile. At one station in Nzassi, some questions arose about the true nationality of some voters whose cases were referred to district authorities. Election officials said that the census had been conducted in a "very general manner" here and the fact that many people had relations on both sides of the border complicated matters.

Back in Pointe Noire, the ID requirement was also affecting the turnout of urban voters. The greatest

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

difficulty they encountered was with the electoral lists which had not included a certain percentage of registered voters. At many stations, potential voters whose names were left off the lists were told to come back in the afternoon. In the meantime, local electoral officials and district authorities were able to double-check their lists and add the missing names. They agreed to extend voting hours for about 45 minutes to allow voters who had been affected to cast their ballots. This solution worked for those who were able to return to vote at the end of the day.

At the several polling stations where I observed the vote count that evening, the process proceeded without difficulty or controversy. Every station had candles or hurricane lamps, although more would have been useful. Pocket calculators also would have helped expedite the count. By 11:00 p.m., every station I visited had completed their count. Then the president of the station, accompanied by other electoral officials and soldiers, transported the ballot boxes and signed vote tabulations to the district office or the prefecture.

Post-Election Debriefing in Brazzaville

The UNDP hosted a meeting of observers after the election. All observers considered the election free and fair. Several commented on the presence of military personnel within the polling places by considered it innocent. All observers were complimentary of the Congolese government's organizational arrangements. There were some procedural inconsistencies among polling places, but nothing significant.

The IFES team prepared a brief report for the UNDP which would be passed on to the CSR at a meeting on Thursday, August 6. The team gave an oral briefing to the U.S. Ambassador, and left him a copy of the team's report.

Summary of Observations and Recommendations

1. General Organization. The IFES observers were favorably impressed with the general level of election organization. In this, the fifth national day of voting to take place in Congo since March, many of the previous snags had been removed from the system. The local polling officials seemed to be well trained and familiar with their task.
2. Enfranchisement of Voters. On the one hand, the IFES observers witnessed impressive efforts to allow as many citizens to vote as possible, such as the mobile polling station at the hospital in Nkayi.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

On the other hand, the recently imposed requirement that voters present a national ID along with their voter's ID before being allowed to vote undoubtedly disenfranchised some legitimate voters.

3. The Role of the Military. The armed forces played a very visible role on election day. In many instances, individual soldiers went beyond their formal role of maintaining peace and security. In almost all cases, however, the team observed military personnel playing a helpful role and their presence did not seem to intimidate voters.
 4. Polling Station Supplies and Equipment. Polling stations were, in most cases, adequately supplied. The previous problems with on-time deliveries of ballots seems to have been solved. The team recommends in future elections that there be a standardization of the use and placement of voting screens, and that additional lanterns be provided for polling stations without electricity.
 5. Use of Multiple Ballots. In this election, there were sixteen Presidential candidates and thus sixteen separate ballots each bearing the name, symbol and photograph of a candidate. While this system on the French model requires vast amounts of paper and complicates the distribution of ballots, the IFES observers found it to be effective and appropriate to the current conditions in Congo.
 6. Public Awareness and Participation. Voting seemed to be strongly influenced by tribal loyalties, but many voters interviewed by the observers knew a few things about their candidate and what he stood for. Information on candidates had reached through the mass media or through personal contact at a rally or speech.
- Voter participation was lower than in previous elections. Possible explanations for this phenomenon include a) voter fatigue, after four previous elections; b) stricter identification requirements; c) seasonal migration or other seasonal work conflicts; and c) discouragingly long waits in line to vote.
7. International Observers. International observers without a doubt played a positive role in reducing concerns about the legitimacy of the Congolese election process. Though the international delegation was not large, they had very wide exposure because of effective deployment by the UNDP and through interviews with the mass media.

OBSERVER MISSION #3: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ROUND 2

The IFES observer delegation to the second round of presidential elections, held on August 16, 1992, was made up of two members, Eugenie Lucas and Randall Purcell. All four attended briefings at IFES and at the Department of State on August 12 and departed for Brazzaville that evening.

As with the previous delegation, these two observers were briefed by U.S. Ambassador Phillips on Friday morning. That afternoon and evening, they witnessed rallies in Brazzaville for both presidential candidates, Bernard Kolélas and Pascal Lissouba. On Saturday morning, they and the other international observers were officially welcomed by the Minister of Labor and attended a meeting at the UNDP where they were briefed and given their deployment assignments. Eugenie Lucas traveled to Nkayi and Randall Purcell remained in Brazzaville.

Eugenie Lucas, Nkayi, Bouenza Region

My observer colleague, a member of the Canadian Parliament from Quebec, and I departed from Brazzaville at 11 a.m., Saturday, August 15 and arrived Nkayi, in the Bouenza region, that evening at 5 p.m. At the town hall, we were briefed by the mayor on the preparations for the elections and given a list of all 39 polling sites with the names of the presiding officers and the assessors and their political party affiliation.

At 4:45 a.m. Sunday, August 16, we arrived at the town hall to observe the opening of two polling sites there, after which I departed to observe polling stations throughout the city. The polling sites in Nkayi were, almost without exception, well organized and everyone involved in the process, the president of the bureau de vote, the assessors and the representatives of the two political parties, were aware of their specific functions and diligent in carrying out their responsibilities. The polling places were equipped with locked ballot boxes made of lucite sides (to provide transparency), voting booths with some form of covering to provide privacy, and what appeared to be equal stacks of ballots for both candidates.

The voters were either given or instructed to take both ballots before entering the voting booth. Once inside, they placed the ballot of their choice into the envelope which was then placed into the locked ballot box. The voters thumb or forefinger was then dipped in indelible ink and the voter registration card was either stamped or signed by the presiding officer and returned. There was no evidence of any form of political campaigning at the polling sites nor any evidence of harassment, intimidation or any effort to influence the outcome.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

We departed Nkayi at 11:30 AM, after having observed all 39 polling sites, and proceeded to Sibiti in the Lekoum region, a one and a half hour drive north of Nkayi. We arrived in Sibiti, unannounced, at 1 PM. There we met Bemba Leon, a professor of communication at the University of Brazzaville, who had been sent to Sibiti by the CSR to supervise the election. Mr. Leon gave us a briefing on the polling sites and provided us with two guides to accompany my colleague and I to observe the election. This was the first time international observers had visited Sibiti and he encouraged us to visit as many polling sites as possible. Although it was not possible to visit all 48, we did nevertheless manage to visit a dozen polling sites.

The polling sites in Sibiti, as in Nkayi, appeared well organized. At nearly all of the polling sites, voters had cast their ballots earlier in the day and we arrived too late to actually observe the process. Nevertheless, the election officials impressed me as being properly informed and as having carried out their functions in a serious and responsible manner. Many of the election officials in Sibiti, as well as in Nkayi, commented on the low voter turnout but declined to offer any insights as to the possible cause of voter apathy.

The highlight of the trip was arriving at a polling station in an area inhabited by a large number of Pygmies. There were reports of Pygmies, particularly in the northern region of the Congo, being intentionally excluded from the political process during previous elections. According to the journalist from Radio Congo, efforts had been made on the part of the government to encourage greater participation in the political process by Pygmies. The government had issued a communique informing election officials that Pygmies were to be allowed to vote without the required identification, if they were in possession of the voter registration card and their name appeared on the electoral list.

This was the dry season and the majority of the Pygmies, of which there were approximately 100 in the village of Kolo, had remained in the bush. I was told that there were perhaps as many as 50 who had voted earlier in the day. With the aid of an interpreter, I interviewed a number of Pygmies and asked questions about the documents they were required to have in order to vote and whether they had been harassed or intimidated into voting for a particular candidate. I was assured that there had been no attempts at excluding or coercing Pygmies on the part of the government or any political candidate. They explained that they too had been far away in the forest and had returned to the village only to cast their ballots. I was impressed with the level of civic involvement and awareness.

We next traveled to Loudima, in the Bouenza region. Here, as elsewhere, the polling stations were well organized with the election officials appearing to have performed their responsibilities in a competent and professional manner.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

We did observe one minor irregularity at one station, however, which was in the process of counting the ballots when we arrived at 4:50 p.m. The officials made the decision to begin the count before the official closing of the poll at 7 p.m. There were no lights and candles had not been furnished at this particular polling site and, since the ballots had to be counted that evening, the decision was made to begin the count before dark. There was no reaction on the part of the government official with us, who appeared comfortable with the decision. However, there were a number of registered voters who had not voted and could have conceivably come to cast their ballot while the count was taking place. Although obviously an isolated case which would not have affected the outcome of the final count, such actions could have created the perception of cheating and provided the basis for a formal challenge of the election results.

We returned to Nkayi at 6 p.m. and observed the vote count at the town hall and the tabulation of the results as they arrived from all 39 polling stations. The tabulation of the results was completed at 12:30 a.m. The official results in Nkayi were:

Lissouba:	10,646 votes
Kolelas:	2,393 votes
Voter Turnout: 54%	

Randall Purcell, Brazzaville

I observed polling stations in Brazzaville, teamed with a Canadian Member of Parliament. Polls opened at 5 a.m., which required poll workers to rise very early at the beginning of what was a very long day for them. Many people were exhausted by evening and were anxious to get the day over with. I don't think that this affected the overall vote count, but in isolated cases it may have led to a certain laxity. People didn't start trickling into the polls, even in busy city areas, until 9 a.m., four hours after polls opened.

The voting itself went very well. Poll workers were well-informed and very diligent about their responsibilities. The military presence was strong, with soldiers even performing poll duties like stamping papers. This presence did not appear to be disruptive or intimidating, however.

The only problem we witnessed were some people not discarding their used ballots, or unused ballots being treated lightly by poll workers. They were supposed to burn them, but didn't do this everywhere.

IFES Observers' Report on Elections in Congo

We visited two voting bureaus after polls closed at 7 p.m. to witness the vote count. Generally, this went well. There were some questions, however, about the vote transportation and tabulation process. There seemed to be opportunities for fraud when ballots and tabulations were transported or retabulated at interim stops on their way to City Hall for the final vote count. We were assured, however, that party representatives took note of the number of people voting at each polling station, so if the numbers didn't add up this would be well known.

Summary of Observations and Recommendations

1. Use of Multiple Ballots. While the multiple ballot system may be the most appropriate system for Congo at this time, the practice of openly discarding unused ballots can bring into question the fairness of the election process. The Election Commission should be encouraged to provide covered boxes in the voting booths for future elections.
2. Adherence to Electoral Procedures. Poll officials were generally diligent in carrying out the procedures specified in the Electoral Code. Some laxity was observed, however. Procedures regarding the closing of the polling sites should be strictly enforced. Even a minor irregularity such as early closing could create the perception of cheating and led to allegations of fraud.
3. Guides for International Observers. Guides assigned to escort the international observers should have no identification or affiliation with a candidate or a political party.
4. Technical Assistance Needs. There remains a need for technical assistance, particularly in the area of computerizing the electoral lists. The lists were handwritten, and though this created few if any problems in terms of processing voters, it requires an inordinate amount of time and expense to furnish the lists for each. Computerization of the lists will make the process more efficient and cost effective.

Likewise, there remains a need for technical assistance in developing electoral lists which can be protected from double entries and a system to more effectively control the issuance of voter registration cards. The "Ville Morte" imposed throughout the Republic of the Congo on the day of the election prevented the unauthorized use of transportation for a twenty-four hour period. Businesses in Nkayi were ordered close. This created an unnecessary inconvenience, but it was the only way election authorities were able to prevent people, in possession of multiple voter registration cards, from traveling to polling sites in different regions and voting more than once. More efficient voter registration procedures would eliminate the need to impose a "ville morte."

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

5. Voter Participation. One element in the disappointingly low turnout of voters for this last election of the transition period may be the length of the transition period itself. Congo may have missed a window of opportunity by completing the transition on schedule. In the months that followed the National Conference, interest and awareness in political change and participation was high on the part of Congolese citizen. That interest may have waned in the succeeding months when elections were rescheduled countless times and the transitional government became bogged down in bickering and inefficiency. By August 1992, Congo was well-prepared to administer a free and fair and organized election. The long wait to reach that point may have dimmed the popular interest in the democratic process.

CONCLUSION

Elections have marked the steps in the progress of the Congolese government and people in reaching the goal of a pluralistic, democratic and sustainable government. These steps have often been faltering, particularly the early ones. In the end, however, elections achieved their purpose of being an effective mechanism whereby the people of a nation can freely express their opinion on some of the most crucial issues of their communal lives: who will be their leaders and in what direction should they head as a nation. Congo now has a popularly ratified constitution and a democratically elected legislature and president. They have every right to be proud of this accomplishment. They join a growing number of African countries that have accomplished the same task in the past two years, including Namibia, Zambia, Benin and Mali.

The tasks of establishing an effective electoral system and of preparing for elections is not over, however; this is an on-going endeavor. It would be appropriate for the new government in Congo to soon revisit the electoral law promulgated by the transition government. There are likely to be changes that are recommended by the experiences of the past year. The legislature should also consider the establishment of a permanent and autonomous electoral commission, so that election administration is professionalized and protected from the manipulation of the party in power. If established, one of the first tasks of an election commission should be resolution of the persistent problems of voter registration, voters lists, and voter's identification.

Education in democracy is a task that cannot be completely accomplished during a year-long transition period. It is a project that must be taken on as a long-term project by a democratic government. Civic education should become a institutionalized component of the schools' curriculum. Ways should be found for civic education to reach the adult population as well.

Foreign governments and organizations have made an important contribution to this transition. Here too, however, the task is not complete, neither in the specific area of election support nor in the general area of building a sustainable democracy.

MEMBERS OF THE IFES OBSERVER DELEGATIONS TO CONGO

David Aasen (Legislative 1, Presidential 1) was Country Representative for the National Democratic Institute's Haiti Election Project in 1990. For five years, he worked as Program Officer for Europe and the Middle East in Amnesty International's Washington office.

Robert Sloan (Legislative 1) is a partner at the law firm of Pepper, Hamilton & Sheetz where his work focuses on international corporate transactions and privatization of state-owned companies. He has worked in the Office of the Legal Adviser at the U.S. Department of State, and for two years was the General Counsel of the Multinational Force and Observers, the organization which supervised the security arrangements under the Egypt-Israeli Peace Treaty. He has traveled frequently to Congo.

Robert Fritts (Presidential 1) is a retired U.S. Foreign Service Officer and former Deputy Inspector General of the Department of State. He has been U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda and Ghana, and Acting Ambassador in Sudan. His other posts include Japan, Indonesia and the United Nations.

Bernadette Oddiah (Presidential 1) is a Special Assistant and Staff Counsel to Congressman Mervyn Dymally, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, where she specializes in international issues, particularly democratization in Africa. She has a law degree from Howard University.

William Kuhn (Presidential 1) has been an economic and political officer with the U.S. Foreign Service, serving in Madagascar, Chile and Washington. He was a member of the IFES pre-election assessment mission that analyzed political and electoral issues in Madagascar in February and March 1992.

Eugenie Lucas (Presidential 2) has been a U.S. Information Agency officer in Liberia, Tanzania and Norway. Currently she is a consultant in public relations, educational and cultural development, and civic education. In May and June of this year, she implemented an IFES voter and civic education project with the government of the Republic of Comoros, promoting voter participation and awareness prior to the constitutional referendum.

Randall Purcell (Presidential 2) is currently a consultant at the World Bank. He has been Policy Specialist for the House of Representatives' Leadership and Democratic Study Group, and for four years was Executive Director of the Curry Foundation, an organization specializing in leadership education and policy research in international economics and development. In March 1992, he was a member of the IFES pre-election assessment mission in Burundi.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: STATEMENT OF IFES DELEGATION FOLLOWING PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION (ROUND 1)

RAPPORT DE L'EQUIPE IFES (USA)

La délégation voudrait tout d'abord exprimer ses remerciements au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et aux autres autorités congolaises -- surtout celles des localités que nous avons visitées à Pointe-Noire, à Brazzaville, à Nkayi et à Oyo -- pour l'accueil chaleureux et la coopération qui nous a permis de mener à bien notre mission. Nous étions également très bien accueillis dans tous les bureaux de vote par les membres de la commission électorale dans les circonscriptions locales et régionales.

Selon les témoignages des quatre observateurs de l'équipe IFES, les élections se sont déroulées dans une ambiance de calme et d'ordre. Nous n'avons pas constaté d'incidents ou d'autres difficultés susceptibles d'empêcher les électeurs d'exprimer librement leur choix. En vue de mieux servir le processus électoral au Congo, nous voudrions partager quelques observations qui pourraient être utiles pour un meilleur fonctionnement des élections :

1. Listes Electorales: Nous avons noté une absence de noms sur certaines listes électorales. A Pointe-Noire, par exemple, nous avons constaté qu'il existait une différence entre les listes préparées au niveau des bureaux de vote lors des dernières élections, et les listes fournies par les autorités du district (listes vérifiées au préalable sur ordinateur). Selon les membres de la commission de supervision des élections dans certains bureaux de vote, les noms de certains électeurs ayant déjà voté au cours des élections précédentes n'ont pas paru sur les listes du premier tour des élections présidentielles. Bien que ce problème ne se soit pas manifesté partout, il s'est tout de même reproduit dans plusieurs quartiers de Pointe Noire, tel que Tié-tié, par exemple.

Cette situation a été partiellement réglée : En effet, les présidents des centres de ces bureaux de vote ont décidé, de commun accord avec les commissions électorales, d'ajouter aux listes les noms des électeurs qui avaient déjà voté antérieurement. Ces personnes, munies des pièces d'identité requises, ont été autorisées à voter sans difficulté.

2. Cartes d'Identité: L'obligation pour chaque électeur de présenter sa carte d'identité a été rigoureusement mise en vigueur par rapport au scrutin précédent. Cette stricte observation de la loi a provoqué des vifs remous de la part des électeurs qui ne s'y étaient pas conformés. Sur le plan logistique, nous avons pu constater un certain retard dans les centres d'identification, retard dû à la forte demande des cartes par les citoyens au dernier moment. Dans les zones rurales, la situation difficile des transports a empêché certains électeurs d'obtenir leurs cartes d'identité.

3. Communiqués des Commissions Electorales: Les communiqués ont été diffusés de façon tardive dans certains cas. Le manque de moyens de transport a rendu la tâche largement plus difficile pour les commissions électorales de régler les problèmes qui ont surgi dans les bureaux de vote au courant de la journée.

4. Les Militaires: Les forces armées étaient présentes dans la majorité des bureaux de vote. Souvent armés, les militaires ont assisté et contribué au déroulement du scrutin pour veiller : au maintien de l'ordre, au contrôle des pièces d'identité des électeurs, à assister les membres de la commission électorale, par exemple dans le dépouillement du scrutin. Bien que les militaires aient joué un rôle constructif, nous souhaitons souligner que leur présence doit être autorisée par les présidents des bureaux de vote et que leur rôle doit rester strictement neutre dans l'opération électorale.

5. Autres Observations et Points Techniques: La compétence des membres de la commission des bureaux de vote et la manière par laquelle ils ont accompli leur tâche ont été remarquées par tous comme étant exceptionnelles. Nous avons constaté la présence des représentants des divers partis politiques dans chaque bureau de vote. Ils ont assuré l'intégrité et le bon déroulement du processus électoral. Aucune réclamation n'a été enregistré par ces derniers. Le matériel électoral était largement suffisant, nous n'avons pas constaté une pénurie de bulletins de vote. Mais certains éléments pourraient toujours être ajoutés, tels que les lampes (ou bougies) et les calculatrices.

Conclusion: De ce que nous avons constaté, nous estimons que ces élections se sont déroulées d'une manière libre et équitable. Ces observations préliminaires ont été faites la veille des élections, sans savoir le taux d'affluence ni les résultats au niveau national. Selon les impressions générales de notre équipe, une confiance croissante règne tant du côté des participants que des organisateurs. Ceci indique que le Congo continue sur la bonne voie des élections libres et démocratiques.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

APPENDIX B: BALLOTS (LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, ROUND 1)

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE

4è Circonscription

413 - 44



KORILA Fortuné-Bienvenu

BOUNGOU Ange

Union Républicaine pour le Progrès

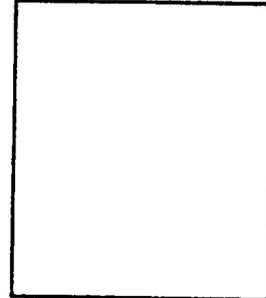
U.R.P.

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE

4è Circonscription

413 - 44



MBIKA Arsène

DIBONDO Jean Marie CHR

U.P.S.D.

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE

4è Circonscription

413-44



FOUTI-SOUNGOU Philomène

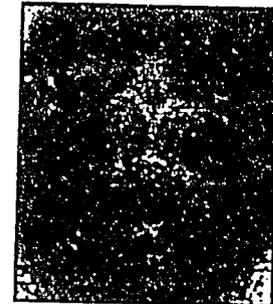
PANGOU-LEMBELLA

R.D.P.S.

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE TIE 4è Circonscription

413-44



LOUA-MABIKA née MBOYO
Angèle

ITONA-ITONA Victor

Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Développement

R.D.D.

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE

4e Circonscription

413-44



SENGOMONA Ferdinand

SAYA Norbert

Parti Congolais du Travail

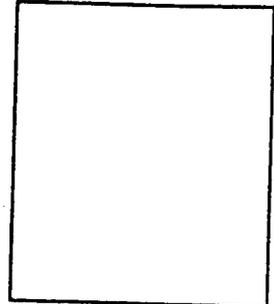
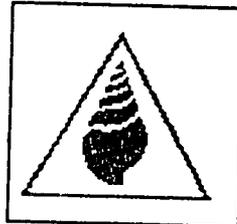
P.C.T.

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE

4e Circonscription

413-44



SAMBA Joseph

MISSIDINENO Georges

R.N.D.P.

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE - 4e Circonscription

413 - 44



MISSAMOU Jean-Félix

MALONGA Almé-Clotaire

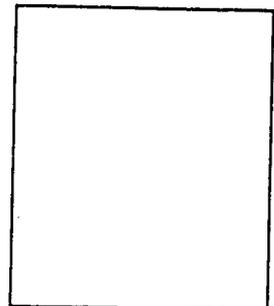
F.R.A.P.P.

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE

3e Circonscription

413-43



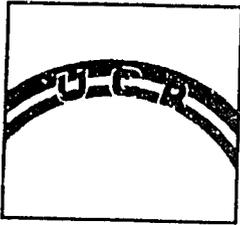
LOUFOUA-MAPATA Jean Jacques

MOUKALA Pierre

U.D.C.

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE 4è Circonscription
413-44



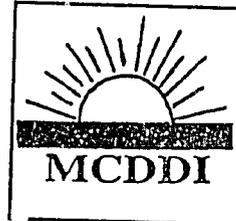
OUNABAKIDI Michel

MAMBOUANA Gaston

U.C.R.

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE — 4e Circonscription
413 - 44



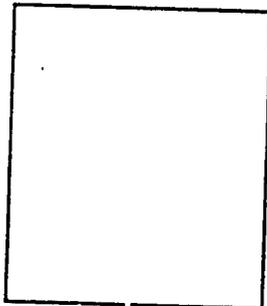
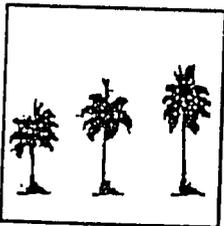
PETHAS Théodore

MABANZA Gilbert

MCDDI

Elections Législatives — 1er tour

TIE-TIE
4^e CIRCONSCRIPTION
413- 44



PANDZOU Célestin

LIPANDA Guillaume

Union Panafricaine pour
la Démocratie Sociale

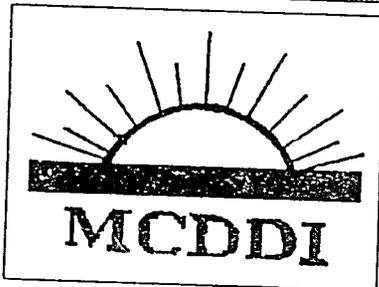
U.P.A.D.S.

IFES Observers' Report
on Elections in Congo

APPENDIX C: BALLOTS (PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ROUND 1)

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

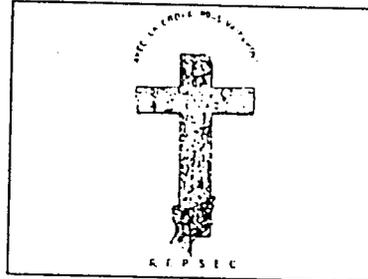
M.C.D.D.I.



Bernard KOLELAS

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

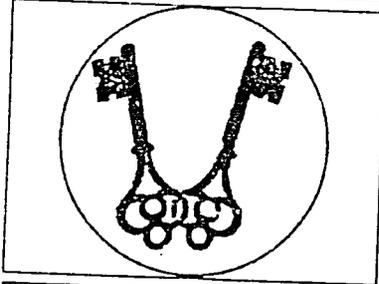
R.D.P.S.E.C.



Angèle BANDO

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

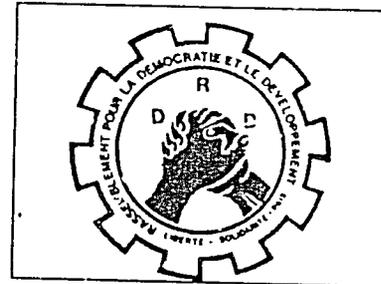
U. P.



Jean Martin MBEMBA

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

R. D. D.



Jacques-Joachim YHOMBY - OPANGO

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

INDEPENDANT



Paul .. AYA

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

U. R. N.



Gabriel BOKILO

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

U. R. P.



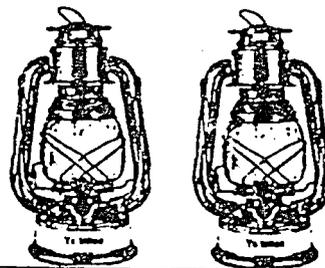
Le Parti de l'avenir



Alphonse SOUHLATY POATY

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

INDEPENDANT



André MILONGO

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

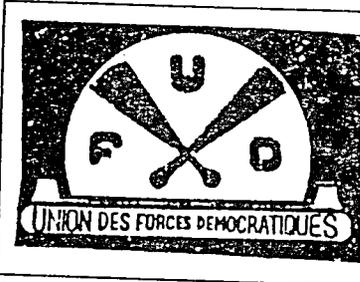
U.P.A.D.S.



Pascal LISSOUBA

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

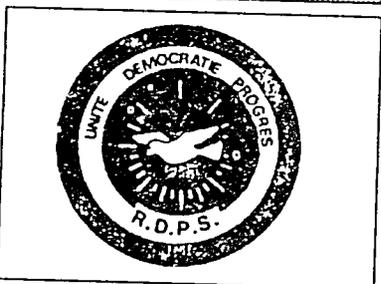
U. F. D.



David Charles GANA O

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

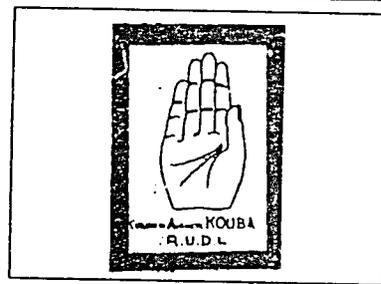
R. D. P. S.



Jean-Pierre THYSTERE - TCHICAYA

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

R. U. D. L.



Corentin Auguste KOUBA

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

U. P. D. P.



Auguste - Célestin GONGARAD-NKOUA

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

P. C. T.



Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

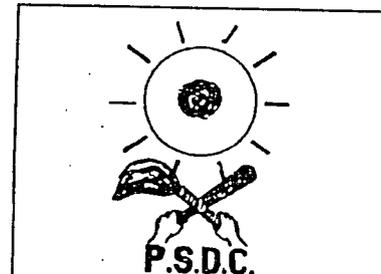
AMICALE



Antoine MAKANGOU-LOUKAMY

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 1^{ER} TOUR

P. S. D. C.



Clément MIERASSA

APPENDIX D: BALLOTS (PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ROUND 2)

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 2^{ème} TOUR — PBLXK

M.C.D.D.I.



Bernard KOLELAS

ELECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES — 2^{ème} TOUR — PBLXK

U.P.A.D.S.



Pascal LISSOUBA

APPENDIX E.: INSTRUCTIONS TO POLLWORKERS (PRIOR TO
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, ROUND 2)

NOTE D'INSTRUCTION
A L'ATTENTION DES MEMBRES DES
BUREAUX DE VOTE.-

-o-o-o-o-o-

1)- INSTRUCTIONS RELATIVES AUX LISTES ELECTORALES :

* Compte-tenu de nombreuses omissions constatées dans les listes électorales révisées dernièrement, les assesseurs devront tenir compte des listes complémentaires ouvertes dans chaque bureau de vote, depuis les législatives.

* Les anciennes listes qui accompagnaient les nouvelles, sont purement retirées.

2)- INSTRUCTIONS RELATIVES A LA TENUE DES BUREAUX DE VOTE :

* Les bureaux de vote sont ouverts à 5 heures du matin et sont fermés à 19 heures.

* La fermeture peut être retardée d'au plus 30 à 60 mn lorsque les électeurs se trouvent dans les rangs.

* Avant l'ouverture du scrutin, le Président du Bureau de Vote procède aux opérations suivantes :

- Vérification de nombre de bulletins de vote (égal au moins à celui des électeurs ;

- Ouverture de l'urne pour constater que celle-ci ne contient, ni bulletin, ni enveloppe.

* Le Bureau de Vote a le pouvoir de police. Ce pouvoir est exercé par le Président.

* Il veille à la tranquillité et à la sécurité des Bureaux de Vote, tant à l'extérieur qu'à ses abords immédiats.

* Il veille au bon déroulement des opérations électorales.

* Il interdit l'accès dans la salle de vote aux électeurs porteurs d'une arme quelconque.

* Il peut faire expulser du local du vote, tout électeur, qui troublerait l'ordre ou retarderait les opérations.

* Le Bureau délibère sur les difficultés qui s'élèvent sur les opérations électorales, les décisions sont motivées et prises à la majorité.

* En cas de partage de voix, celle du Président est prépondérante.

N.B.- : Les délégués des Partis qui siègent en qualité d'observateur, n'ont aucun droit d'influencer, ni de contester une décision motivée du Bureau, car cela constituerait un délit d'entrave.

* Cas d'absence : un membre de bureau de vote, de refus ou d'empêchement, le Président du Bureau de Vote doit immédiatement saisir la COLOSEL qui prendra toute décision relative au remplacement.

* Le Bureau de Vote par l'intermédiaire du Secrétaire, dresse le procès-verbal, en y mentionnant :

- l'heure d'ouverture et de fermeture du scrutin ;
- le remplacement éventuel des assesseurs ;
- les noms et prénoms des délégués des Partis Politiques, des scrutateurs, dont le nombre est limité à quatre(4) ;
- l'expulsion d'un électeur qui troublerait l'ordre.
- tous les événements vécus au cours du vote, les décisions et les pièces qui s'y rapportent, les résultats du scrutin et les observations.

3)- INSTRUCTIONS RELATIVES AU DEPOUILLEMENT :

Après la fermeture du scrutin, le Président du Bureau de Vote ouvre l'urne et renverse le contenu(enveloppes) sur une table.

* Les membres de bureau comptent les enveloppes et les bulletins sans enveloppe déposés dans l'urne.

* Le bureau classe les enveloppes par paquet de 100. Il en fait de même pour les bulletins sans enveloppes.

* Le bureau arrête ensuite le nombre des votants qui doit être égal au total des emprunts portés sur la liste d'émargement.

* Lecture et pointage des bulletins par scrutateur. Le scrutateur chargé d'annoncer les votes le fait à haute voix.

* Si une enveloppe contient deux(2) ou plusieurs bulletins d'un même candidat, le vote est valable et compte pour une voix seulement. Ces bulletins sont agrafés ensemble.

4)- INSTRUCTIONS RELATIVES AUX BULLETINS NULS :

Sont nuls :

- les bulletins sans enveloppes ou les enveloppes sans bulletins ;
- les bulletins trouvés dans les enveloppes, portant les mentions injurieuses pour les candidats ou pour les tiers ;
- les bulletins entièrement ou partiellement barrés ;
- les bulletins imprimés différents de ceux régulièrement autorisés ;
- les bulletins sur lesquels, le votant a ajouté un(1) ou plusieurs candidats ;
- les bulletins de différents candidats trouvés dans une seule enveloppe.

5)- LES SCRUTATEURS :

* Le dépouillement a lieu après la clôture du scrutin.

* Le dépouillement des votes se fait en présence :

- des délégués des Partis ;
- des électeurs.

Le dépouillement est opéré par des scrutateurs désignés par le Président du Bureau de Vote.

* Ils sont choisis parmi les électeurs présents dans la salle de vote, au moment du dépouillement.

* Le nombre de scrutateurs est fixé à quatre(4). Aucun membre de bureau de vote, ni délégué de Parti ne peut être scrutateur.

6)- INSTRUCTIONS RELATIVES A LA PUBLICATION DES RESULTATS :

Après le dépouillement, le Président du Bureau de Vote annonce immédiatement à haute voix, les résultats constatés devant les électeurs présents et dans la salle où se sont déroulées les élections.

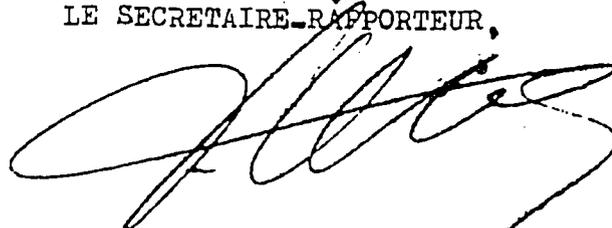
* Les indications ci-après doivent être lues:

- 1/- Nombre d'électeurs inscrits ;
- 2/- Nombre de votants ;
- 3/- Nombre de suffrages exprimés ;
- 4/- Nombre de bulletins nuls ou blancs ;
- 5/- Nombre de voix recueillies par chaque candidat.

* Ensuite, il appartient au Président de Bureau de Vote, de transmettre les résultats à la COLOSEL./-

Fait à NKayi, le 13 Août 1992

P/LA COLOSEL,
LE SECRETAIRE-RAPPORTEUR,



Daniel OUKOUNGULA--

APPENDIX F: INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING "JOURNEE VILLE MORTE"

PREFECTURE DE LA BOUENZA

COMMUNE DE NKAYI

C A B I N E T

N° 022 /PREF.B/CNK/CAB. ~~14~~

REPUBLIQUE DU CONGO
Unité-Travail-Progrès

/ 8 O T E - C I R C U L A I R E

-----oOo-----

A l'occasion du 2^e Tour des élections présidentielles, la journée du 16 Août 1992 est déclarée " Journée Ville Morte ".

A cet effet, les marchés, les boutiques ainsi que les buvettes et bar dancings restaurants fermés toute la journée du 16 Août 1992.

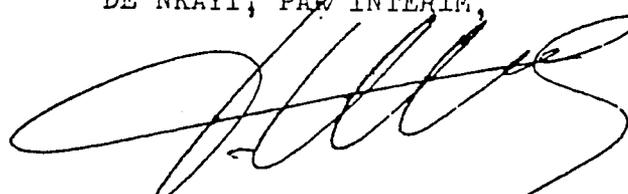
Par la même occasion, il importe de rappeler aux Chefs des Partis Politiques que la campagne électorale sera close sur toute l'étendue de la Commune de Nkayi le Vendredi 14 Août 1992 à 24 heures.

Les Services de Sécurité sont chargés chacun en ce qui le concerne de l'application de la présente Note-Circulaire qui ne doit souffrir d'aucun désobéissance./-

(LARGE DIFFUSION)

Fait à Nkayi, le 13 Août 1992

L'ADMINISTRATEUR-MAIRE DE LA VILLE
DE NKAYI, PAR INTERIM,



Daniel OUKOUNGUIL A.-

APPENDIX G: ELECTION OBSERVERS' REPORT FORM

RAPPORT D'OBSERVATION ELECTORALE

Congo, 2è Tour des Elections Présidentielles, 16 Août 1992

- LOCALISATION DU BUREAU (Région - Commune).....
- HEURE ARRIVEE AU BUREAU.....HEURE DEPART.....
- NOMBRE D'ELECTEURS EN LIGNE POUR VOTER.....
- LE PERSONNEL DU BUREAU EST-IL COMPLET ? OUI..... NON.....
- Y A-T-IL DES DELEGUES DE PARTIS ? OUI..... NON.....
- SI OUI, COMBIEN DE PARTIS SONT REPRESENTES ?.....
- SONT-ILS SATISFAITS DU DEROULEMENT DU SCRUTIN JUSQU'ICI ?
- OUI..... NON.....
- HEURE D'OUVERTURE DU BUREAU.....
- Y A-T-IL DES MILITAIRES OU GENDARMES PRES DU BUREAU ?.....
- Y A-T-IL DES MILITAIRES A L'INTERIEUR DU BUREAU ?.....
- L'ELECTEUR PRESENT-IL SA CARTE D'ELECTEUR AUX OFFICIERS
D'ELECTION ? OUI..... NON.....
- LES BULLETINS DE VOTE SONT-ILS :
- DISPONIBLES POUR TOUS LES CANDIDATS ? OUI..... NON.....
 - DISPOSES EN PILES DE HAUTEUR EGALE ? OUI..... NON.....
- LA COLLECTION DES BULLETINS ET DE L'ENVELOPPE EST FAITE :
- PAR L'ELECTEUR LUI-MEME ?.....
 - PAR UN OFFICIER D'ELECTION ?.....
- ISOLOIR DISPOSE DE FACON A PRESERVER LE SECRET DU VOTE ?
- OUI..... NON.....

L'ELECTEUR VOIT-IL SON POUCE TREMPE DANS L'ENCRE INDELEMBLE APRES AVOIR VOTE ?

OUI..... NON.....

INTERVALLE MOYEN ENTRE L'IDENTIFICATION DE L'ELECTEUR ET SA SORTIE DU BUREAU DE VOTE :

- MOINS DE 2 MINUTES.....
- DE 2 A 5 MINUTES.....
- PLUS DE 5 MINUTES.....

COMBIEN DE PERSONNES

- SE SONT VU REFUSER LE DROIT DE VOTER ?.....
- ONT VOTE SUR PRESENTATION D'UN TITRE DE MISSION ?.....

QUE FAIT L'ELECTEUR DES BULLETINS DE VOTE INUTILISES ?

- LES EMPORTE AVEC LUI HORS DU BUREAU.....
- LES DEPOSE DANS UNE CORBEILLE : FERMEE..... OUVERTE.....

COMPETENCE GENERALE DES OFFICIERS D'ELECTION : - ELEVEE.....

- BONNE.....

- MEDIOCRE.....

OBSERVATIONS SUPPLEMENTAIRES :

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....