



# Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti

Fighting for the Human Rights of Haiti's Poor.

For Immediate Release:  
November 29, 2010

Contact:

**Nicole Phillips**, Esq., Staff Attorney, Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti  
Nicole@ijdh.org, +509 3419 0888 (in Port au Prince), 510-715-2855 (U.S.)

**Brian Concannon Jr.**, Esq., Director, Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti  
Brian@ijdh.org, 617-652-0876 (US), 541-263-0029 (US cell)

## **Haiti Needs New, Credible Elections Run By A New, Credible Electoral Council**

The Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH) in collaboration with its partners had six teams of unofficial election observers at the polls in Haiti on November 28. The teams covered approximately 50 voting centers throughout Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas, as well as Jacmel and Gros Morne.

The teams observed the following electoral flaws:

- In nearly every location, the teams observed voters unable to vote because their names were missing from the registration lists.
- We observed hundreds of voters standing in line for several hours because polling stations opened late or ballots had not yet arrived hours after the polls had opened.
- We interviewed dozens of voters who complained that they were sent to multiple voting locations and still could not find their names on any registration lists.
- Several locations also reported ballot stuffing in the form of pre-marked ballots for the INITE party or individuals using multiple identity cards to cast several ballots for INITE candidates.
- Polling station hours were inconsistent. In some areas, polls were closed as early as 9:43 am, while in other areas, polls were late to open due to lack of electricity, faulty ballots, or no ballots at all, causing huge lines and massive delays.

Yesterday's failed elections in Haiti are not a surprise – they are consistent with the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP)'s history throughout the electoral process. Haiti has been on the course of undemocratic elections since the CEP was handpicked by President Préval in October 2009, in violation of Constitutional requirements for an independent Council. In November 2009, the CEP excluded 15 political parties from the elections, including Haiti's most popular party *Fanmi Lavalas*. The CEP's failure to update voter registration lists and mishandling of the re-registration of displaced people in their new locations resulted today in chaos and frustration when voters could not find their names on the electoral lists, but did see the names of deceased neighbors and family members. Over 100,000 voters could not vote because they did not receive their government-issued identity cards in time.

Despite persistent warnings from human rights groups, think-tanks and members of the U.S. Congress, the international community invested \$29 million in these undemocratic elections. During the months and weeks preceding elections, as well as the election day itself, members of the international community continued to turn a blind eye to blatant irregularities. Even by the afternoon, when it was clear that a significant percentage of voters who had visited the polls were unable to vote, MINUSTAH's head, Edmond Mulet, claimed there

were only “small administrative problems,” while at the same time calling for official electoral results to be respected. Validating today’s vote in 96 percent of polling stations, CEP President Gaillot Dessainvil described the elections as “successful” and that the CEP was “comfortable with the vote.”

IJDH/BAI urges the international community to finally listen to Haitian voters and declare these elections illegitimate. The International Community should not spend another penny for the current CEP, or any government resulting from an election run by this CEP. New, credible elections should be organized immediately, by a new, credible CEP.