

BURUNDI PARLIAMENTARY AND MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS - 29TH JUNE 2015:

KENYA EMBASSY OBSERVATION REPORT

Regions where observation took place:

- 1) Bujumbura
- 2) Ngozi, Gitega and Muramvya

BUJUMBURA

Generally in Bujumbura the voter turnout was low attributed to security concerns that led to CENI merging some polling centers and hence a confusion on the part of some voters. In some centers that were visited like Ngangara and Gihosha, several cards could be seen lying on the table awaiting voters to collect the same.

Counting was equally observed at AP Primaire and Jardin public and it went on well with opposition political parties such as Amizero Y'A barundi being voted despite the boycott declaration. There were also many ballot papers that were not filled and for some there were not counted because of many errors.

NGOZI, GITEGA, MURAMVYA

Voting exercise commenced early with many voters being women. The turnout was high in the three places. The exercise also closed on time and the team observed the counting in which the ruling party CNDD - FDD was in the lead.

OBSERVATIONS

There was tight security throughout the polling centers and as such the voting process especially outside Bujumbura was calm and peaceful. It was noted that there was not sufficient voter education because it appears most voters were filling the ballot papers like what they did in 2010. Also on the part of CENI staff the capacity was wanting, in the sense that they required sufficient training to manage the exercise.

CONCLUSION

There is need for CENI to work on the gray areas to improve on the remaining presidential elections.

There is urgent need of voter education to avoid many wasted ballot votes.

The opposition political parties need to be encouraged to participate in the remaining elections as there is clear indication that their supporters also voted.

The international community needs to take note of the turnout particularly in the rural areas and engage accordingly.

On the balance of things; the conditions for the holding of elections were met in the rural areas. In Bujumbura the conditions for the voters to freely exercise their democratic rights were absent.

Signed.

Prof. Ken Vithier

