

ELECTION REPORT ☆

General and Regional Elections in Guyana

Final Report

Sept. 1, 2025

Guyana

THE
CARTER CENTER



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Map of Guyana



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| Foreword

I was pleased to return to Guyana to observe the Sept. 1, 2025, general and regional elections. These were the sixth national elections The Carter Center has observed in Guyana—the most we’ve observed in any country. Our long-term engagement is a testament to the Center’s enduring commitment to Guyana.

Guyana has reached yet another important turning point. The 2025 elections shifted the political landscape in new ways and underscored the need for electoral and constitutional reforms to address Guyana’s winner-take-all electoral system and ensure it represents all citizens.

Guyana’s March 2020 elections presented the most serious challenge to democracy the country has experienced since the watershed elections of 1992. The 2020 elections were preceded by two years of litigation over a no-confidence motion that removed the government. Though the 2020 voting process was orderly on election day, it was derailed during the tabulation stage, when it abruptly stopped, and fraudulent results were announced. After a series of court rulings and regional intervention from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), a national recount was implemented, followed by the declaration of a credible result five months later. The country completed a difficult political transition, but the 2020 electoral process was deeply divisive and another painful setback to long-needed reconciliation.

In response to an invitation from the government of Guyana to observe national elections, The Carter Center deployed a limited international election observation mission in June, starting with a small core team that focused on assessing electoral preparations and the

campaign period.¹ The Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM), which managed the process, completed an important overhaul to tabulation procedures consistent with legislative reforms passed in 2022, but the commission was plagued by longstanding polarization.

Questions about the size of the voter list were a main source of concern for opposition parties and others. The Carter Center team reported that the final phase of the electoral campaign was spirited and largely peaceful. The elections featured several new political parties that brought fresh dynamics and issues to the campaign. The Carter Center released a preelection statement on Aug. 19, 2025, covering key issues and noting concerns about infringements on the right to political participation faced by some political candidates.

For election day, the Center deployed a team of 43 international observers from 21 countries across all 10 regions of Guyana. These observers visited 17% of polling places on election day and observed postelection processes at regional offices through the tabulation phase.

On Sept. 6, 2025, GECOM announced the final results: The incumbent People’s Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) was reelected, with an expanded parliamentary majority. A new leading opposition party, We Invest in Nationhood (WIN), emerged, led by a candidate under U.S. sanctions. The results signaled the fracture of the longstanding opposition coalition led by the People’s National Congress Reform (PNCR) and a substantial loss of support. Also noteworthy, turnout declined, with 5% fewer Guyanese voting than in the 2020 elections, despite an increase in the

¹ The mission was “limited” because no long-term observers were deployed.

population. This development deserves further examination and reflection.

Several key issues negatively impacted public confidence in the 2025 elections, including questions around campaign finance and spending. With windfall oil revenues, it is imperative that Guyana modernize its campaign finance laws and regulations to draw a clearer line between the incumbent party and state expenditures and bring more transparency to campaign donations so the public can better understand the role of monied interests in politics. Questions about the voter registry also continued to dominate political discourse. To help address the long-standing issues connected to the integrity and accuracy of the voter registry, The Carter Center recommends an independent audit of the registry well in advance of the next elections to resolve any questions. The politically divided composition of GECOM remains a significant challenge to elections in Guyana.

Guyana stands at a critical juncture and faces an uncertain future. With the growing challenges to democracy around the world, Guyana's 2025 elections were an important demonstration of its democratic

resilience. Nevertheless, its citizens must have confidence in the fairness and integrity of elections and institutions – without trust, democracy cannot endure.

This report provides the Carter Center's observations and key findings around the 2025 elections. Grounded in a spirit of support and cooperation, the report includes recommendations to address key issues that could help strengthen Guyana's democracy and build public trust so the country can become an example for others. With constitutional reform on the agenda, Guyana's citizens and leaders have an important opportunity to build a more inclusive and accountable democracy. It is critically important for the future of the country that they seize this opportunity.



Jason Carter
Chair, Board of Trustees

Executive Summary

Guyana's 2025 elections followed the deeply traumatic 2020 polls, which were marked by multiple attempts to subvert the will of the electorate. Intervention by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and a national recount conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic ultimately produced a credible outcome five months after election day. These events deepened fractures among the political elite while Guyana had begun to experience a major economic windfall from offshore oil discoveries that tripled the national budget after 2021 and fueled average annual GDP growth of approximately 47%. As a result, the 2025 elections were conducted in an environment of entrenched political divisions and low public trust in political parties and institutions.

In response to the 2020 elections, Guyana in 2022 amended the legal and electoral framework governing general and regional elections. These reforms addressed several recommendations from international observers, including measures to improve the transparency of the vote tabulation process and significant changes to voter registration procedures.

In late June 2025, a four-person Carter Center core team arrived in Guyana following an invitation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. They were later joined by a larger team led by Jason Carter, chairperson of the Carter Center Board of Trustees and grandson of the late U.S. President Jimmy Carter. On election day, 47 observers from 21 countries visited 234 polling stations across Guyana's 10 regions to observe voting and counting. The Carter Center also observed tabulation at all 17 tabulation centers across the country. The Center's team departed Guyana in late September 2025.

These were the sixth elections that The Carter Center has observed in Guyana. The Center congratulated the

people of Guyana for the calm and quiet dignity with which they exercised their right to choose their leaders on election day. The 2025 election was the first since the traumatic experiences of 2020, and the nation faced important choices about its future and the use of its newfound economic wealth.

The preelection period was marked by concerns among some Guyanese stakeholders regarding the integrity of the voter list, as well as calls for the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) to improve public communications and strengthen engagement with political parties. While the campaign was at times fractious, the Guyanese people showed that they can have lively rallies and impassioned debate while maintaining a peaceful election environment.

The Carter Center raised concerns about the use of state resources and noted that the ruling party appeared to benefit from biased state media coverage, undermining equitable treatment of candidates. Only four of the six political parties contesting the elections signed a political party code of conduct. While campaigning was generally peaceful, several issues arose that risked undermining political participation, including the overcompliance of local banks with U.S. sanctions that affected one political party. In addition, campaign finance lacked transparency.

On election day, all polling stations visited by Carter Center observers opened on time in a calm atmosphere, with some voters queued in long lines to cast their votes. Carter Center observers rated the conduct of procedures positively at every station visited, with no significant irregularities reported. Overall, the legislative changes made to the tabulation process were positive and contributed to a more efficient and transparent tabulation process that better ensures that the announced results reflect the will of the people as expressed on election day.

The ruling People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) secured reelection with 55% of the vote, expanding its parliamentary majority to 36 seats. The election produced a significant political realignment, with newcomer We Invest in Nationhood (WIN) emerging as the official opposition with 25% of the vote and 16 seats, while A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) saw its support collapse to 12 seats and the Alliance for Change (AFC) lost all parliamentary representation for the first time in nearly two decades. Fewer voters turned out in 2025, down 15% from 2020, with the sharpest drops in traditionally opposition-leaning districts, suggesting voter disengagement amid opposition fragmentation.

The 2025 elections built positively on recommendations from past elections, but more needs to be done to enhance Guyana's democracy, ensure its representativeness, and increase its ability to serve all its people. The enormous economic gains from the country's oil boom offer both promise and peril. It is critical for the next National Assembly to take up further constitutional and legal reforms to protect and strengthen Guyana's democracy and elections.

Below are key findings related to various aspects of the electoral and political process, which are discussed in greater detail later in the report. Overall conclusions and recommendations can be found at the end of the report.

Election Management Body

International standards indicate that an independent and impartial election management body is necessary for genuinely democratic elections. A transparent, accountable, and professional body, able to function independently from any undue influence, is key to providing an effective means of ensuring that other international obligations related to the democratic process can be met. The structure of GECOM, however, replicates political divisions, excludes new parties, and has proved over time to inhibit the effective and transparent administration of elections. The Carter Center reiterates a prior and longstanding recommendation: Guyana should reform GECOM's structure to increase its independence, effectiveness, and professionalism.

Electoral System

At its core, any electoral system should serve as a mechanism for transforming the collective will of the people into a government that genuinely represents their interests, values, and aspirations. The legitimacy of a democracy depends on how effectively its electoral processes capture and reflect the voice of the electorate. Guyana's electoral system interacts with a historical pattern of ethnic voting for its two major political parties contributing to highly polarized elections, although this may have attenuated over time with demographic changes in the population. Guyana's current electoral system, determined during negotiations following a constitutional crisis, is a particularly complex mixed system based partially on proportional representation, with voters casting ballots for parties and not individual candidates. Guyana's 65-member parliament is composed of 40 members elected from a single national constituency and 25 members from "geographical constituencies" that are spread across Guyana's 10 regions according to legislation from 2001.² All seats are allocated according to a proportion of votes each party receives using the Hare quota.³ The electoral system's complexity makes it particularly challenging to translate to the ballot paper, ultimately undermining citizen choice at the ballot box and ultimately undermining the representativeness of government. The electoral system also relies heavily on political parties that struggle to accurately represent Guyana's people and contributes to a winner-takes-all government in operation. The Carter Center recommends consideration of reform of the electoral system that would clarify and streamline the electoral system and basis of representation.

Boundary Delimitation

Electoral constituency boundaries were last delimited in 2001. Although censuses were conducted in 2012 and again in 2022, boundaries have not been adjusted. A preliminary report from the 2022 census was released Jan. 12, 2026, and made it clear that Guyana's population distribution has changed in the 24 years since boundaries were last drawn. The Carter Center recommends that a constitutional review process consider carefully Guyana's electoral system and

² Please see the boundary delimitation section of this report for additional discussion. RoPA states that "Guyana shall be divided into polling districts. ... Provided that no polling district shall extend across the boundary of any region" (RoPA 6. (1)) and that "Guyana shall be divided in ten geographical constituencies for the purpose of electing members of the National Assembly from each geographical constituency" (RoPA 11A. (2)).

³ Elections for the regional democratic councils, conducted on a separate ballot, also use the Hare quota, in a much more straightforward application of the principle of proportional representation.

corresponding methods of delimiting boundaries to ensure that equal suffrage is upheld.

Campaign Finance

Guyana’s legal framework lacks legislation on party and campaign finance beyond ceilings for election expenditure and a simple requirement that declarations of electoral expenses be submitted to GECOM after the election. The absence of campaign finance law allows for potentially significant inequalities between political parties as well as a lack of transparency about the sources and uses of campaign funding, obscuring the role that monied interests play in Guyana’s politics and leading to capture of the democratic process. Guyana also lacks effective guardrails on the use of state resources for campaigning by the incumbent, a perennial problem that now is magnified by the explosive growth in public finances, raising concerns about a level playing field. If unchecked, this can lead to an erosion of legitimacy in political representation. Enacting a modern campaign finance law and regulations would provide a sufficient framework for the accounting and reporting of campaign finances, set reasonable limits on campaign contributions and expenses, and establish a structure for effective monitoring and enforcement.

Political Participation of Marginalized Groups Women

International standards for democratic elections indicate that states are obligated to take all appropriate measures, including temporary special measures, to eliminate discrimination against women in political and public life. In Guyana, however, there are no gender quotas or other special temporary measures in place to foster greater political participation by women. The constitution envisions an electoral system that includes women in parliament in numbers “reflective of their proportion among the electorate.” This has not been translated coherently into legislation, as the Representation of the People Act requires that political parties include women in their lists of nominees but does not require that the parties allocate any seats to women.

Indigenous People

International law holds that states must ensure the principle of equal suffrage and take appropriate measures to ensure

the participation of marginalized groups in public affairs. Amerindians make up approximately 10% of Guyana’s population, living in approximately 200 villages and communities across the country.⁴ Indigenous communities in Guyana have historically been marginalized, both in terms of their geographic isolation and their limited political representation. Some legal framework changes made before the elections sought to increase inclusivity, including making it easier for the Indigenous leaders or village chiefs, the *toshao*s, to help people secure birth certificates and accepting information from them regarding deaths. Although no official figures are available, The Carter Center was informed that a portion of the adult Indigenous population remains unregistered to vote, primarily because of the lack of birth certificates, which prevents their inclusion on the voter list. In some villages, voter education remains limited, mostly because of the limited outreach capacity of the radio or broadcasters.

LGBTI Community

International law protects citizens from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. A history of discrimination and restrictive legislation in Guyana has limited the role of the LGBTI community in public life, including individuals’ participation in elections as candidates, political party officials, and election workers. Homosexuality is a criminal offense in Guyana. The Carter Center condemns Guyana’s anti-gay legislation and is concerned that homophobic speech prevents members of the LGBTI community from meaningful and open participation in the political life of the country.

People With Disabilities

Although inclusive elections require accessible polling stations and measures to protect the secrecy of the vote for persons with disabilities, these standards were not fully upheld in Guyana’s 2025 elections. Despite legal obligations under the Persons with Disabilities Act and the availability of voting options such as assisted or proxy voting, most polling stations remained inaccessible physically and lacked accommodations like ramps or tactile aids, undermining independent and secret voting. While some positive steps were taken—including sensitivity training for polling staff, voter education initiatives, collaboration with disability organizations, and the inclusion of disability issues in party

⁴ 10.5% of Guyana’s population was Amerindian according to the 2012 census. Notably, the preliminary census report from 2022 that was released in January of 2026 does not include ethnic data.

manifestos—these efforts did not fully compensate for the failure to implement practical accessibility measures previously used in past elections, revealing a gap between legal commitments and actual electoral practice.

Prisoners

Ensuring universal suffrage and the enjoyment of the fundamental right to vote is essential to guarantee credible democratic elections. Prisoners who are on remand and prisoners serving sentences for some types of convictions are entitled to vote. In practice, though, all prisoners in Guyana have been deprived of their voting rights, as there are no procedures in place to ensure they have an opportunity to vote.

The Media

The Carter Center mission did not conduct systematic media monitoring. Nevertheless, it noted reports of state media coverage mostly favoring the ruling party, including its social media platforms. All opposition parties expressed a lack of confidence in state-owned media, alleging limited or biased coverage of their campaign activities and claiming that their requests for coverage often were rejected. At the same time, some representatives of state media reported challenges in establishing contact and maintaining communication with opposition parties. The Center was informed by the National Communication Network TV that only the PPP/C placed paid advertisements.

Civil Society and Citizen Observation

An important deficiency in Guyana’s democracy is an overall weak civil society, which is evident in citizen election observation. While in past elections there have been civil society efforts to form nonpartisan democracy and governance groups that would include citizen election observation among their activities, none were active around these elections. While the business community and some professional organizations accredited citizen observers, Carter Center observers did not encounter nonpartisan domestic observers during polling, counting, or tabulation. Civil society organizations that seek to protect and advance the rights of marginalized communities—such as the Amerindian community, people with disabilities, and the LGBTI community—lacked resources and operated at times under fear of government retaliation.

Tabulation

The tabulation of results in Guyana’s 2025 elections took place in the context of the deeply contested 2020 process, which eroded public trust and prompted legal and procedural reforms aimed at decentralization and greater transparency. Overall, the post-2020 reforms were positive, contributing to a more efficient and transparent tabulation process that better ensured results reflected the will of the electorate.

Carter Center observers found that the tabulation process in 2025 was conducted in a reasonable or very good manner across all 17 of the tabulation centers, with increased transparency through the public posting of Statements of Poll (SoPs) and the timely uploading of these to GECOM’s website. While new procedures—particularly the requirement to upload all SoPs before tabulation—caused delays, the system functioned efficiently with few technical issues and allowed close public and observer scrutiny. Party agents raised objections in some of the tabulation centers, and APNU’s audit and recount requests led to transparent recounts in Regions 4 and 5, conducted with party agents and international observers present and completed without major incident. Despite delays and postelection disputes, the 2025 tabulation process marked a significant improvement over the 2020 electoral process, strengthening confidence in the official electoral results.

Electoral Dispute Resolution

Effective, impartial, and timely remedies to electoral disputes are essential to protecting electoral integrity and maintaining public confidence. The judiciary, composed of the High Court, Court of Appeal, and final appellate Caribbean Court of Justice, has exclusive jurisdiction over election result disputes, while preelection challenges are limited to appeals on candidate lists or constitutional grounds. Guyanese law is generous and gives broad legal standing in postelection cases. While deadlines are in place related to filing cases, no specific deadlines are established for the High Court to consider election petitions, affecting the international human right to legal remedy. Although several important cases were filed in the preelection period, including those challenging prohibitions against independent candidates as well as ballot access, none received substantive consideration. Some postelection complaints were submitted via letter to GECOM, but no legal

complaints were ultimately filed to object to the election results.

Constitutional and Electoral Reform

The Center welcomed the establishment of the Constitutional Reform Commission (CRC) in 2024 and urges the new parliament and government to ensure that the commission is fully supported in undertaking its mandate. It is essential that all parliamentary parties are engaged in and represented throughout the constitutional reform process so that the work of the CRC is inclusive, transparent, and timely.

The Center further recommends that the CRC develop and implement a nationwide review process that integrates civic education and participatory dialogue, enabling Guyanese from all regions and communities to contribute to discussions on constitutional priorities and potential reforms. It is critically important that constitutional amendments are finalized with sufficient time to allow for subsequent adjustments to the electoral legal framework and to ensure that new provisions can be effectively implemented before the next general and regional elections.

A successful constitutional reform effort must be grounded in transparency, broad political participation, and meaningful engagement with the public.

Conclusion

Guyana's 2025 elections were held in the shadow of the deeply contested 2020 polls, which undermined public trust and exposed weaknesses in the electoral system. Since then, Guyana has experienced dramatic economic growth

driven by offshore oil discoveries, heightening political stakes amid entrenched polarization. Legal and electoral reforms adopted in 2022—particularly to improve voter registration and tabulation transparency—addressed some international recommendations.

The Carter Center observed the 2025 elections and found election day procedures to be calm, orderly, and well administered, with no significant irregularities. The revised tabulation process was more transparent and verifiable than in 2020, contributing to greater confidence in the announced results. However, the polarization of GECOM and size of the voter list relative to population estimates available at the time continued to undermine confidence.

The 2025 elections resulted in the reelection of the PPP/C with an expanded parliamentary majority. In addition, they produced a major political realignment, as a new party became the official opposition while traditional opposition forces weakened amid declining voter turnout. Despite improvements, significant challenges remain, including concerns over GECOM's independence, the complexity and representativeness of the electoral system, outdated constituency boundaries, weak campaign finance regulation, misuse of state resources magnifying incumbent advantage, unequal media access, limited civil society engagement, and barriers to political participation for marginalized groups.

Guyana's rapid economic transformation presents both opportunity and risk, underscoring the need for inclusive constitutional and electoral reforms to strengthen democratic institutions ahead of future elections.

| The Carter Center in Guyana

The Carter Center has worked in Guyana since 1992 to help strengthen democracy, support civil society, encourage sustainable development, and reinforce rule of law. The Carter Center has extensive election observation expertise, having deployed more than 125 election observation missions globally, including in Guyana in 1992, 2001, 2006, 2015, and 2020. The Center first became involved in Guyana prior to the critical transitional elections of 1992, which were the first in 28 years to be internationally monitored.

In addition to work on elections, The Carter Center has conducted a range of activities in Guyana, including helping Guyanese articulate a comprehensive vision and development strategy; supporting civil society groups working to advance the status of women, youth, and

Amerindians; assisting judicial system reform programs in partnership with the High Court, the chief justice, the Guyana Bar Association, and the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers; and conflict resolution efforts in support of initiatives for peace and political dialogue.

The Center supported capacity building for government, industry, and civil society stakeholders to comply with the requirements of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), to identify legislative and regulatory changes necessary for Guyana to participate in EITI, and to enable the government to develop an acceptable candidacy document, which was accepted by the EITI International Secretariat in 2017.

Figure 1. Timeline of The Carter Center in Guyana

- 1990-1992 The Carter Center supports a 16-month electoral observation project culminating in an election mission led by former President Carter, Prime Minister George Price of Belize, and former President Rodrigo Carazo of Costa Rica for the elections on Oct. 5, 1992, resulting in the first democratic elections and peaceful transfer of power in almost three decades.
- 1994 President Carter attends the Caribbean Consultative Group for Cooperation in Economic Development meeting of international donors in Georgetown as a special guest of the government of Guyana. The conference helps leverage more than \$300 million in additional donor pledges for Guyana. The Carter Center is invited to help create a long-term development strategy.
- 1995-2000 The Carter Center's Global Development Initiative works with the government of Guyana to formulate the National Development Strategy (NDS). After hundreds of Guyanese took part in two dozen working groups, an extensive draft of the strategy is released for public comment in 1997. A final version of the NDS is completed under the leadership of civil society leaders in 2000 and is used by the government as the basis for its first poverty reduction strategy paper. The NDS is unanimously endorsed by the eighth parliament on Dec. 15, 2005. Guyanese leaders participate in several of the Center's Development Cooperation Forums in Atlanta to address reform of the global aid system.
- 2000 The Carter Center presents the government with a proposal for the creation of the Guyana Rain Forest Foundation (GRFF) to attract international funding to compensate Guyana for utilizing its rainforests in ways that preserve their extensive size and pristine nature given their important roles in climate stabilization and biodiversity protection. The GRFF was proposed in the NDS chapter on the environment. The government subsequently develops the concept into its Low-Carbon Development Strategy (2009), which attracts \$250 million from the government of Norway.
- 2000-2004 The Carter Center works with the National Democratic Institute and the International Foundation for Election Systems on a USAID-financed program to improve the rule of law and the judiciary to resolve disputes in a timely manner, sustain institutional capacity to conduct free and fair elections, increase influence by civil society, and strengthen local governance. The Carter Center's activities address capacity building of civil society organizations targeting youth, women, and Amerindians, and strengthening the rule of law and judicial system.
- 2001 The Carter Center deploys an international election observation mission under the leadership of President Carter, former U.S. First Lady Rosalynn Carter, and former Prime Minister of Barbados Lloyd Erskine Sandiford to observe the 2001 general and regional elections on March 19, 2001. The Carter Center notes that further electoral and constitutional reforms are needed to ensure inclusive governance and reduce ethnic polarization.
- 2002-2004 The Carter Center establishes a targeted field presence in Guyana in 2002 to assist unofficial civil society-led efforts to promote conflict resolution, reduce political polarization, and develop strategies for dialogue and social cohesion. President Carter visits Guyana in 2004 to consult with political leaders about ongoing stalemated politics and repeats his call for reforms to promote more inclusive and accountable governance.
- 2006 The Carter Center deploys a small, targeted election mission for the Aug. 28, 2006, general and regional elections to demonstrate support for Guyana's democratization process, while calling for substantive governance and election system reforms.

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- 2015 The Carter Center deploys its third full international election observation mission to Guyana for the May 11, 2015, general and regional elections. The delegation is led by President Carter, former Foreign Minister of Barbados Dame Billie Miller, and Dame Audrey Glover of the United Kingdom. The election results in the first change in the governing party in 23 years.
- 2016–2017 The Carter Center supports the national multi-stakeholder group of government, industry, and civil society leaders as it develops Guyana’s candidacy application for membership in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. This includes help to identify legislative and regulatory changes necessary for Guyana to participate in EITI, which promotes good governance of the oil, gas, mining and other extractives sectors. Guyana is accepted to EITI in October 2017.
- 2019 Following a parliamentary no-confidence vote against the government in December 2018, The Carter Center deploys an assessment mission to Guyana in February 2019. A second mission is deployed in March 2019—led by Jason Carter, chairperson of the Carter Center Board of Trustees—as legal disputes around the no-confidence vote continue and the end of the constitutionally mandated 90-day period in which elections should be held following the vote draws near. The Carter Center continues to visit Guyana and assess the quickly moving political and electoral landscape.
- 2020 Following an invitation from the government of Guyana, The Carter Center launches an election observation mission to observe the country’s March 2 general elections. That mission is led by Aminata Touré, former prime minister of Senegal, and Jason Carter. The Carter Center withdraws its electoral experts and observers from the country once the electoral process grinds to a standstill following allegations of vote tampering. After a five-month standoff, GECOM affirms the 2020 election results, which results in President Irfaan Ali assuming Guyana’s highest office.
- 2024 The Carter Center returns once more to Guyana to assess the political and electoral environment in advance of Guyana’s 2025 general and regional elections.

Election Observation Methodology

The Carter Center has deployed more than 125 full and limited observation missions in 40 countries and three Native American nations. It is one of more than 50 intergovernmental and international nongovernmental organizations that have endorsed the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observation, endorsed at the United Nations in 2005.

The Carter Center assesses elections against international standards for democratic elections contained in the host country's international obligations and commitments and in its national legal framework. Carter Center observation missions are conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct that was adopted in

the U.N. in 2005 and has been endorsed by at least 55 organizations.

Guyana ratified several international treaties relevant to political and electoral rights. Given the country's commitment to conduct elections in line with internationally recognized principles, The Carter Center based its assessment of the electoral process on Guyana's national legal and regulatory framework as well as a comprehensive body of international provisions, including Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). References to international principles and guidelines for democratic elections are included throughout this report, and elements of the election process are introduced with the respective international standards used to make assessments. A summary of Guyana's human rights commitments is seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Guyana's Human Rights Commitments Under Public International Law

Treaty/Declaration	Status	Date
Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Ratified	Jan. 1, 2015
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts	Acceded	July 30, 2010
Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters	Ratified	April 7, 2008
Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism	Ratified	April 13, 2007
Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court	Ratified	Sept. 24, 2004
U.N. Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime	Acceded	Sept. 14, 2004
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the U.N. Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime Preamble, supplementing the U.N. Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime	Acceded	Sept. 14, 2004
Inter-American Convention Against Corruption	Ratified	Dec. 11, 2000

Treaty/Declaration	Status	Date
Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women	Ratified	Jan. 8, 1996
Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Acceded	May 10, 1993
Convention on the Rights of the Child	Ratified	Jan. 14, 1991
Organization of American States, Charter	Ratified	Jan. 8, 1991
Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Ratified	May 19, 1988
Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of Aug. 12, 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)	Acceded	Jan. 18, 1988
Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of Aug. 12, 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims on Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II)	Acceded	Jan. 18, 1988
International Convention Against Apartheid in Sports	Ratified	Oct. 1, 1986
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	Ratified	July 17, 1980
International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid	Acceded	Sept. 30, 1977
International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights	Ratified	Feb. 15, 1977
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Ratified	Feb. 15, 1977
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	Ratified	Feb. 15, 1977
Equal Remuneration Convention	Ratified	June 13, 1975
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention	Ratified	June 13, 1975
International Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft	Acceded	Dec. 21, 1972
Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field	Acceded	July 22, 1968
Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea	Acceded	July 22, 1968
Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War	Acceded	July 22, 1968
Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War	Acceded	July 22, 1968
Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention	Ratified	Sept. 25, 1967
Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention	Ratified	June 8, 1966
Convention Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labor	Ratified	June 8, 1966
Abolition of Forced Labor Convention	Ratified	June 8, 1966

In April 2024, The Carter Center was invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to observe Guyana's elections. The Center's observation of the 2025 general and regional elections included the deployment of a preelection assessment mission in June 2024 that evaluated the status of political developments, changes to the legal framework, and electoral preparations.

Due to the short time leading up to the elections, The Carter Center deployed a limited international election

observation mission that did not include long-term observers in the preelection period. As in all Carter Center election observation missions, the goal was to provide an impartial assessment of the overall quality of the electoral process.

The Center launched its limited international election observation mission with the deployment of an initial core team of four experts, who arrived in Georgetown beginning on June 30, 2024. Around election day 2025,

the Carter Center deployed 47 observers from 21 countries who visited 234 polling stations (8%) at 204 polling places (17%) in all 10 administrative regions to observe election procedures, including balloting, counting, and tabulation processes. The Carter Center’s mission for the Sept. 1, 2025, elections was led by Jason J. Carter, chairperson of the Carter Center Board of Trustees.

Observers used the Carter Center’s data collection methodology and Open Data Kit Collect to fill out and submit observer checklists via mobile phones on election day.

In the days following the election, observer teams continued to assess the tabulation process in all 17 tabulation centers across the country.

Over the course of the electoral process, The Carter Center released four public statements (included in the

appendices to this report) to share its assessment of the electoral process and make key recommendations. This included a substantive preelection statement released Aug. 19, 2025, that analyzed the status of electoral preparations and campaign period to date, including the inappropriate use of state resources by the governing party, state media coverage bias, action by local banks and businesses against certain candidates, and the lack of transparency surrounding campaign finance regulations.

A preliminary statement was issued on Sept. 3, two days after voting, that congratulated the Guyanese people for a peaceful and orderly election while stressing the need for further constitutional, electoral and legal reforms. The Carter Center’s presence in Guyana concluded with the departure of its core team members by Sept. 23, 2025.

Historical and Political Background

History to Independence

Guyana is located on the Guiana Shield, the oldest geologic formation on the South American continent, which stretches across six countries. Its vast wetlands, forests, rivers, mountains, and savannahs are home to some of the most stunning and well-preserved biodiversity in the world. Guyana is a multicultural mosaic, starting with the nine Indigenous peoples, some of whom have ancestors dating back thousands of years on this continent. European contact and plantation colonialism brought African, East Indian, Chinese, Portuguese, and other European peoples to its shores so that today Guyana is known as the Land of Six Peoples.

The Dutch first colonized the Atlantic coast of Guyana in the 1600s where three great rivers—the Essequibo, the Berbice, and the Demerara—produced fertile plains for agriculture. Enslaved Africans were brought to the colonies to transform and work the land for sugar, coffee, cotton, and cacao. Their numbers eventually reached nearly 100,000. The Dutch territories were ceded to the British in 1814 and in 1831 were merged into the colony of British Guiana. Slavery was abolished shortly thereafter, and free Africans left the sugar plantations for urban areas and established village settlements for freehold agriculture. To address the newfound labor shortage, the British turned to indentured servitude and imported Chinese and Portuguese laborers, and later Indians in much larger number. Nearly 240,000 Indians were brought to Guyana by the time the indenture system was terminated in 1917.

At about this time, the trade union movement began to develop in Guyana and the wider Caribbean. The first union for Guyanese dockworkers was organized in 1919. Trade unionism accelerated during the interwar period

and beyond, with unions formed in the civil service, sugar, mining, and other sectors of the economy. Trade unionism was the backbone of Guyana's independence movement, which was led by Indo-Guyanese dentist Dr. Cheddi Jagan and Afro-Guyanese attorney Forbes Burnham. The two led the People's Progressive Party (PPP), which emerged to lead the independence movement and won the first elections in 1953. The British suspended the constitution and ousted the PPP government after five months, unable to accept the PPP's leftist ideological bent. The party split in 1956, with Burnham taking his Afro-Guyanese supporters and forming the People's National Congress (PNC). This ethno-political split came to define Guyanese politics for decades.

The PPP won successive elections in 1957, 1961, and 1963 under a first-past-the-post system and buttressed by the numerical majority of the Indo-Guyanese population. With independence inevitable, the U.S. coordinated with U.K. authorities to prevent the PPP from leading the country to independence. Western covert operations infiltrated the trade union movement to sow instability against Jagan's governments, resulting in heightened ethnic tensions and episodes of ethnic rioting and violence. The U.K. ultimately maneuvered the PPP out of power by imposing a new system of proportional representation for the independence elections, which the PNC was able to win in coalition with the small, pro-capitalist party known as The United Force (TUF). Guyana became independent on May 26, 1966.

The Post-Independence Period

The PNC-TUF coalition did not last, as the PNC was committed to take the Guyanese economy in a socialist direction. This left the PNC with a problem: Its

Afro-Guyanese voting base was not enough to beat the Indo-Guyanese-dominated PPP in elections. Faced with this reality, the PNC stayed in power by rigging elections for the next three decades. In 1974, Burnham introduced the doctrine of “party paramountcy” in which the PNC party assumed supremacy over the government, eventually even subordinating the legislature. The economy struggled and eventually, with the death of Burnham in 1985, the PNC began political and economic reforms. Pressure from civic and political forces within Guyana, coupled with international pressure, brought about democratic elections in 1992, which unseated the PNC after 28 years in power.

The PPP, now branded PPP/Civic, won the 1992 elections with 53% of the vote and continued to liberalize the economy while in power over the next two decades. However, the persistence of ethnic voting, the demographic advantage afforded by the PPP’s Indo-Guyanese base, and a winner-take-all electoral system made these elections highly contentious and sometimes violent. Despite a constitutional reform process in 1999 that was intended to make the governance system more inclusive, the electoral system remained largely unchanged, and the notion persisted that democratic elections merely represented an “ethnic census.”

During the 2000s, the electorate began to shift demographically, which revealed itself in voting patterns. The significant migration of Indo-Guyanese relative to other groups had decreased its share of the population. At the same time, the indigenous population had grown to nearly 10%, emerging as a key swing constituency. Those identifying as mixed ethnicity grew to nearly 20% of the population according to the 2012 census, up from 12% in 1991. The two traditional parties competed for these voters as did new political entrants, most notably the Alliance for Change (AFC), which formed in 2005. The AFC gained 8.4% of the vote in 2006 and 10.1% in 2011, demonstrating itself as a viable alternative for many voters. The PPP/C won the 2011 election but gained fewer seats than the AFC and the PNC-led A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) coalition combined, resulting in a minority government. Parliament was highly contentious, and the PPP/C government was forced to conduct early elections following the threat of a no-confidence vote.

APNU and the AFC formed a preelection coalition for the May 2015 polls and eked out a victory by a mere 4,500 votes—a single percentage point. The APNU+AFC win marked a change in government for the first time in 23 years, but it, too, would be short-lived. A few days after the

election, a consortium of oil companies led by Exxon-Mobil announced significant oil discoveries in Guyana’s territorial waters. The APNU+AFC government itself was brought down by a no-confidence vote in 2018. A political standoff ensued, and the matter was litigated for nearly two years before elections were finally held in March 2020 during the global pandemic. Those elections became embroiled in controversy during the tabulation process and only in August 2020—after regional intervention by CARICOM and a full recount—was the PPP/C declared the victor.

The Return of the PPP/C

In 2021, charges were brought against GECOM and APNU+AFC officials involved in the tabulation controversy, including conspiracy to defraud electors, forgery, and misconduct in public office. Procedural and other delays prevented the cases from being concluded before the election. In 2022, the government launched a presidential commission of inquiry into the 2020 election controversy, which delivered findings in April 2023 that three officers of GECOM were responsible for an attempt to subvert the tabulation process for ascertaining the election results. During this period, the PPP/C government used its parliamentary majority to pass a series of amendments to the election laws that significantly increased penalties for election offenses and changed the process for tabulating results to increase transparency and integrity.

The PPP/C administration returned to government just as revenues from the Exxon consortium’s oil exploitation began to flow into government coffers through the state’s Natural Resource Fund. The government budget grew nearly fourfold between 2020 and 2024. The government began extensive highway expansion and social infrastructure projects. Construction of a modern high-span bridge across the Demerara River began to replace the existing floating bridge. The government also completed the sale of the country’s first forest preservation carbon credits to the Hess Corporation, channeling \$22 million of the proceeds to Indigenous communities in 2022. While the economic boom is undeniable, it has been accompanied by concerns about lack of transparency and corruption.

The APNU+AFC coalition took up their seats as the parliamentary opposition but were damaged by their role in the political crisis that had gripped the country since 2018. Neither party went through a significant internal reckoning, and both maintain that the declared results of 2020 were unlawful and imposed by the international community.

Political Parties and Context for the 2025 Elections

As the 2025 general and regional elections approached, negotiations between APNU and AFC took place on a potential coalition agreement to contest the election jointly as they had in 2015 and 2020. The parties were unable to come to agreement and thus contested the election separately. The period also witnessed an unprecedented level of defections from the erstwhile coalition partners to the PPP/C or to new party formations such as the Forward Guyana Movement (FGM) and the Assembly for Liberty and Progress (ALP). The president announced on May 25, 2025, that the elections would be held on Sept. 1, 2025.

Conventional wisdom held that the PPP/C was in a strong position relative to the opposition parties, but this outlook was challenged three months before the election

by a new entrant, the We Invest in Nationhood (WIN) party headed by U.S.-sanctioned businessman Azruddin Mohamed. His family were well-known financial backers of the PPP/C in the past. Mohamed had been sanctioned by the U.S. government in June 2024 for involvement in illicit gold smuggling. Well-known in Guyana for his ostentatious lifestyle, Mohamed had more recently become the face of his family's charitable activities. With the considerable resources of its founder at its disposal, WIN was able to assemble a basic party structure and effective online media presence only months ahead of the election.

Nomination day took place on July 14, with seven political parties presenting their lists for approval by GECOM. Ultimately, six parties were approved to contest the election: AFC, ALP, APNU, FGM, the PPP/C, and WIN.

Electoral Institutions and the Framework for Elections

Effective electoral institutions and a sound legal framework are essential for administering democratic elections and for ensuring that a country upholds its international obligations. A comprehensive legal framework includes constitutional provisions, domestic legislation, and regulations that govern every stage of the electoral process. In line with its international commitments, Guyana is required to take concrete measures to promote the principles of the rule of law and to ensure that its electoral laws are consistent with internationally recognized human rights and election standards. By doing so, the country helps safeguard the integrity of its elections and strengthens public confidence in democratic governance.⁵

Legal Framework

The legal framework governing elections in Guyana consists of international and regional human rights and political rights instruments, the constitution, and a range of national legislation and regulations.

Guyana is party to several international and regional treaties that impose obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights standards in the conduct of elections, including:

- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- The Convention Against Torture
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Guyana also is a party to the U.N. Convention Against Corruption and the OAS Inter-American Convention Against Corruption. However, under the constitution, Guyana operates as a dualist state: While the executive, legislature, and judiciary are expected to respect and uphold treaty obligations, the National Assembly may limit the domestic application of treaties by a two-thirds majority vote.⁶

Notably, Guyana is not a party to the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention.

Domestically, general and regional elections are primarily regulated by the constitution, the Representation of the People Act (RoPA), the National Registration Act (NRA), the Local Democratic Organs Act, the National Assembly (Validity of Elections) Act, and the General Elections (Observers) Act. This framework is supplemented by secondary legislation—namely, regulations and orders issued

⁵ U.N. ICCPR, art. 2

⁶ Article 154A (1) & (6) of the constitution

by GECOM—which grants the commission broad powers, including authority to amend subsidiary legislation.⁷

Legal certainty is a fundamental component of the rule of law and essential to the integrity of the electoral process. It requires that electoral laws be clear, accessible, stable, and predictable. Guyana’s framework contains several inconsistencies, including contradictory provisions that GECOM has been unable to implement, as well as technical errors, outdated sections, and inconsistent terminology.

Although the existing legal framework for elections provides a basic foundation for conducting democratic elections, it contains significant gaps. It does not comprehensively regulate several key aspects of the electoral process, including party and campaign finance; the prohibition of misuse of state resources, media access and oversight during the election period; and the registration and operation of political parties. Amendments in 2022 did not address these longstanding issues, despite repeated recommendations from The Carter Center and other international election observation missions. As a result, the reform process represented a missed opportunity to align the legal framework more closely with international standards and electoral best practices.

Finally, the consolidated text of RoPA was not made publicly available, limiting stakeholders’ access to and understanding of the applicable legal provisions—even among political parties and civil society.

2022 Amendments to the Electoral Legal Framework

The legal framework for elections underwent significant reform in 2022, particularly in the areas of tabulation and voter registration. In its preelection statement, The Carter Center assessed these changes positively, noting their contribution to improving the transparency of election-day procedures and tabulation.

The 2022 amendments to the RoPA introduced new administrative arrangements, dividing the three most populous regions (Regions 3, 4, and 6) into three, four, and three subdistricts, respectively, for tabulation purposes. Each subdistrict is now overseen by a supernumerary returning officer (SRO), who performs functions similar to

those carried out by returning officers (ROs) at the district level in other regions. The amendments also required the immediate online publication of Statements of Poll (SoPs) and tabulation forms by election officials, as well as the electronic display of each SoP during the tabulation process. In addition, the amendments reinforced the rights of party agents to observe all stages of the process. Severe penalties were introduced for violations, including noncompliance with the new provisions, such as failing to publish information, delivering false information, not providing certified copies to superior election officers, or obstructing party agents in exercising their rights.

The NRA was revised to discontinue house-to-house voter registration, establish registration primarily through designated offices, and introduce a two-phase annual registration process independent of the electoral cycle. Further, the 2022 amendments to both RoPA and the NRA removed the residency requirements for voter eligibility, including for the elections of regional democratic councils (RDCs). These changes followed the 2019 High Court ruling that residency was not constitutionally required to vote in general elections. In April 2025, the High Court clarified that the constitutional reference to persons “residing in the region” does not impose a substantive residency requirement but reflects the address declared at registration, requiring voters to cast their ballots in the region where they are registered. While this decision was practical and inclusive, the constitutional and legislative provisions would benefit from refinement to ensure consistency and legal clarity.⁸

Voting of Prisoners

Concerns persist about the ability of people in custody to exercise their right to vote. Constitutional provisions disqualify from voting only those convicted of electoral offenses. Despite this, prisoners on remand awaiting trial were unable to participate in these elections. No procedural framework exists to enable the participation of prisoners, resulting in the disenfranchisement of some 2,500 prisoners, including pretrial detainees. This is an important deficiency in Guyana’s international human rights obligations to ensure equal suffrage. With a rising number

⁷ GECOM has broad powers under Article 162(1) of the constitution to take such action as it deems necessary or expedient to ensure fairness and compliance. In addition, Section 153 of the RoPA authorizes the commission, where a difficulty arises, to make an order, including amending subsidiary legislation, subject to parliamentary oversight. Further, GECOM can extend the deadlines for various electoral events.

⁸ Article 73 of the constitution provides that persons residing in the regions shall elect the members of the RDC. The 2022 amendments to the RoPA retained address-verification requirements, which the High Court, in case *Carol Joseph v. AG*, 2024, found to be inconsistent with Article 159 of the constitution, as it does not establish residency requirements for voter eligibility. The court called on parliament to address this discrepancy.

of prisoners and at times very long judicial delays, the exclusion of these eligible voters becomes a more prominent issue of electoral integrity.

The Carter Center recommends that well in advance of future elections GECOM develop procedures to ensure the facilitation of voting rights of prisoners in compliance with the commission's constitutional obligations.

Conclusions

Guyana's legal framework for elections provides a foundation for conducting democratic elections. However, reform should be done in advance of future elections to address important gaps and better align with international standards for democratic elections, including the introduction of legislation regarding party and campaign finance; the prohibition of misuse of state resources, media access and oversight during the election period; and the registration and operation of political parties. The review also should remove inconsistencies and technical errors in the RoPA to ensure coherence with other election-related laws. Amendments should be adopted well in advance of elections through an inclusive and transparent process, with broad stakeholder consultation. Consideration also could be given to consolidating the various electoral laws into a single, accessible text, thereby enhancing legal certainty, clarity, and public confidence in the integrity of the process.

Electoral System

The electoral system defines the manner in which leaders and representatives of a given country are chosen, which includes, among other things, how votes are translated into seats. An electoral system has many parts, but the two most important are the division of the people into groups to be represented (the "basis of representation") and the manner in which votes are translated into seats or results (the "electoral formula").

The choice of an electoral system is one of the most important and sensitive decisions in a country's political life and substantially influences electoral credibility. No system is inherently better than any other, but a clearly

defined electoral system that ensures compliance with international principles and addresses important national issues and aspirations is essential for credible elections.

At its core, any electoral system should serve as a mechanism for transforming the collective will of the people into a government that genuinely represents their interests, values, and aspirations. The legitimacy of a democracy depends on how effectively its electoral processes capture and reflect the voice of the electorate.⁹

Guyana's current electoral system was established before the 2001 elections. It was the result of the 1999-2000 constitutional reform process mandated by the Herdmanston Accord, which followed the tumultuous aftermath of the 1997 elections and draws in part on a proportional representation system introduced by the British in 1964. The system represented a last-minute compromise among political parties to translate the principles of the new system into practical effect just a few months before the 2001 elections. It was a temporary system designed for that election that has remained in use ever since.

Guyana's electoral system interacts with a historical pattern of ethnic voting for its two major political parties, although this may have lessened over time with demographic changes in the population. This has caused elections to be highly polarized, with relatively little cross-over voting. The system does not allow the negotiation of postelection coalitions to form a government, so a party with a plurality of the vote can win the powerful executive presidency and with it the right to appoint the cabinet. This combination of factors gives Guyana's system a winner-take-all character that has been detrimental for social cohesion and ethnic relations.

Guyana's electoral system is a particularly complex mixed system based on proportional representation. Guyana's 65-member parliament is composed of 40 members elected from a single national constituency and 25 members from "geographical constituencies" that are spread across Guyana's 10 regions according to legislation from 2001.¹⁰ All seats are allocated according to a proportion of votes each party receives using the Hare quota.¹¹

9 U.N., International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 25(b); International IDEA Electoral Standards: Guidelines for Reviewing the Legal Framework for Elections, p. 28

10 Please see the boundary delimitation section of this report for additional discussion. RoPA states that "Guyana shall be divided into polling districts.... Provided that no polling district shall extend across the boundary of any region" (RoPA 6. (1)) and that "Guyana shall be divided in ten geographical constituencies for the purpose of electing members of the National Assembly from each geographical constituency." (RoPA 11A. (2)).

11 Elections for the regional democratic councils, conducted on a separate ballot, also use the Hare quota, in a much more straightforward application of the principle of proportional representation.

The president of Guyana is not elected directly. Each party designates a person on their list who is the presidential candidate of the party. The candidate of the party that wins the plurality of the votes nationally becomes the president. The modalities of the system to elect members of the National Assembly result in highly unusual ballot paper arrangements, which exacerbates the system's complexity and ultimately undermines citizen choice at the ballot box.

While proportional representation is used for both the general and regional elections, the system applied for each election differs significantly. In practice, while the system used for the regional elections is a fairly common modality of proportional representation, the system used for the national elections is complex and unusual, and in many respects cannot be regarded as genuinely proportional. The combination of national and geographical lists creates two categories of members of the National Assembly, thus confusing the basis of representation and creating two types of representatives. The very low magnitude of most geographical constituencies makes proportional outcomes unattainable, effectively turning them into first-past-the-post contests.¹²

The electoral system's peculiarity is further exacerbated by its treatment of party lists. The Carter Center has previously highlighted that Guyana uses neither a "closed list" system nor an "open list" system. After the election, a party's representative of the list has full discretion to select candidates from the relevant list to fill any seats the party has won. While candidate lists are published in advance of elections, voters do not know which candidates from those long lists will be chosen by party officials to sit in the allocated seats.

In addition, the presidency is awarded to the list with the most votes (plurality) in the parliamentary election, a highly unusual feature tightly linking the executive to the legislative outcome. As the president is elected by plurality (first-past-the-post), this also means it is possible for the president's party to lack a majority in parliament.

To contest the general elections, a party must successfully present a national "top-up" list as well as lists for at least six different geographical constituencies.¹³ This requirement that a party contest a minimum of six geographical constituencies combined with the yoking together of the

presidential and parliamentary vote results in a highly unusual and complex balloting arrangement.¹⁴ Voters cast a single vote for a political party, which counts toward three choices: first, for a party's geographical constituency list; second, for a party's national top-up list; and third, for a party's presidential candidate. This uncommon variant of proportional representation has yielded an arrangement in which a political party contesting national elections might not appear on the ballot in all 10 regions, meaning that voters in different regions have different options for national seats.

Although six political parties qualified to contest the 2025 general elections, as seen in Table 2, only four of them—APNU, AFC, PPP/C, and WIN—appeared on the general election ballot in all 10 regions. Two parties—ALP and FGM—had not submitted lists for every geographical constituency, resulting in these two parties not being on the ballot in every constituency and therefore not being an option for voters everywhere despite a part of the vote going toward the 40 parliamentary seats that are based on a single national constituency. (The relationship between the electoral system and the ballot was the subject of a legal complaint in the preelection period that is discussed further in the Electoral Dispute Resolution section of this report.)

The electoral system is nominally intended to ensure proportional representation by "topping up" the representation of the geographical constituencies. However, the exclusion of parties from the ballot in geographical constituencies where they do not field candidates but may enjoy some measure of support limits the extent to which the allocation of seats fully reflects parties' proportional standing countrywide. This practice also denies those parties votes in the presidential contest, hampering their competitiveness in that election. The implementation of the system places parties that are unable to field candidates in all 10 regions at a disadvantage.



In practice the complex process of seat allocation distorts proportionality and erodes the relevance of the geographical constituencies. Seats are determined based on a Hare quota calculation for each geographical constituency and, separately, for the national top-up list. However, the national top-up calculation is based on a total of 65 seats, which are then divided among the parties. The 25 total

¹² Electoral districts 1, 2, 5, 7, and 10 currently have only two geographical constituency seats each, while districts 8 and 9 each have only a single seat. This seat allocation dates back to 2001 and has not been updated following censuses in 2012 and 2022.







¹³ Provided that these constituencies represent at least 13 seats.

¹⁴ Section 11 (C) of RoPA dictates that "a vote for a Party's geographical constituency list is simultaneously a vote for that Party's national top-up list."

Table 2. Parties Contesting General and Regional Elections 2025

GUYANA ELECTIONS COMMISSION
PARTIES CONTESTING
GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS 2025

SER	PARTY NAME	PARTY INITIALS	SYMBOL	TYPE OF ELECTION	GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES / REGIONS										
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	A PARTNERSHIP FOR NATIONAL UNITY	APNU		GENERAL ELECTION	✓										
				GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
				REGIONAL ELECTIONS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	ALLIANCE FOR CHANGE	AFC		GENERAL ELECTION	✓										
				GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
				REGIONAL ELECTIONS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	ASSEMBLY FOR LIBERTY AND PROSPERITY	ALP		GENERAL ELECTION	✓										
				GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
				REGIONAL ELECTIONS			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
4	FORWARD GUYANA MOVEMENT	FGM		GENERAL ELECTION	✓										
				GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
				REGIONAL ELECTIONS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
5	PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY / CIVIC	PPP/C		GENERAL ELECTION	✓										
				GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
				REGIONAL ELECTIONS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	WE INVEST IN NATIONHOOD	WIN		GENERAL ELECTION	✓										
				GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
				REGIONAL ELECTIONS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

seats from the geographical constituencies allocated to the parties are then “subtracted” from the seats allocated to each party under the national top-up calculation for 65 seats. In most outcomes, this means that a party’s share of seats in parliament is effectively determined solely by the countrywide calculation.¹⁵ The only exceptions are if a party wins a geographical constituency seat (or seats) but does not win any top-up seats, or if a party wins more geographical constituency seats than top-up seats. In either instance, the number of seats in parliament would have to be increased, as the number of geographical constituency seats is fixed at 25 by law.¹⁶

In current application of the law, the 25 geographical constituencies essentially become a means of allowing parties to enter parliament based on a different quota than would be the case countrywide. However, this is in turn undermined by the requirement that a party contest a minimum of six districts to qualify for the general elections. A party that enjoys support in fewer than six districts must still qualify to stand in six in order to compete in the districts which it actually aspires to represent.

This problem is exacerbated by Guyana’s use of neither open nor closed party lists. Candidates can appear on both a party’s national top-up list and on a single one of the

¹⁵ Given that the Hare quota calculation for the national top-up is made with a substantially higher denominator than that for any given geographical constituency, it also means that it is therefore much easier for a party to reach the quota and enter parliament via the national top-up list than via almost any geographical constituency. In these elections, the national top-up quota was smaller than the geographical constituency quota in all but two regions (7 and 8), though the two quotas were close in a third (Region 1).

¹⁶ It is therefore all the more problematic that RoPA bases the countrywide (top-up) Hare quota calculation on 65 seats.

party's geographical constituency lists, the latter of which is not subject to any residency requirement. Therefore, a candidate can be chosen to represent a geographical constituency despite neither living in nor having any substantive connection to that constituency. Voters, as noted above, are left uncertain about which candidates for a given party ultimately will represent their region. This further undermines the role of the geographical constituencies in providing genuine representation for the country's regions in parliament, which was the very purpose for their introduction into the legal framework.

Women and the Electoral System

Under international law, states must take all appropriate measures, including temporary special measures, to eliminate discrimination against women in political and public life.¹⁷ While Guyana's constitution permits parties to include women in parliament in numbers "reflective of their proportion among the electorate," this has not been realized in legislation or in practice. Political parties are required to ensure that women make up a third of their lists for the "national top-up" (proportional representation) election, the geographic constituencies, and the elections for regional democratic councils.¹⁸ Though parties are required to include women on their lists, the unique electoral system with neither open nor closed lists means that parties ultimately are not required to allocate any seats to women.

Candidates are not identified by gender on party lists when published by GECOM, making it very difficult to ensure that parties have complied with the gender requirement. However, an informal review suggested that APNU, PPP/C, and WIN may have failed to reach this threshold on their national top-up lists, and that WIN also may have fallen short on its list for the geographical constituencies.

When considering reform of Guyana's electoral system, The Carter Center urges that legal framework changes commit special measures that support women's political participation, consistent with Guyana's international obligations and with international election standards.

Right to Stand for Election

The constitutional rules in Guyana prohibit independent candidates from standing for office to become either parliamentarians or president, though they are eligible to contest local government elections. Candidates for higher office must belong to a political party list to participate in elections. This is an unreasonable limitation on the freedom of association and on the right to stand for election, and consideration should be given to allowing candidates to run independently. The law and electoral system should be reformed to allow for independent candidates to contest the presidency.

Conclusion

Taken together, all the concerns cited above amount to an electoral system that does a poor job of ensuring either proportional or regional representation. In the 2025 elections some voters were denied the full range of choices presented to other voters even though all six parties had qualified to contest the general elections, forcing parties to compete unequally. The translation of the electoral system to the ballot paper ultimately undermines citizens' choices.

The winner-takes-all nature of Guyana's electoral system has been a historical weakness that exacerbates ethnic and political divisions. The Carter Center strongly recommends that the electoral system be a focus of national discussion and reform.

There are steps that GECOM, the parliament, and Guyana's Constitutional Reform Commission can take to clarify the electoral system and ensure that it serves its purpose in effectively capturing the voice of the electorate and transforming the will of the people into a truly representative government.

The Carter Center recommends that GECOM consider listing all parties that qualify to contest the general elections on the ballot in all electoral districts. The Center also recommends that parliament consider legislative reforms to require candidates on a party's list for a given geographical constituency to live in that constituency and to limit the national top-up calculation to 40 seats.

In addition, the Center recommends that the parliament explore legislation to close the party lists—arranging the order of candidates according to how seats would be taken

¹⁷ U.N. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

¹⁸ Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2000 (Section 11B, Articles 5-7) provides for gender representation as an eligibility criterion for political parties wishing to contest national and regional elections. It states that each political party must have at least one-third women on the list of representatives submitted to the Guyana Elections Commission.

up—to strengthen the connection between voters and their ultimate legislators and executive as well as to better ensure that parties not only include women on their lists, but include them in electable slots.

For longer-term reform, The Carter Center recommends that the CRC explore the electoral system and consider options that would clarify and streamline the electoral system and the basis of representation. It is further recommended that the legal framework be amended to allow for the participation of independent candidates.

Election Management

An election management body that operates with full independence, neutrality, and transparency is essential to ensuring that citizens can participate meaningfully in a genuine democratic process.¹⁹ Such a body must function professionally and free from political influence to ensure stakeholder trust in the integrity of the electoral system and its outcomes. It is the responsibility of the election management body to safeguard the electoral process and ensure that every stage complies with Guyana’s domestic, regional, and international obligations for democratic elections and human rights.

Electoral Administration in Guyana

Guyana’s elections are managed by GECOM, established under Articles 161-162 of the country’s constitution. The commission is composed of two elements: a board of commissioners and a secretariat. The board is responsible for determining policy as well as monitoring the electoral process and its conduct, but it is constitutionally excluded from active management of the process. The secretariat is responsible for fulfilling the commission’s managerial role.

Guyana’s constitution empowers GECOM to exercise general direction and supervision over voter registration and the election of the National Assembly but does not explicitly provide for GECOM’s independence and freedom from undue influence.²⁰ The RoPA gives GECOM the power to divide the country into polling districts (though these districts cannot cross regional boundaries) and, within districts, polling divisions. GECOM issues regulations, approves and publishes lists of candidates,

declares the results, and serves as the custodian of electoral documents.

The Board of Commissioners

GECOM’s board of commissioners has seven members: six commissioners and a chairperson. The board sets policy and monitors its implementation. Its members are not subject to term limits and by convention hold regular meetings in Georgetown. GECOM commissioners are appointed based on a recommendation by President Carter and former Prime Minister of Belize George Price, known as the “Carter-Price formula”—but often called simply the “Carter formula”—intended to help resolve the political impasse that preceded the 1992 elections. This formula was incorporated into the constitution in 2000. Modeled on the U.S. Federal Election Commission, the formula provides that three GECOM commissioners are appointed by the president at their discretion while three are appointed by the president “acting in accordance with the advice of the leader of the opposition” in the National Assembly, who must first engage in “meaningful consultation” with parliamentary parties not participating in government.

Regarding the selection of GECOM’s chairperson, the constitution also requires that following “meaningful consultation” with those parties, the leader of the opposition must then propose a list of six candidates “not unacceptable” to the president, from whom the president appoints the chairperson. The appointment of GECOM’s current chairperson took place prior to Guyana’s 2020 elections following significant legal controversy that rose to the Caribbean Court of Justice.

GECOM’s board of commissioners during the 2025 elections consisted of the following members, listed here with the political party or coalition by which they were nominated and the year of their appointment:

- Justice (retired) Claudette Singh, chairperson (senior counsel, Cacique Crown of Honour, 2019)
- Vincent Alexander, commissioner (APNU, 2007)
- Charles Corbin, commissioner (APNU, 2009)
- Desmond Trotman, commissioner (APNU and AFC, 2017)
- Sase Gunraj, commissioner (PPP/C, 2015)

¹⁹ UNHRC, General Comment No. 25, para. 20

²⁰ See the Article 161B of the constitution; see also ICCPR, General Comment 25, para. 20: “An independent electoral authority should be established to supervise the electoral process and to ensure that it is conducted fairly, impartially.”

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- Manoj Narayan, commissioner (PPP/C, 2020)
 - Clement James Rohee, commissioner (PPP/C, 2022)

The composition of GECOM’s board of commissioners—three members aligned with the ruling party and three aligned with the main opposition—has resulted in significant politicization of its governance and operations. This structure, combined with the general lack of transparency surrounding board meetings, places other political parties at a substantial disadvantage, leaving them without equal access to information about GECOM’s activities and without meaningful opportunities to contribute to decision-making. This creates an unlevel playing field and limits rights to political association.

Throughout the electoral process, the political interests of GECOM commissioners hindered the commission’s work and at times undermined public trust in the institution and its work. The Carter Center reiterates its longstanding recommendation that Guyana consider reforming the articles of the constitution related to GECOM’s composition to ensure that future elections are conducted by an election management body that is truly impartial, professional, and transparent in its operations.

The Secretariat

The secretariat is GECOM’s executive and operational arm, headquartered in Georgetown, and is led by a chief election officer (CEO). The CEO is responsible for implementing the board of commissioners’ policy decisions and for the overall preparation and conduct of elections, including logistical provisions, implementation of technical operations and voter education campaigns, training of polling staff, and the transportation and reconciliation of statements of poll on polling day. The CEO also is charged with ascertaining and publishing election results, based on the compilation of the original statements of polls from each polling station and after having first reported the results to the board.

In addition to oversight of preparations and conduct of the elections, by convention the CEO also holds the title of commissioner of registration and is responsible for the compilation and maintenance of the voter register. In this capacity, the CEO is in charge of issuing national identification cards.

The CEO is supported by a deputy CEO and several technical and operational departments, including voter registration, logistics, civic/voter education, information technology, human resources, administrative support,

security, and finance. The board of commissioners is responsible for the appointment of all secretariat staff.

While GECOM’s secretariat includes a legal office, during the 2025 elections, the commission did not have a dedicated legal adviser. It was reported that, during the electoral process, the attorney general—who was also a candidate in the elections—provided legal advice to GECOM, raising concerns regarding a potential conflict of interest and the perceived independence of the election administration. This connection could be interpreted as a means of government oversight over GECOM and could undermine the commission’s neutrality and independence. International standards and best practice hold that an election management body must operate independently from government. The Carter Center recommends that in future elections GECOM’s commissioners, secretariat, and legal department operate independently of the nation’s attorney general to ensure its full independence.

Returning Officers

During the electoral process, the CEO nominates a returning officer for each of the country’s 10 polling districts (corresponding to the country’s 10 administrative regions). The ROs then have primary responsibility for overseeing the elections in their respective districts. Prior to the call of elections and given recent legal reforms establishing a more continuous voter registration process, ROs frequently serve as registration officers and oversee that process as well. At least seven days before election day, ROs are to submit to the CEO a report on preparedness for the poll, stating the extent to which electoral preparations have been completed and highlighting any issues of concern.

The 2022 amendments to Guyana’s legal framework for elections also more firmly defined the role of the ROs in the ascertainment of the results. ROs now have responsibility for the tabulation process through which the total votes cast in favor of each list of candidates is determined by tallying the votes recorded on the statements of poll produced following the count at each polling station. Once this process is complete, ROs issue the official declaration of results for their respective districts.

ROs are supported by deputy returning officers (DROs), one for approximately every 10 polling stations. Deputy ROs are assigned to each subdistrict and are responsible for supervising the arrangements for a group (or “cluster”) of polling stations and for immediate transmission of the statements of poll produced by these polling stations to the

RO. Deputy ROs also can fulfill the responsibilities of ROs in the event an RO is unable to do so.

In the interest of enhancing the speed and efficiency of the tabulation process, the 2022 reforms of the legal framework introduced a new class of election officials—the supernumerary returning officers (SROs)—who report to ROs in three regions. As set out in the law, Regions 3 and 6 have three SROs each, while Region 4 has four SROs. Each SRO is responsible for a geographically contiguous subdistrict and can be assisted by deputy supernumerary reporting officers (DSROs). In these three regions, the SROs have primary responsibility for the tabulation process; the ROs in these regions tally up the results presented by the SROs and then issue the official declaration.

Polling Day Staff

GECOM now maintains a standing pool of polling staff. Potential polling staff receive two days of training and are then tested; only those trainees who pass the test are included in the pool. After the call for elections, ROs are responsible for conducting refresher training and appointing staff from the pool.

On election day, polling stations typically have four to six staff members, including a presiding officer, an assistant presiding officer, a ballot clerk/counting assistant, and one or more poll clerks (depending on the number of registered voters assigned to a polling station). The presiding officer has overall responsibility for the polling station, and after completing the count of the ballots and preparation of the statement of poll must report the results to the appropriate official.

The assistant presiding officer is responsible for supporting the presiding officer and, if necessary, assumes responsibility for the operation of the polling station in the presiding officer's absence. The poll clerk oversees the checking of all documents to ensure that a voter is entitled to cast a ballot. The ballot clerk supervises the ballot box and administers the electoral ink. At polling places with multiple polling stations, one or more information clerks may also be appointed to assist voters in finding their polling station. A police officer, working under the supervision of the presiding officer, is responsible for crowd control outside the polling station, maintenance of order, and overall security, but is only to enter the polling station on the invitation of the presiding officer.

GECOM Workplan

Making a clear electoral calendar publicly available and accessible to the public and political parties helps strengthen overall transparency and therefore build trust in the electoral process.

Guyana's legal framework grants GECOM discretion to set certain dates within the electoral cycle, and the commission used this discretion to schedule nomination day for July 14–17 days before the legal deadline. However, this decision compressed the overall electoral timeline and shortened key periods for tasks outside GECOM's discretionary authority, such as correcting deficiencies in candidate lists, submitting joinder notices, and withdrawing candidacies.²¹

Although this approach might be viewed as pragmatic, it underscores the need for legislative amendments to either clarify GECOM's authority over the electoral calendar or establish relevant deadlines directly in the RoPA. When setting such deadlines in law, it is important to account for how each stage of the process interacts—for example, the link between nomination procedures, dispute periods, and ballot design and printing—and to ensure sufficient flexibility to accommodate unforeseen circumstances.

Conclusions

Guyana's deeply polarized political environment, intensified by the 2020 elections, has undermined the effectiveness of the Guyana Elections Commission, leading to frequent gridlock and limiting its ability to improve electoral administration. The commission's structure has in practice privileged the political parties in parliament to the exclusion of other parties and civil society, restricts access to information, and reinforces perceptions that commissioners act as party representatives rather than independent guardians of the electoral process. This lack of inclusivity and independence has contributed to low trust among political parties and the broader public in elections. The Carter Center reiterates long-standing recommendations to depoliticize GECOM, strengthen its independence and professionalism, and reduce direct party influence, while urging the Constitutional Reform Commission to ensure that reforms are completed to create a more independent election management body in time for the next elections.

²¹ The law sets the deadline for parties to submit the notice of joinder as 25 days before election day. However, according to the GECOM workplan, the joinder notice was due on July 21, 2025.

Boundary Delimitation

According to international standards, constituency boundaries should be drawn in a way that preserves the principle of equal suffrage, so that every voter has roughly equal voting power.²² Interpretive sources add that equal suffrage and the “one person, one vote” rule require that constituency boundaries be drawn so that voters or residents are represented in the legislature on a (roughly) equal basis.²³ International good practice indicates that variances should rarely exceed 10%.²⁴

Guyana’s unique and complex electoral system makes boundary delimitation equally complex. Forty of Guyana’s parliamentary seats are assigned based on the assumption of a single national constituency. An additional 25 seats that are divided across Guyana’s 10 regions using the “geographic component” with an assumption that the population is equally divided across these 25 seats. The distribution of seats across regions was last established in 2001 through legislation passed by parliament and has not been adjusted since, although censuses have since been conducted in 2012 and again in 2022.

A preliminary report from the 2022 census was published Jan. 12, 2026, making it clear that Guyana’s

population has changed in the 24 years since boundaries were last drawn. As a result, there is significant variance between constituencies, undermining the international democratic principle of equal suffrage. The current distribution of seats can be seen in Table 3.

Conclusions

The Carter Center recommends that a constitutional review process consider carefully Guyana’s electoral system and the corresponding methods used to delimit boundaries to ensure that equal suffrage is upheld. International standards indicated that the delimitation of boundaries should be reviewed with regularity. Therefore, consideration should be given to amending the law to require regular review of the delimitation of boundaries, to adjust boundaries based on the current population, and to reduce deviation to under 10%. The apportionment criteria should be publicly available and include details such as the number of residents, number of registered voters, number of actual voters, or a combination thereof. Reforming laws related to boundary delimitation and addressing the large gap between electoral quotients for obtaining seats in small and large electoral constituencies will allow Guyana to more fully respect the principle of equal suffrage.

Table 3. Distribution of National Assembly Seats Compared With Population

Distribution of Geographic Seats (25) in the National Assembly										
District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Seats	2	2	3	7	2	3	2	1	1	2
Population Per Seat by Census Since 2001										
2012	13,822	23,405	35,928	44,795	24,910	36,551	9,188	11,077	24,238	19,996
2022	19,478	28,235	47,961	49,680	28,834	38,191	15,162	13,598	29,944	22,750

22 “The drawing of electoral boundaries and the method of allocating votes should not distort the distribution of voters or discriminate against any group and should not exclude or restrict unreasonably the right of citizens to choose their representatives freely.” ICCPR. General Comment 25. Article 21.

23 U.N. HRC General Comment 25, para. 21.

24 Council of Europe (Venice Commission), Code of Good Practice, sec. 1.2.2.15. In its report on Guyana’s 2015 elections, The Carter Center noted, “The magnitude of the geographic constituencies varies significantly, from 10,140 citizens per seat in Region 7 (Cuyuni-Mazaruni) to 44,776 citizens per seat in Region 4 (Demerara-Mahaica). This negatively influences the equality of suffrage. All districts deviate from the person-per-seat average by more than 15%, a maximum advised by international good practices.”

I Preelection Period

The Carter Center launched its limited international election observation mission with the deployment of an initial core team of four experts who arrived in Georgetown beginning on June 30, 2024. Limited time and resources prevented the Center from deploying long-term observers in advance of election day to assess the preelection period. In spite of this, the limited election observation mission included reports on several key preelection activities, including nomination day and a series of campaign launches and campaign events in advance of the Sept. 1 elections.

The Center's core team of experts visited each administrative region in advance of polling to assess the status of preparations for elections and the overall political environment and to make logistical arrangements for the short-term observers who would deploy around election day. The mission conducted extensive consultative meetings and interviews with key stakeholders, including government officials, the Guyana Elections Commission, the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC), key political parties, civil society leaders, business community leaders, members of the diplomatic community, and others.

The Carter Center issued a preelection statement Aug. 19, 2025, summarizing its key findings, including concerns around campaign finance, a lack of commitment of all parties contesting elections to the ERC's code of conduct, alleged intimidation of public workers, misuse of state resources, and the impact of U.S. sanctions on the international human right to political participation. The Center's

observation and key findings in the preelection period are explored further below. (The preelection statement is included in Annex D.)

Voter Registration

Voter registration is recognized as a critical means to strengthen the right to vote and enhance universal and equal suffrage. Voter registration should be made available to the broadest pool of citizens possible, without obstacles.²⁵ A credible voter register that is complete, accurate, and up to date is a major element in ensuring the credibility and integrity of elections.

The development of the voter register is a sensitive matter in all elections, and this has been particularly true in Guyana. In advance of the 2020 electoral process, voter registration was a source of heated controversy. Important changes were made to Guyana's legal framework for voter registration in advance of the 2025 elections, which are discussed below as well as in the Legal Framework section of this report.

The Carter Center did not observe the registration of voters in 2025 and did not conduct any assessment of the quality of the voter list. What follows is a discussion of legal and procedural aspects of voter registration in Guyana, as well as information from key stakeholder interviews.

Voter Eligibility

In Guyana, citizens 18 and older are eligible to vote, along with commonwealth citizens who have lived in Guyana for

²⁵ U.N., International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 25(b); U.N., United National Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 25 on "The Right to Participate in Public Affairs, Voting Rights and the Right to Equal Access to Public Service," para 11.

more than one year in advance of an election.²⁶ The recent amendments removed references to residency requirements, in line with the 2019 judgment that held that the constitution does not require residency for general elections. In April 2025, the High Court further ruled that residency is not required for regional (RDC) elections.

A significant amendment to the Registration of Births and Deaths Act allows adults who lack a birth certificate to be issued one based on certain documents, including a declaration by a “person of high standing in the community.” In hinterland areas—often home to Amerindian communities, whose members have historically had difficulty obtaining such documentation—this role can be filled by an elected local community leader known as a toshao.

The Voter Registration Process

The last “house-to-house” registration process in which a fresh voter list was created took place in 2008—17 years prior to these elections.²⁷ Following periodic reviews and updates, the database built in 2008 has served as the basis for subsequent national and local government elections. The accuracy and integrity of the database have been a consistent source of tension in Guyana’s elections, with the 2025 elections being no exception.

Legal reforms in 2022 sought to address some past concerns around the voter registry primarily by further entrenching a continuous registration process and seeking to improve methods for removing the dead from the list, while remaining within constitutional parameters. (These reforms are discussed further in the Legal Framework section of this report.)

Following the 2022 legal reforms, voter registration is now conducted across Guyana on a quasi-continuous basis in two phases throughout the year. From January to May, and then again from July to November, individuals can visit GECOM offices across the country to register as new voters. GECOM then produces a preliminary list of electors. During the months of June and December, citizens can file claims (registering to vote or updating their registration information) or objections (challenging the inclusion of someone who is allegedly improperly registered).

Following the most recent regular round of claims and objections in December 2024, GECOM conducted an abbreviated “claims and objections” exercise for these elections, beginning on June 16, 2025. Claims were received until June 18 and objections until June 20. During this period, GECOM received a total of 6,563 claims and four objections.²⁸ GECOM then produced a revised list of electors incorporating approved changes.

The Official List of Electors (OLE)

The OLE for these elections was published on July 30, 2025, following a period of public review.²⁹ Notably, GECOM published a searchable version of the OLE on its website for the first time. This searchable version of the OLE featured a tool allowing prospective voters to confirm their registration details. Additionally, the OLE was publicly displayed in all 10 regions. These measures helped to ensure transparency.

As seen in Table 4, the OLE consisted of 757,690 voters: 376,703 men and 380,987 women. This represents an increase of 14.6% over the final OLE used for the 2020 election, which in turn was an increase of 15.5% from the OLE used for the 2015 election.

Many interlocutors raised concerns about the size of the OLE, particularly as the last census conducted in 2012 estimated the country’s total population as 746,955 people.³⁰ As noted, the database that serves as the foundation for the current voter registry was built during Guyana’s last “house-to-house” registration effort in 2008. While periodic updates have been made to the list over time, a common assumption in advance of the elections was that Guyana’s population today is dramatically different in both size and demographics than it was 17 years ago. Although many expressed concern about the relative size of the OLE, The Carter Center did not receive evidence of any manipulation of the voter roll.

Guyana conducted a new census in 2022, but the results were not released in advance of the elections, further obscuring public understanding and fueling mistrust. As The Carter Center noted in its Aug. 19 preelection statement, the failure to publish the 2022 census is a regrettable

²⁶ The constitution states that a commonwealth citizen of 18 years of age or older who has been “domiciled and resident in Guyana and has been so resident for a period of one year immediately preceding the qualifying date” is eligible to be registered as an elector. Constitution of Guyana Art 159. (2) (b)

²⁷ A house-to-house registration process was initiated in advance of the 2020 elections but ultimately discontinued. The Carter Center’s final report on the 2020 elections includes additional discussion.

²⁸ All four objections were dismissed.

²⁹ The OLE is valid for six months after it is certified.

³⁰ https://statisticsguyana.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Final_2012_Census_Count-1.pdf

Table 4. Number of Registered Voters and Polling Stations

DISTRICT	DISTRICT NAME	NO. OF POLLING STATIONS	NO. OF ELECTORS
1	BARIMA/WAINI	113	24, 453
2	POMEROON/SUPENAAM	158	42, 596
3	ESSEQUIBO ISLANDS/WEST DEMERARA	407	116, 876
3	SUB-DISTRICT 1 – ESSEQUIBO ISLANDS/ESSEQUIBO RIVER	54	8, 627
3	SUB-DISTRICT 2 – ST. LAWRENCE/CORNELIA IDA	148	48, 142
3	SUB-DISTRICT 3 – HAGUE/ARABIO CREEK	205	60, 107
4	DEMERARA/MAHAICA	1, 088	323, 436
4	SUB-DISTRICT 1 – EAST BANK DEMERARA	243	74, 703
4	SUB-DISTRICT 2 – NORTH GEORGETOWN	262	58, 021
4	SUB-DISTRICT 3 – SOUTH GEORGETOWN	192	73, 781
4	SUB-DISTRICT 4 – EAST COAST DEMERARA	391	116, 931
5	MAHAICA/BERBICE	193	50, 796
6	EAST BERBICE/CORENTYNE	435	111, 554
6	SUB-DISTRICT 1 – EAST BANK BERBICE/CANJE	149	36, 384
6	SUB-DISTRICT 2 – UPPER CORENTYNE	140	36, 025
6	SUB-DISTRICT 3 – LOWER CORENTYNE	146	39, 145
7	CUYUNI/MAZARUNI	99	17, 846
8	POTARO/SIPARUNI	58	9, 192
9	UPPER TAKUTU/ UPPER ESSEQUIBO	91	22, 481
10	UPPER DEMERARA/ UPPER BERBICE	148	38, 460
	TOTAL	2, 790	757, 690

lapse that obscures public understanding of basic population demographics and their potential relation to the size of the voter list.³¹

After decades in which many Guyanese left seeking opportunities abroad, the country now has a large diaspora; the U.S. Census Bureau estimates there are at least 180,000 people of Guyanese origin in that country alone.³² A 2024

31 The Bureau of Statistics released a preliminary census report on Jan. 12, 2026, showing an overall population increase from 746,955 to 878,674.

32 U.S. Census Bureau: <https://data.census.gov/table?q=ancestry>

U.N. survey estimated there may be as many as 470,000 Guyanese living outside the country.³³ Many Guyanese know someone who has emigrated. Following the recent court decisions and legislative changes, registered voters cannot be removed from the list on the grounds that they no longer reside in the country. Some share of the sizeable Guyanese diaspora is validly registered.

Improvements to Remove Names of Deceased People

The Carter Center welcomes recent legal reforms that empower GECOM to take additional steps to remove the dead from the voter list. In the past, names could not be removed from the voter list unless a death certificate was provided. Death certificates were difficult to obtain, and GECOM had inadequate access to official information regarding the issuance of death certificates. In response to these concerns and complications around the 2020 elections, legal amendments were passed to strengthen GECOM's ability to remove the names of deceased people from the list. GECOM can now act based on a wider range of official documentation, including death certificates from the General Registry Office and quarterly reports of deaths by the commissioner of police and the country's chief medical officer. There are no current mechanisms to address deaths that might occur overseas among Guyana's diaspora.

Though the recent reforms are welcome, they have not been fully implemented. Stakeholders reported that information received via these channels is frequently insufficient to identify voters with full confidence, and the commission has not agreed upon an effective modality to fully operationalize the new provisions. Some deaths, including those that occur overseas or in villages far from the country's major towns, simply are never reported to authorities.

In addition to improvements in removing names of the dead from the OLE, Guyana has strong procedures in place to protect against multiple voting. Carter Center observers did not observe any attempts at multiple voting on election day and noted that procedures to protect against doing so were well-implemented.

Commonwealth Citizens

Guyana's constitution establishes that commonwealth citizens are eligible to vote if they are 18 years of age or older, duly registered, and have lived in the country for a

year prior to the qualifying date. This generous provision became particularly controversial in the days surrounding election day, with multiple opposition parties alleging the incumbent government had taken advantage of it to register foreign workers employed on government contracts. GECOM informed The Carter Center that the OLE included 2,000 commonwealth citizens, about half of whom were reportedly registered prior to the 2020 elections.

Conclusions

The integrity of Guyana's voter list has long been a source of tension and debate in Guyana and is often a primary factor influencing confidence in electoral processes and their outcomes. While legal reforms in advance of these elections sought to address some concerns and enhance the integrity of the list, more needs to be done in advance of future elections to improve implementation of these reforms. It is imperative that GECOM implement procedures for removing voters who have died within Guyana using the new provisions under the law and explore additional measures to remove registered voters who have died in the diaspora.

The Center also recommends that GECOM consider an independent audit or test of the voter list well before the next election. This could be modeled on the test conducted on the voter list prior to the 1992 election, in which a sample of names was tested to determine each registrant's current status. A "list-to-people" audit in which a statistically relevant sample of names from the OLE is selected and tested would help increase understanding of the state of the list, build confidence where warranted, and identify need for reform and updates.

In the interest of transparency and to increase public trust in the list of electors, GECOM could consider publishing the OLE with additional data fields included, including gender as well as the number of commonwealth citizens.

Voter Education and Access to Public Information

Voter education is not just a procedural step in the electoral cycle; it is a cornerstone of genuine democratic participation. International law recognizes voter education as essential to ensuring that every citizen can make informed

33 U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, International Migrant Stock dataset 2024. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock>

choices and fully exercise their right to vote. To protect universal and equal suffrage, Guyana should ensure that voter education is accessible to the broadest possible pool of citizens. Doing so is not only a legal obligation under Guyana’s international commitments but also is imperative for strengthening public trust and safeguarding the integrity of its democracy.³⁴ Access to information is a critical means of ensuring informed public participation, transparency, and accountability in the electoral process. Elections conducted in the absence of adequate public access to information, including key election-related matters, harm the electoral process.

The Carter Center’s limited observation mission did not conduct a thorough analysis of voter education around these elections. However, the mission noted that GECOM’s civic and voter education unit was understaffed and did not have a manager during the period leading up to the 2025 elections. While some voter and civic education efforts were observed, they were limited in reach and scope.

Beyond voter education, the process reflected additional shortcomings in access to public information related to the elections. These include the lack of a completed and published census, the absence of campaign and party finance data, limited information about GECOM decision-making, and obstacles faced by some media outlets and citizens in obtaining public information. On a related note, the U.N. Human Rights Committee, in its May 2024 report, noted concerns that the commissioner of information does not respond to all requests and urged Guyana to ensure the right of access to information is effectively exercised.

The Carter Center recommends that the new parliament address the long-standing obstacles to the public’s right to information held by their government and take decisive action to address them.

For future elections, expanding efforts to share voter information and raise awareness about all aspects of the electoral process—especially any new or revised procedures—will be essential to strengthening public trust and confidence. Information campaigns should be tailored to the needs of different sectors of the population, including youth, Amerindian communities, and persons with

disabilities. They should be visible and accessible across all regions of Guyana. The Carter Center recommends that GECOM allocate sufficient resources to its civic and voter education unit so that comprehensive public education initiatives can be carried out, helping citizens make informed decisions and reinforcing confidence in Guyana’s electoral processes and their outcomes.

Candidates, Parties, and Campaigns

The right to be elected is a universal right that requires states to ensure that their citizens have a genuine opportunity to stand for public office, free from unreasonable restrictions. Equitable treatment of candidates and political parties, along with the preservation of an open and transparent campaign environment, is essential to maintaining the integrity of the democratic electoral process.³⁵

Guyana’s legal framework, together with its international and regional commitments, establishes clear obligations related to the nomination of candidates, political parties, and the conduct of campaign periods. These obligations include the right to be elected, the right to freely express political opinions, and the right to participate in public affairs.

The Carter Center released a preelection statement that commented on the candidate nomination and campaign periods. This statement highlighted concerns that some parties declined to sign a political party code of conduct, as well as concerns about campaign finance regulations, the use of state resources, and the realization of the rights to be elected and to participate in public affairs.

Candidate Registration

The Carter Center observed nomination day, July 14, in a festive environment of spirited competition. Political parties interested in contesting the election were required to submit to GECOM their lists of candidates for the general elections and those regional elections in which they wanted to compete. To qualify for the general election, a party must contest in at least six of the electoral districts. Ultimately, six of the seven³⁶ parties that submitted candidate lists were approved to contest the election. Of the six, four—APNU,

34 U.N. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 25(b). U.N. Human Rights Council, General Comment 25, “the Right to Participate in Public Affairs, Voting Rights, and the Right to Equal Access to Public Service,” para 11.

35 U.N. ICCPR art. 19

36 The six parties whose lists were approved were A Partnership for National Unity (APNU), Alliance for Change (AFC), Assembly for Liberty and Prosperity (ALP), Forward Guyana Movement (FGM), People’s Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C), and We Invest in Nationhood (WIN). The only party to submit lists on nomination day that were not approved to contest the election was the Horizon and Star Party.

AFC, PPP/C and WIN—were approved to contest in all 10 districts for the regional elections. This represented a winnowing from the 21 parties that had earlier submitted party symbols to GECOM for approval. The ALP was approved to contest in six districts (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10) and FGM in seven (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10). Of the six political parties contesting the election, two nominated a woman as their presidential candidate and three designated women as their prime minister candidates. Parties had until July 21 to notify GECOM of any joinder of lists, but none did so this year unlike in 2020.

Campaign Period

All of the political parties approved to contest the election campaigned across the country. The campaign proceeded in a generally peaceful manner, with no major incidents of violence, although some confrontations at public meetings and overheated rhetoric were reported. Videos posted on social media showed flags of one party being removed and replaced by those of another party.

Posters, billboards, and party flags were on display widely, and the parties held events ranging from large rallies to small public meetings. The Center received complaints from new parties about delays in police approval for campaign events. The police had indicated that they intended to approve campaign requests quickly.

The Carter Center noted with concern that WIN presidential candidate Azruddin Mohamed had been denied interior airline service for campaign flights. The Center also noted that the party in some instances was denied use of local public areas for campaign meetings. These issues raised concerns about equal application of the rights of freedom of association.

Code of Conduct

On Aug. 5, political parties gathered to sign a code of conduct agreement developed by Guyana's Ethnic Relations Commission, in which parties committed to peaceful campaigns, avoidance of hate speech and ethnically divisive rhetoric, and prioritization of the nation over any political party. The Carter Center notes that two political parties—APNU and Forward Guyana Movement—did not sign the code of conduct.³⁷ The Center called on all parties to sign the code and to commit to its principles, which

reflected the laws of Guyana and international standards for democratic elections.

Freedom of Association and Reports of Intimidation

Freedoms of opinion and expression, as well as freedoms of association and assembly, are essential elements of the right of political participation.³⁸ The Carter Center received allegations from opposition and new parties of an atmosphere of fear among some public-sector workers, local business owners, and community members concerned about losing their jobs or future economic opportunities if they did not display support for the ruling party. In two instances reported to The Carter Center, an employee of Guyana Sugar Corp. and a police corporal appear to have been transferred to new posts after encounters with WIN's presidential candidate.

The Carter Center also expressed concern about reports from the Guyana Press Association of attempts by government officials, opposition candidates, and party supporters to censor and intimidate journalists. Others worried that political parties might pay electors to vote, prompting GECOM to issue a bulletin reminding voters that this is illegal and eventually decided not to allow phones in the voting booth.

On Wednesday, Aug. 27, the PPP/C submitted a formal complaint to the ERC regarding threats of postelection violence. Though the complaint was an active case and was not released publicly in advance of election day, it seemed to be related to alleged comments by the leaders of APNU and WIN that could be interpreted as threatening violence should they lose elections they considered to be unfair.

The Right to be Elected and the Right to Political Participation

Equitable treatment of candidates and political parties during elections, and the maintenance of an open and transparent campaign environment, are critical to ensuring the integrity of democratic elections and the right of every citizen to be elected. This is a universal right that requires states to ensure that their citizens have the opportunity to run for elected office, free from unreasonable restrictions.

In June 2024, the U.S. government sanctioned WIN presidential candidate Azruddin Mohamed, his father, Nazar Mohamed, several of their businesses, and Guyanese

³⁷ FGM argued that the code was unenforceable and should cover other institutions such as the police force and election commission.

³⁸ U.N., ICCPR, Article 26. U.N. (CCPR), General Comment 25.

government official Mae Thomas Jr. for public corruption.³⁹ The U.S. Department of Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) blocked Mohamed’s assets in the U.S. financial system, and aimed to prevent transactions of money, goods, and services that would benefit Mohamed or the others in the U.S. financial system.

After WIN’s list was approved in July 2025, three local commercial banks reportedly closed the personal accounts of approximately 70 WIN candidates, party members, and their associates. Some candidates were dismissed by private-sector employers for appearing on WIN’s list. Although the banks did not provide a detailed public explanation of their actions, they were reportedly concerned about secondary sanctions and their banking relationships with the U.S. financial system.

The Guyanese banking system operates within national laws and international regulatory standards to prevent the misuse of the international financial system. While the Center recognizes the banking sector’s caution, the relevant Financial Action Task Force and OFAC standards⁴⁰ and guidelines recommend a “risk-based” approach⁴¹ to such matters and discourages overcompliance with practices such as blanket account closures (“de-risking”).⁴² The relevant practice indicates that the risk of secondary sanctions arises when there is a prohibited transaction or other significant dealing with a sanctioned person. Mere political association, without evidence of such transactions or facilitation, does not constitute the proper basis for termination of accounts.

The Carter Center expressed concern that banks were over-complying with U.S. sanctions, undermining political participation and electoral integrity by discouraging people from participating fully in the political process.

The private sector has an important role to play in safeguarding democratic rights and freedoms and, as such, must ensure that decisions do not discriminate against individuals for exercising those rights. After the election, the Center requested a meeting with the Guyana Association of Bankers to gain perspective on its members’ concerns, but the request was declined.

On Aug. 26, the U.S. embassy asserted that the Guyanese would only run afoul of the sanctions if they engaged in financial transactions directly with a sanctioned individual and that “simply belonging to a party led by a sanctioned individual does not automatically trigger penalties.” The Carter Center notes that this additional information, while important, was provided very late in the campaign period.

Misuse of State Resources and State Media

The Carter Center received multiple allegations from political parties and civil society that the ruling party misused state resources. Social media and news reports were rife with photographs suggesting this problem. The use of state resources for party campaigning runs contrary to Guyana’s international obligations with respect to campaign finance.⁴³

The Carter Center received reports alleging that the ruling party frequently used state-owned vehicles to campaign and took advantage of “10-day workers” (employed part-time by the government) in campaign activities. Official government statements about the opening of schools and other public buildings regularly featured public officials in full ruling-party regalia, blurring the line between the state and the party. Within a month of the election, the president announced he would promote more than 2,800 Guyana Police Force (GPF) officers and the government announced that bridge crossings would be free.⁴⁴ These and similar measures can be seen to afford the ruling party an unfair advantage. While Guyana’s laws do not prohibit new government spending after an election is called, such spending can run contrary to international standards and best practices intended to ensure a level playing field.

Although The Carter Center did not conduct systematic media monitoring, the mission noted and received reports indicating that state media coverage appeared to be biased in favor of the ruling party. Several political parties reported limited access to state media, with their events receiving little or no coverage, and one party alleged

39 <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2401>

40 <https://ofac.treasury.gov/media/16331/download?inline>

41 <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/content/dam/fatf-gafi/recommendations/FATF%20Recommendations%202012.pdf.coredownload.inline.pdf>

42 <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/en/publications/Fatfgeneral/Rba-and-de-risking.html>

43 States must take measures to prevent corruption. Treaty obligations establish the general requirement and indicate that States shall promote transparency in public decision-making as a means of combating corruption. U.N. Convention Against Corruption, articles 18 and 13.

44 In March 2025, the government of Guyana announced a new policy granting free bridge crossings. Although it was introduced months earlier, it only took effect on August 1 – during the campaign season. Implementing the policy without the necessary regulations raises concerns, as it can create problems and potentially undermine a level playing field.

it was denied the opportunity to place advertisements in state media.

Approval of Late Application of Political Party Agents

On Aug. 30, just two days before election day, GECOM approved the appointment of political party agents from the AFC, ALP, FGM, and WIN whose applications had initially been rejected. These parties had missed a statutory deadline that requires notification be given to returning officers within seven days of election day. The parties appealed, and The Carter Center publicly commended GECOM for its unanimous decision to approve these agents, noting that the presence of political party agents at the polling place for voting and counting on election day is fundamental to an electoral process. The decision by GECOM helped to increase transparency.

Campaign Finance

Guyana's international human rights commitments obligate the state to take concrete measures to prevent corruption, particularly in campaign financing. Effective regulation of campaign finance should promote a transparent and accountable system in which all political parties and candidates are treated equitably. This includes measures to ensure that state resources—funds, personnel, infrastructure, equipment, and regulatory/administrative controls—are not misused for campaign purposes. Transparency in funding sources helps safeguard the integrity of the electoral process and ensures that political influence is not disproportionately shaped by wealth or hidden interests. In addition, states may impose reasonable limitations on campaign expenditures to help level the playing field and protect voters' freedom of choice. Such measures contribute to fair competition and strengthen public confidence in the democratic process.⁴⁵

Guyana's legal framework does not provide comprehensive legislation on party and campaign finance. Existing provisions in RoPA are limited to outdated expenditure ceilings and a requirement that declarations of electoral expenses be submitted to GECOM within 35 days after the

declaration of results.⁴⁶ The CEO must publish a summary of these reports in the official gazette, and the reports may be inspected for two years by anyone who pays a fee. In the 2025 electoral process, no political party submitted a declaration of electoral expenses.

There is no state funding of political parties in Guyana, and the law does not regulate donations. The legal framework also lacks mechanisms to ensure enforcement of expenditure reporting requirements. While the High Court is empowered to impose fines, these provisions have never been applied. It remains unclear who may submit cases to the court, and no effective oversight exists.

Parties conducted fundraising events throughout the course of the election campaign. The substantial advantage of the ruling party over its competitors was apparent. As noted in more detail above, there were allegations of the ruling party's misuse of state resources, including at the regional level, while small parties lacked financial resources to campaign in all regions. This is a long-standing problem that has existed under different administrations and noted in previous election observation reports. The WIN party was reported to have financed its campaign largely from the wealth of a single individual—the party leader—who had been sanctioned by the U.S. for alleged corrupt practices.

Conclusions

Gaps in Guyana's legal and regulatory framework regarding campaign finance contributed to significant inequities between political parties, particularly some newly established ones, and limited transparency about the sources and use of campaign funding, contrary to Guyana's international obligations and the interests of citizens in knowing what monied interests are financing the campaigns of their political candidates. Continued neglect of this issue can erode public confidence in the integrity of the democratic process and the legitimacy of political representation.

For future elections, The Carter Center calls on Guyana to strengthen its campaign finance regulations and their enforcement, including updating expenditure ceilings, defining legal contributions, enacting campaign contribution limits, and publishing the names of contributors. The authorities also should consider a system of public

⁴⁵ U.N. Convention Against Corruption, art. 7.3: "Each State Party shall also consider taking appropriate legislative and administrative measures, consistent with the objectives of this Convention and in accordance with the fundamental principles of its domestic law, to enhance transparency in the funding of candidatures for elected public office and, where applicable, the funding of political parties." And HRC, CCPR, GC No. 25, para. 19: "Reasonable limitations on campaign expenditure may be justified where this is necessary to ensure that the free choice of voters is not undermined or the democratic process distorted by the disproportionate expenditure on behalf of any candidate or party."

⁴⁶ The expenditure limit is set at approximately US\$240 per candidate on the list. However, the wording of the RoPA remains unclear as to whether candidates' personal expenses in connections to elections are included within this limit.

campaign financing to ensure a more level playing field for smaller parties. Campaign finance reports should be required and made available to the public periodically, including in advance of elections. Such transparency of reporting is critical in promoting voters' ability to make an informed choice on election day. Campaign finance reporting requirements should be well-enforced, with appropriate penalties for any political parties that do not comply.

The government should strengthen regulations to ensure that state resources are not misused for campaign purposes by any political party, thus blurring the line between the state and political party activity. The principle of avoiding undue incumbency advantage means that the use of state resources not available to all candidates in the electoral campaign should be prohibited. Guyana should consider defining a formal campaign period during which government officials would refrain from major announcements on promotions, appointments, or new projects using public funds or institutional resources. Restrictions would apply to the conduct of official events such as ribbon-cutting ceremonies for public infrastructure to ensure that they are distinct from campaigning. Such regulations can be applied in a manner that maintains the right of incumbents to run on their accomplishments. Finally, rules for the conduct of public officials, the proper management of public finances, and those that ensure an impartial public sector also should be reviewed and strengthened in this context.

In parallel, it is critically important to establish an independent body with sufficient authority and resources to oversee and enforce campaign finance provisions. Strengthening both the regulatory framework and the enforcement capacity would enhance equality, transparency, and accountability in the electoral processes. The state also should consider providing training and support to political parties to enhance their capacity to comply with campaign finance reporting regulations that are consistent with international standards for democratic elections.

Participation of Women, Minorities, and Marginalized Groups

Freedom from discrimination and the equal right to participate in the political process are enshrined in numerous international and regional treaties of which Guyana

is a signatory.⁴⁷ Despite these commitments, women, Amerindians, people with disability, and other minority groups were underrepresented during the electoral process.

Participation of Women

Under international law, states must take all appropriate measures, including temporary special measures, to eliminate discrimination against women in political and public life. There are no gender quotas or other special temporary measures in place to foster greater political participation by women in Guyana. The constitution envisions an electoral system that includes women in parliament in numbers “reflective of their proportion among the electorate.” However, this has not been coherently translated into legislation, as the Representation of the People Act requires that political parties include women in their lists of nominees but does not require that the parties allocate any seats to women. Furthermore, candidates are not identified by gender on party lists when published by GECOM, making it very difficult for a transparent review to ensure that parties have complied with the gender requirement.

When considering reform of Guyana's electoral system, The Carter Center urges that legal framework changes commit special measures that support women's political participation, consistent with Guyana's international obligations and with international election standards.

Participation of People with Disabilities

An inclusive election process requires that all voters be able to cast their ballots without being impeded by physical barriers at polling stations. States have an obligation to ensure that accommodations are made for people with disabilities so that they can exercise their right to vote.⁴⁸ Furthermore, reasonable measures should be implemented to guarantee the secrecy of the vote for voters with disabilities.

Regrettably, the secrecy of the vote for people with disabilities is not ensured in Guyana. These voters may cast their ballot in person, through proxy voting, or with the assistance of a person of their choice, including presiding officers. While the Persons with Disabilities Act, adopted in 2010, mandates that GECOM ensure barrier-free polling stations and adequate arrangements for people with disabilities, these provisions have not been implemented.⁴⁹

47 U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; UNHCR, ICCPR.

48 U.N. CRPD, art. 29.

49 See Persons with Disabilities Act, 2010, subpart IX, art. 33.

According to the National Commission on Disability, there are approximately 25,000 people with disabilities in Guyana, including those below voting age. Some parties included people with disabilities in their candidate lists and, positively, addressed disability-related issues in their manifestos.⁵⁰

The majority of polling stations did not provide independent access for elderly voters or people with physical disabilities. Polling places are located mostly in public buildings, which often do not ensure accessibility for voters with disabilities. Special measures, such as ramps for wheelchair users or stencils for visually impaired voters, were not in place, reportedly due to the limited time between nomination day and election day. Positively, on the initiative of GECOM and in collaboration with the Guyana Council of Organizations for Persons with Disabilities (GCOPD), more than 5,000 polling staff received sensitivity training ahead of election day. In addition, special brochures were produced and disseminated to polling officials to guide their interaction with voters with disabilities, and GECOM reportedly improved voter education advertisements targeting people with disabilities. Furthermore, GCOPD conducted nine training sessions on the voting process for people with disabilities across the country.

In past elections, GECOM provided tactile ballot guides to ensure the secrecy of the vote of visually impaired people and also has previously procured portable ramps to improve accessibility of some polling locations. Unfortunately, these and other steps were not implemented in the 2025 elections.

To ensure equal access to the polling process for voters with disabilities, GECOM should guarantee that polling stations are accessible and consider expanding methods of voting, such as assigning voters to accessible polling stations or consideration of curbside voting. GECOM should ensure the availability of tactile ballots to guarantee independent voting for people with visual impairments.

Participation of Ethnic Minorities

Protecting religious and ethnic minorities is essential to maintaining a democratic society. The right to be free from discrimination and to receive equal treatment under the law

must be upheld throughout the electoral process, including during voter registration.⁵¹

Guyana is home to an estimated 78,000 Indigenous people who reside in approximately 200 villages and communities across the country. Indigenous communities in Guyana historically have been marginalized, both in terms of their geographic isolation and their limited political representation. Some legal framework changes made before these elections sought to increase inclusivity, including making it easier for *toshaos* to help people secure birth certificates and accepting information from *toshaos* regarding deaths.

Most party manifestos featured issues related to Indigenous peoples, with pledges ranging from improving access to education and health and addressing land demarcation to amending the Amerindian Act (2006). Parties campaigned in Indigenous-populated areas. However, some parties lacked the financial resources to conduct outreach effectively because of high transportation costs. Some interlocutors reported instances of intimidation and pressure on community by the ruling party. In addition, one presidential candidate was denied air services to campaign.

Although no official figures are available, The Carter Center was informed that a portion of the adult Indigenous population remains unregistered to vote, primarily because of the lack of birth certificates, which prevents their inclusion on the voter list. In some villages, voter education remains limited, mostly because of the limited outreach capacity of the radio or broadcasters.

Participation of the LGBTI Community

International law protects citizens from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Guyana remains the only country on the South American continent where homosexual acts remain illegal.

A history of discrimination and restrictive legislation in Guyana has limited the role of the LGBTI community in public life, including their participation in elections as candidates, political party officials, and election workers. The Carter Center condemns Guyana's anti-gay legislation and is concerned that homophobic speech prevents members of the LGBTI community from meaningful and open participation in the political life of the country. The

50 Reportedly, an FGM candidate faced difficulties voting due to the inaccessibility of her polling station.

51 UNGA ICCPR, art. 26.

Carter Center recommends that discriminatory legislation be repealed.⁵²

Conclusions

Despite Guyana's international commitments to equality and nondiscrimination in political participation, women, people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, and the LGBTI community remain underrepresented and faced persistent barriers during the electoral process. Women's political participation is limited by the absence of special measures such as gender quotas or other enforceable legal mechanisms to translate constitutional principles into practice, while the lack of gender-identified party lists undermines transparency. Voters with disabilities encountered widespread physical inaccessibility at polling stations and insufficient measures to guarantee independent and secret voting, despite legal obligations and some positive initiatives such as staff training and voter education.

Indigenous communities continued to face structural obstacles, including reported challenges accessing voter registration due to documentation gaps, limited voter education, high campaign outreach costs, and reported intimidation, despite increased attention in party platforms. Members of the LGBTI community faced exclusion rooted in criminalizing legislation and discriminatory rhetoric, restricting their meaningful participation in public life. Addressing these challenges requires legal reforms and targeted measures consistent with Guyana's international human rights obligations.

The Media

The media play a vital role in elections by providing voters with the information necessary to make an informed choice on election day. In Guyana, freedom of expression and press freedom are guaranteed by the constitution and international commitments. The Guyana National Broadcasting Authority (GNBA), established under the 2011 Broadcasting Act, functions as the supervisory and regulatory body for broadcast media. Under the act, the chairperson and other members of the GNBA are appointed by the president, with one member nominated

by the leader of the opposition, for a three-year term renewable upon reappointment. The appointment process does not provide sufficient safeguards for institutional independence, and according to some stakeholders, contributes to perceptions of the limited impartiality of the GNBA.

There are no specific provisions regulating media conduct during the election period. For example, there is no legal provision for free airtime for the contestants on the state-owned broadcaster, and equitable access to political parties and candidates is not guaranteed. The only exception in the Broadcasting Act 2011 requires that, at election time, broadcast licensees work with political parties and consult with GECOM to allocate airtime to parties. However, this provision is weak and difficult to enforce. According to GECOM, no consultations on this matter have taken place. There are no regulations for printed media.

The GNBA is mandated to establish a system for monitoring broadcast content to ensure compliance with requirements for balanced and fair reporting, and to issue guidelines for broadcasters to follow. The most recent guidelines were issued in 2017 to assist broadcasters in complying with the provisions of the Broadcasting Act. However, the guidelines are not tailored to the electoral period, and the GNBA has not undertaken enforcement to ensure balanced and fair coverage during elections.⁵³

The Carter Center mission did not conduct systematic media monitoring. Nevertheless, it noted reports of state media coverage mostly favoring the ruling party, including on its social media platforms. All opposition parties expressed a lack of confidence in state-owned media, alleging limited or biased coverage of their campaign activities and claiming that their requests for coverage often were rejected. At the same time, some representatives of state media reported challenges in establishing contact and maintaining communication with opposition parties. The Center was informed by the National Communication Network TV that only the PPP/C placed paid advertisements.

Several journalists expressed concerns about the lack of access to information from state bodies and GECOM, with some further reporting that GECOM demonstrated

⁵² Guyana's constitution protects fundamental rights such as equality before the law and freedom from discrimination and generally guarantees fundamental freedoms. However, Guyana's constitution includes a "savings clause" that protects existing laws inherited from the colonial era from being struck down by courts on constitutional grounds. Sections of the Colonial-era Criminal Law (Offences) Act of 1893 still make same-sex sexual acts between men illegal. While these laws are rarely enforced today, their continued existence fosters discrimination and legal vulnerability for LGBT people.

⁵³ The GNBA informed the Center's observation mission that it maintains permanent monitors to verify broadcasters' compliance with the Broadcasting Act; however, this monitoring does not extend to election coverage and is largely limited to content such as sexual or violent material.

preferential treatment toward state media. After elections, Reporters Without Borders expressed concern about government hostility toward the media and called on President Ali's administration to make press freedom a priority during its new five-year mandate.⁵⁴

Conclusions

The Carter Center did not conduct systematic media monitoring around these elections in Guyana, but its observers and experts noted a consistent bias of state-owned media and heard consistent reports of unequal access to media. The Center recommends a review of legislation related to media to strengthen the independence of the regulatory body and introduce clear requirements for broadcasters to ensure fair and balanced coverage during election period. This could be achieved by establishing a system of free airtime for all political parties participating in elections.

Civil Society and National Observers

International law guarantees all individuals the right to participate in the public affairs of their country—a right that extends beyond formal politics to include engagement in nongovernmental organizations, citizen observer groups, and voter education initiatives. Civil society plays an indispensable role in strengthening democracy by promoting transparency, accountability, and public trust in the electoral process. By actively participating, citizens help ensure that elections are fair, credible, and reflective of the will of the people, reinforcing the integrity of democratic institutions and the legitimacy of their outcomes. In the time between elections, civil society organizations also can play critical roles in advocating for election reforms.

An important deficiency in Guyana's democracy is an overall weak civil society, particularly in the areas of

democracy and governance. Though in past elections there have been efforts of civil society actors to form nonpartisan democracy and governance groups that would include citizen election observation among their activities, none were active for these elections. While the business community and some professional organizations accredited citizen observers, there was no active nonpartisan citizen observation organization.⁵⁵ Civil society organizations that seek to protect and advance the rights of marginalized communities such as the Amerindian community, people with disabilities, and the LGBTI community lacked resources and operated at times under fear of government retaliation.

Under the previous administration, the government began to develop legislation on the regulation of nongovernmental organizations. The existing legal and regulatory framework has long been recognized as inadequate for a modern nonprofit sector in a democracy. Early and good-faith engagement of civil society in these efforts can build trust to ensure that everyone's needs and concerns are met, while respecting the critical role that civil society plays in a democracy.

Finally, given the decline in international aid that traditionally has supported civil society organizations in the past, parliament could consider using some of Guyana's newfound oil wealth to endow an independent civil society development foundation. Such a foundation, led by an independent board and modeled on private foundations elsewhere, would combine a mandate for building the capacity of the civic sector broadly and provide grants to civil society activities in pursuit of civic initiatives and partnerships.

These recommendations would help strengthen informed participation in Guyana's continued democratic development.

54 RSF statement on Sept. 12, 2025: <https://rsf.org/en/guyana-following-president-ali-s-re-election-rsf-calls-reset-government-s-relationship-media>

55 A small number of organizations were accredited by GECOM to observe these elections, representing organizations such as the American Chamber of Commerce, Private Sector Commission, the Bar Association, the Ethnic Relations Commission, and others. The Carter Center did not encounter citizen observers in our observation of voting, counting, and tabulation. No organization appeared to be respected as nonpartisan with trained observers collecting data and making evidence-based reports. Guyana does not have a civil society observation organization that is recognized by the Global Network of Domestic Election Observers. https://officialgazette.gov.gy/images/gazette2025/aug/Extra_26AUGUST2025GecomNoti1.pdf

I Polling and Counting

The integrity of voting operations on election day is central to ensuring that an election meets its democratic obligations. Under Guyana’s international commitments, all citizens are entitled to universal and equal suffrage, subject only to reasonable and objective limitations. A fundamental requirement of international law is that elections be conducted by secret ballot, which guarantees that the will of the people is expressed freely and that individual votes cannot be linked to voters—thereby protecting against intimidation or political retribution. Except in cases where a voter, such as an illiterate or disabled person, is lawfully assisted, no voter may waive the right to the secrecy of the ballot.

Accurate and transparent polling and counting are equally essential to democratic integrity. Properly managed voting and counting processes ensure that every eligible vote is recorded and tabulated correctly, providing citizens with confidence that election outcomes truly reflect the collective will. By safeguarding both the secrecy of the ballot and the transparency of vote counting, a democracy upholds public trust, prevents disputes, and strengthens the legitimacy of its institutions.

Advance Voting

Guyana’s legal framework for elections allows for advance voting by disciplined forces—military and law enforcement agencies—and by diplomats abroad and their families.⁵⁶

Advance Voting for Disciplined Services

Guyana’s electoral procedures designate a separate voting day in advance of national elections in which members of Guyana’s disciplined forces who would be on duty on election day have an opportunity to cast their ballots in secret.

On Friday, Aug. 22, members of Guyana’s disciplined services had the opportunity to cast their ballots at more than 80 polling locations across the country. Each ballot cast is stored in a secure envelope identifying the district in which the voter is registered; these are then sorted and distributed to polling stations in the relevant districts. On election day, these ballots are “intermixed” with other ballots and added to ballot boxes, and then they are counted along with other ballots after the polls close.⁵⁷ The practice ensures that any overall political leaning of the disciplined forces remains unknown, as their ballots are not disclosed as a bloc.

The Carter Center observed disciplined services voting on Aug. 22, including the sorting of ballots the following day, and found the process to be well-administered.

Election Day

The quality of voting operations on election day is crucial to determining the degree to which an election is consistent with its democratic obligations.⁵⁸ Carter Center observers observed all key phases of the process, including opening, voting, closing, and counting procedures.

⁵⁶ Ninety-two ballots were sent abroad to 20 embassies to enfranchise diplomats and their families.

⁵⁷ GECOM’s DCEO told The Carter Center that the commission tries to intermix no more than 25 ballots at a given polling station and looks for polling stations with between 50% and 75% of the maximum number of 400 voters so as not to cause turnout to exceed that threshold.

⁵⁸ U.N. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 25 (b); U.N. Human Rights Committee, General Comment 25, para. 21; U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 21 (3); Inter-Parliamentary Union Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections, Article 2 (6).

Opening

Of the polling stations visited by Carter Center observers, 94% opened on time. Opening was calm and conducted according to procedure in almost all polling stations observed. All material was present and correct in 92% of the polling stations visited. Carter Center observers reported high turnout at the start of the day, with electors queuing before the polls opened. Polling staff fully or adequately implemented opening procedures in all stations observed.

Polling

On Sept. 1, voting took place at 2,790 polling stations in 1,140 polling places across the country, with a maximum of 400 voters per station.⁵⁹ Carter Center observers reported that citizens across Guyana queued peacefully to cast their votes. On election day, observers from the Center visited 234 polling stations across all 10 regions, representing approximately 8% of the total—providing a substantial level of observation coverage. Of the polling stations visited by Carter Center observers, 74% were in urban areas and 26% in rural areas.

Overall, observers described the atmosphere throughout the day as calm and orderly. Observers assessed positively the implementation of procedures at every station visited, with no significant irregularities reported. In most polling stations observed, polling staff appeared well-trained and demonstrated reasonable or very good knowledge of the voting process. Voting proceeded smoothly, with minimal technical issues in the stations observed—an important pillar supporting election integrity. Polling staff implemented voting procedures fully or adequately in almost all observed polling stations. Voter identification, ballot issuing, inking, and other voting procedures were followed to a substantial degree in observed stations. No objections were made to presiding officers at 97% of stations observed. Overall, polling stations were evaluated as calm, efficient, and peaceful.

Observers reported a strong presence of political party agents at polling stations visited, with PPP/C at 97%, APNU at 90%, and WIN at 85%. The other three parties contesting the elections were present in much smaller shares of observed polling stations: AFC at 7%, FGM at 3%, and ALP at 2%.

Unfortunately, domestic observers were noted at very few polling stations.

Proxy Voting

Certain voters on the official list of electors are allowed to vote by proxy, including election officials working on election day, candidates, Transport and Harbours Department employees, people with disabilities, and members of the disciplined forces who did not vote on the day set aside for them to vote in person. Applications for proxy voting must be submitted to ROs and were due by Aug. 11, three weeks before election day. The Carter Center observed seven instances of proxy voting (3% of observations); polling staff conducted this aspect of the process in accordance with the law.

Police Presence

Security for sensitive polling materials was provided by officers of the Guyana Police Force. The GPF assigned an officer to every polling station in the country. By law, GPF officers can only enter a polling station if specifically requested to do so by that station's presiding officer for the purpose of maintaining order. Throughout election day, Carter Center observers frequently encountered GPF officers inside polling stations. While it was consistently unclear if a given GPF officer was present at the specific invitation of a presiding officer, neither polling staff nor voters raised concerns about their presence, and they did not seem to interfere with the process.

It is possible that their presence was the result of an overzealous interpretation of guidance to provide ballot box security (specifically to “never let the ballot box out of your sight”), though the police commissioner had confirmed to The Carter Center well in advance of election day that officers were not to enter polling stations unless invited. Despite this, some GPF officers did seem to take notes on the proceedings, and others asked observers for their names and took pictures of voters' IDs. In at least one polling station, an officer was tracking the total number of voters who had cast ballots.

Given historical sensitivities around the role of the police and tensions between the police and the public, the presence of GPF officers in otherwise orderly polling stations raises concerns about the potential for intimidation. In future elections, and in compliance with Guyana's

⁵⁹ A number of polling stations did exceed this ceiling, but none had more than 420 voters.

domestic law, GPF officers should be clearly instructed to remain outside polling stations unless called upon by the presiding officer to assist in resolving a specific incident.

Ballot Secrecy

In the weeks preceding election day, the possibility that voters might take photographs of their ballots using their phones became a topic of national discussion. Many Guyanese expressed concern that such images could be used to prove how a voter cast their ballot, either in exchange for money or due to coercion. In response, GECOM conducted a public information campaign instructing voters not to take photographs of their ballots, while acknowledging that the commission lacked the legal authority to prohibit the practice.

On election day, voting screens often were positioned in ways that made it possible to observe whether voters were taking photographs of their ballots. In many cases, however, this positioning inadvertently allowed people to see how voters marked their ballots. Carter Center observers reported that in 9% of polling stations observed, voters were unable to cast their ballots in secret. Qualitative reporting from observers suggests that the issue was more widespread than this figure indicates, although observers did not report any instances in which voters or others raised concerns, nor any confirmed cases in which ballot secrecy was violated.

International standards for democratic elections require that the secrecy of the ballot be maintained throughout the entire voting process. For future elections, the Carter Center urges that polling station layout and the training of poll workers be improved to ensure that ballot secrecy is fully protected.

Political Party “Help Desks”

On election day, Carter Center observers frequently encountered what the Center has previously described as “help desks” established by political parties near polling places. During these elections, the vast majority of such desks appeared to have been set up by the PPP/C. When approached, staff at these desks often stated that they were helping voters locate their polling stations. Guyanese election law does not explicitly prohibit campaigning on election day and only restricts parties from “interfering” with voters within 200 yards of a polling place.

While the party “help desks” generally appeared to comply with the law, in some instances they appeared to be involved in get-out-the-vote efforts. Additionally, some desks – and the attire worn by their staff—seemed designed to resemble GECOM. On one occasion, the mayor of a town was observed at a help desk urging people to vote for the PPP/C, telling observers, “This is PPP/C territory, and we’re making sure it stays that way.” Even when these help desks are engaged in lawful and legitimate activities, they should be clearly identified as partisan efforts and clearly distinguished from GECOM.

Closing and Counting

The accurate and fair counting of votes plays an indispensable role in ensuring that the electoral process is democratic and reflects the will of the voters. International and regional commitments require that votes be counted by an independent and impartial electoral management body whose counting process is public, transparent, and free of corruption.⁶⁰ The counting process should be transparent and easily verifiable.

The Carter Center observed the closing of the polls at 17 stations across Guyana’s 10 administrative regions. All these stations closed on time, and voters in line at 6 p.m. were allowed to cast their ballot, as required by law. Overall, Carter Center observer teams concluded that polling staff mostly or always followed closing procedures. The electoral atmosphere at the closing was generally described as calm. Party agents were present in all observed polling stations and fulfilled their roles in providing additional transparency to the process to close the stations and prepare for the counting of ballots.

After the close of polls, Carter Center observers continued to observe the counting of ballots at 17 polling stations across the country. During counting, Center observers reported that the atmosphere was “reasonable” or “very good” in a significant majority of locations. In some places a lack of full familiarity with the procedures slowed the process, although the integrity of the process was not affected. The counting of ballots adhered to regulations either fully or adequately in most polling stations visited. Representatives of the PPP/C and APNU were present in almost all polling stations observed (PPP/C at all and APNU at all but one).

⁶⁰ IPU, *Free and Fair Elections: International Law and Practice*, p. 152; U.N. Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 25 on “the Right to Participate in Public Affairs, Voting Rights and the Right to Equal Access to Public Service,” para. 20.

Statement of Poll Carbon Copies

Hard copies of the SoP forms used to record votes at the polling-station level were procured in carbon copy packets, with up to four copies per packet. In many polling places, more than four SoPs were needed, so multiple packets of SoPs needed to be prepared. This meant that data from the first packet of SoPs needed to be transferred manually over to the second packet, creating risk of the potential for human error. In some cases, that transfer of data was done after party agents and others had gone home following a long day, undermining the transparency of the process. In future elections, thought needs to go into procurement and preparation of SoPs to ensure that the process is fully transparent and to eliminate any possibility of human error.

Conclusions

Carter Center observers reported that election-day voting operations in Guyana generally were well-conducted, calm, and orderly, with most polling stations opening on time, adequate materials in place, and procedures properly followed throughout opening, voting, closing, and counting. Observers visited 234 polling stations nationwide and found staff to be largely well-trained, voter turnout strong, and voting procedures implemented effectively. While political party agents were widely present, domestic observers were scarce. Proxy voting was conducted in accordance with the law, and voting proceeded peacefully.

However, concerns were noted regarding the frequent presence of police officers inside polling stations, which—despite not drawing complaints—raised potential intimidation concerns given legal restrictions and historical

sensitivities. Additional issues included shortcomings in ballot secrecy due to polling station layout, which sometimes allowed voters' choices to be visible, and the presence of party "help desks" near polling places that, while largely legal, occasionally resembled election officials or appeared to engage in partisan mobilization. Overall, while the election-day process met many democratic standards, The Carter Center identified areas for improvement, particularly regarding police conduct, ballot secrecy, and clearer separation between election authorities and partisan activities.

Carter Center observers found that the closing of polling stations and the counting of votes in Guyana were generally conducted in a calm, orderly, and transparent manner, consistent with international standards requiring impartial and verifiable vote counting. Polls closed on time at all observed stations; eligible voters in line were allowed to vote; and procedures for the closing of a polling station were mostly or always followed, with party agents present to enhance transparency. Observers reported that the counting of ballot papers at the polling locations on election night proceeded in a reasonable or very good atmosphere, adhered to regulations in most cases, and was not compromised despite occasional delays caused by poll workers' limited familiarity with procedures.

However, observers identified a concern regarding the use of carbon-copy SoP forms, as the need to manually transfer results between multiple packets created risks of human error and, in some cases, reduced transparency when data was transcribed after party agents had departed, underscoring the need for improved SoP preparation and procurement in future elections.

| Postelection Period

Tabulation

The tabulation and transmission of results are critical phases in any electoral process. The tabulation process helps ensure that the will of the people serves as the basis of the authority of government and that votes are counted and reported honestly. The tabulation of results should be verifiable and transparent at all levels of the election administration. The process should be open to observation by political parties, international observers, and the media. Publication of results at the polling-station level, or at the lowest possible level of aggregation, strengthens the level of transparency of the tabulation process and thus, trust and public confidence in the electoral results. Transparent tabulation processes should inspire public trust and confidence in elections and their outcomes.⁶¹

Aftermath of 2020

Guyana's 2020 elections were marred by allegations of fraud during the tabulation phase. The slow and cumbersome process further suffered from the absence of written tabulation procedures, including clear and specific procedures for the publication of results. The Carter Center and other international observers reported that the initial results lacked credibility due to the absence of transparency in the presence of observers. As a result, a national recount was conducted by GECOM and observed by CARICOM, with final results announced five months after election day.⁶² At the time of this report's publication, criminal proceedings remain ongoing against individuals accused of electoral

fraud. The disruption of the tabulation process in 2020 significantly eroded trust between political parties and set the stage for the 2025 elections.

After the 2020 elections, changes were made to Guyana's legal framework for elections to decentralize the tabulation process and increase transparency. In the 2025 elections, tabulation took place at an increased number of locations—17 tabulation centers across Guyana's 10 regions. Importantly, polling station-level results forms were posted physically outside polling stations and also uploaded to GECOM's website for public view at the time they were transferred to a tabulation center for processing. (More discussion about the changes to Guyana's legal framework that impact tabulation can be found in the Legal Framework section of this report.)

In the days following the 2025 elections, The Carter Center observed the tabulation process in all 17 tabulation centers. Observers assessed the implementation of tabulation procedures as "reasonable" or "very good" in all centers and assessed the environment as "reasonable" or "very good" in 96% of all tabulation reports.

At the conclusion of the counting process, polling staff at every polling station produce a statement of poll recording the results of the election at that polling station. A copy of the SoP is posted publicly near the polling station itself, and copies are distributed to party agents, as well as the chair and CEO of GECOM. For the first time, in 2025, SoPs were uploaded to GECOM's website during the tabulation process, providing the public with the opportunity to more easily review results from specific polling stations.

61 U.N. International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights, Article 25(b). OSCE, Copenhagen Document – Second Conference on the Human Dimension of the OSCE, para. 7.4.

62 Additional detail on the tabulation process in the 2020 elections can be found in the Carter Center's public statements and final reports.

GECOM's system for capturing images of SoPs and uploading them to the SoP Image Gallery⁶³ on its website started immediately, with the first SoPs appearing the same night. Although the system was new, it functioned efficiently, with ROs and SROs uploading electronic copies of the SoPs—displayed on a screen—shortly after receiving them at the tabulation centers. During this phase, party agents were largely absent. Once all SoPs for a given district or subdistrict had been uploaded, ROs and SROs began compiling district or subdistrict tabulation forms, displaying each SoP a second time and entering the results on these forms, which were displayed on a separate screen placed near the screen displaying SoPs.

In some centers, the process began late because of the delayed submission of SoPs. (For example, in Region 6, the display of SoPs and compilation of results at a subdistrict started as late as 5:30 p.m. Sept. 2.) Observers witnessed party agents raising objections at 24% of tabulation centers.

The new provisions require that SoPs be uploaded immediately upon receipt. In practice, a photograph of each SoP was displayed on a screen at each tabulation center for all present to see and verify that the information was correct and corresponded to their own information. The new procedures also stipulate that tabulation may only begin once all SoPs have been received. As a result, ROs and SROs uploaded SoPs through the night and well into the morning after election day, delaying the start of tabulation. In practice, GECOM staff were required to display SoPs as they were uploaded and then to display them again for tabulation.

There were few if any technical hitches with the site and by Sept. 3 nearly all of the SoPs were uploaded, and the news media and others were projecting results.

The district ROs began declaring official results the day after the election. Districts 2, 8, 9, and 10 declared results on Tuesday, Sept. 2. The remaining districts—1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7—declared results on Wednesday, Sept. 3.

APNU Call for an Audit and Annulment of Election Results

On Sept. 4, APNU wrote to GECOM requesting a “forensic audit and/or aborting of the 2025 electoral process,” although the letter wasn’t received by GECOM until Sept. 5. The three-page letter addressed to Chairperson Singh

outlined a number of concerns and concluded, “APNU requests that you intervene immediately to direct the Commission not to declare the election results before the completion of a forensic audit of electoral data, including electors’ votes and/or order that fresh elections are now due, in light of the circumstances.” The chairperson responded with a letter to APNU, accompanied by a public press release on Sept. 5, acknowledging that recount requests by APNU of Region 4 subdistricts 4 and 5 had been approved and were underway, but that any objection to the overall results of the election should follow constitutional procedures regarding filing of challenges to election results with Guyana’s High Court.⁶⁴

Recounts

Following the declaration of district-level results, recount requests were required to be submitted by noon Thursday, Sept. 4. APNU requested a general recount of all boxes in District 4 (Subdistrict 4) on the day the results were declared, as well as a limited recount of rejected ballots in 77 boxes in District 5. These recount requests were approved, and the limited recount ultimately was executed as a general recount by agreement of all the parties and GECOM.

WIN requested full recounts of Districts 4 and 8. WIN’s recount requests were denied by GECOM, which stated that the requests were not filed by the proper agent under the law.

The recounts of Districts 4 and 5 commenced on the morning of Sept. 4, with 25 workstations set up at the GECOM compound and agents for the major parties present. The processes moved carefully but slowly, with each box taking between an hour and an hour and a half to recount. International observers and political party agents were present and provided an important level of transparency. There were a few heated arguments, but by and large the process was businesslike and the recounts were complete by the evening of Friday, Sept. 5. Retabulated results for both districts were available by 10 p.m. Sept. 5.

Conclusions

The tabulation of results in Guyana’s 2025 elections took place against the backdrop of the deeply contested 2020 tabulation process, which had eroded public trust and prompted legal and procedural reforms aimed at

⁶³ <https://sopgallery.gecom.org.gy>

⁶⁴ Ultimately, no official challenges of the 2025 election results were filed with Guyana’s High Court.

decentralization and greater transparency. Overall, the legislative changes made to the tabulation process following the 2020 elections were positive and contributed to a more efficient and transparent tabulation process that better ensures results announced reflect the will of the people as expressed on election day.

Carter Center observers reported that tabulation in 2025 was generally conducted in a “reasonable” or “very good” manner across all 17 tabulation centers, with improved transparency through the public posting of SoPs at polling stations and their timely upload to GECOM’s website for public scrutiny. While the new procedures—particularly the requirement to upload all SoPs before beginning tabulation—contributed to delays, the system functioned efficiently, with few technical issues, and allowed observers and the public to follow results closely.

Party agents raised objections in some centers, and APNU challenged the results through audit and recount requests, leading to district-level recounts in Regions 4 and 5 that were conducted transparently, with party agents and international observers present, and completed without major incident. Overall, despite procedural delays and post-election disputes, the 2025 tabulation process represented a marked improvement in transparency and verifiability compared with 2020, helping to strengthen confidence in the electoral results.

For future elections, The Carter Center recommends that GECOM produce written tabulation procedures to support training of GECOM staff as well as to enhance transparency and increase political party and public understanding of the process.

Election Results

Declaration of Results

After the conclusion of the tabulation process and recounts in two subdistricts at 10 p.m. Sept. 5, GECOM Chairperson Singh convened a meeting of commissioners at 11 p.m. Sept. 5 to make a decision regarding a formal declaration of full results. Opposition-appointed commissioners did not show up to the meeting, so the meeting lacked a quorum, and the declaration of results could not proceed. By rule, a next meeting could be scheduled 24 hours later and proceed with a majority of commissioners. A meeting was scheduled for 11 p.m. the following evening, Sept. 6. While all six commissioners and the GECOM chairperson were present for the Sept. 6 meeting, the opposition-appointed commissioners abstained from a vote on the final declaration of results.

The final declaration of results was announced just before midnight Saturday, Sept. 6.

Results

The PPP/C received 55% of the vote in the general election, and President Mohamed Irfaan Ali was reelected. In a low-turnout election, the PPP/C was able to expand its majority from 33 to 36 seats, as seen in Table 5. APNU suffered a historic collapse, yielding major opposition party status to newcomer WIN. For the first time in 19 years, the AFC did not win a seat in parliament. Another newcomer, FGM, managed to get the last seat. As the country awaited the results on Saturday, APNU leader Aubrey Norton publicly acknowledged the results⁶⁵, and President Ali was inaugurated for a second term at 10 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 7, at the State House.

Table 5. Seat Distribution in the 13th National Assembly

PPP/C	WIN	APNU	FGM	AFC	ALP
36	16	12	1	0	0

⁶⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1843417946529471>

Table 6. 2025 General Election Results

District	Total Number of Valid Votes Cast for Each Party List of Candidates						2025 Total Votes	2020 Total Votes	% Change
	APNU	AFC	ALP	FGM	PPP/C	WIN			
1	469	35		75	9,030	5,716	15,325	12,111	27%
2	1,835	91		147	17,478	7,400	26,951	26,621	1%
3	8,992	322	138	522	48,055	12,969	70,998	72,592	-2%
4	46,949	1,761	497	2,437	87,538	41,615	180,797	202,077	-11%
5	6,477	209	58	128	18,429	5,817	31,118	33,119	-6%
6	6,223	315	132	361	41,320	12,623	60,974	64,567	-6%
7	983	415	59		3,577	5,098	10,132	9,592	6%
8	276	57			2,872	2,562	5,767	4,665	24%
9	450	192			9,938	4,817	15,397	12,261	26%
10	5,334	210	85	662	4,260	10,458	21,009	21,009	-8%
Total	77,988 17.8%	3,607 .82%	969 .22%	4,332 .99%	242,497 55.3%	109,075 24.9%	438,468	460,352	-5%

This is the first time in Guyana’s history that neither the PPP/C nor the PNCR (or a coalition it led) will be the major opposition party and serving as leader of the opposition.

As seen in Table 6, a total of 438,468 valid votes were cast, falling short of the 460,352 cast in the 2020 election. This 5% decline translates into a 58% turnout based on the OLE, compared with 72% in 2020. The largest decline was in District 4 (the largest district), where 11% fewer people voted than in 2020. A similar drop in turnout was seen in District 10 (down 8%), where voters in the city of Linden—previously a stronghold for APNU—did not deliver for the party and voted for WIN. While WIN pulled in many APNU voters, clearly there were voters in these districts who were unwilling to give their votes to other parties and stayed home. This pattern appeared to repeat in other districts.

The PPP/C fell short of an outright majority in District 4, but for the first time in history received a plurality of votes. The party received 8% more votes in the district, which suggests it may be drawing more urban, multi-ethnic support. Turnout was down in District 6, traditionally a PPP/C stronghold, where it received 41,320 votes compared with 43,440 in 2020. WIN appeared to take APNU votes in District 6 rather than eating into the PPP/C’s share.

Districts in the hinterland (1, 7, 8, and 9) gave strong support to the incumbent, but saw WIN make a robust showing in 7 and 8, especially. As noted earlier in this report, the WIN candidate reportedly was unable to fly to these districts due to a no-fly policy by domestic airlines and saw some *toshaos* deny his party permission to campaign.

Regional Elections

In regional elections, voters elect their representatives to regional democratic councils. The number of seats contested in each council is determined by the district population. If a party wins an outright majority of RDC seats, it will be able to control the council and elect its nominees for chair and vice chair. The election of council leadership takes place in the months following the general and regional elections. In circumstances where no party has an outright majority of seats that would carry their nominees for the two posts, they must negotiate with other parties and alliances are necessary for control. Deals often include the party with fewer seats getting the vice chairperson’s role or possibly committee seats.

The regional election results reflected trends similar to the general election, with WIN inroads appearing at the expense of former APNU+AFC strongholds. The PPP/C won the RDCs outright in regions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 9.

The PPP/C won the most votes in all regions except 4 (Demerara/Mahaica), 7 (Cuyuni/Mazaruni), and 10 (Upper Demerara/Berbice). As shown in Table 7, the PPP/C controlled most seats in Region 4 for the first time in its history but fell short of a majority by one seat. WIN won a majority of seats in Region 7 and while WIN won the most seats of any party in Region 10, other parties together control an equal number of seats, requiring negotiations to determine ultimate control.

Table 7. Regional Election Results

Seat Allocation in Toss-up Councils				
	PPP/C	WIN	APNU	FGM
Region 4 (35 seats)	17	8	9	1
Region 8 (15 seats)	7	7	1	0
Region 10 (18 seats)	3	9	5	1

The subsequent negotiations and votes for chair/vice-chair saw the PPP/C win control of the all-important Region 4 RDC for the first time in history after WIN's slate of candidates failed to attract majority support. In Region 8, where APNU held the tie-breaking vote, the PPP/C won the chair and APNU the vice chair of the council. WIN failed to come out of the votes without leadership in any of these RDCs. Finally, in Region 10, where the second city of Linden is located, WIN held the most seats (nine of 18) but was short of a clear majority. The PPP/C, APNU and FGM together forced a 9-9 tie in the vote. After a period of some confusion, when it appeared that the tie was required by law to be broken by the minister of local government and regional development, the minister declined that this was her role. The matter now rests with the regional executive officer to convene a second vote, which has inexplicably not taken place as of the publication of this report.

Conclusions

The 2025 Guyana general and regional elections concluded with the PPP/C securing reelection with 55% of the vote and expanding its parliamentary majority to 36 seats. The election produced a significant political realignment, with newcomer WIN emerging as the official opposition—with 25% of the vote and 16 seats—while APNU's support

collapsed to 12 seats and the AFC lost all parliamentary representation for the first time in nearly two decades. Voter turnout declined by about 5% from 2020, with the sharpest drops in traditionally opposition-leaning districts, suggesting voter disengagement amid opposition fragmentation. At the regional level, the PPP/C won all regions except Districts 7 and 10, achieved a historic plurality in District 4, and increased support in urban and coastal areas, though turnout fell in some of its traditional strongholds. WIN, meanwhile, made notable gains across several regions despite campaign access challenges.

Electoral Dispute Resolution

Effective, clear, and impartial procedures for the resolution of electoral disputes are a core component of a credible and well-functioning electoral process and are firmly grounded in international human rights law.⁶⁶ Electoral dispute resolution and the right to an effective remedy are fundamental safeguards to ensure the rule of law and to protect the electoral process from bias or fraud. Voters and other electoral stakeholders must not only be afforded meaningful avenues to participate in and challenge the electoral process but also must reasonably perceive those avenues as accessible and effective in order for electoral legitimacy to be sustained.

Timely and effective resolution of electoral disputes is essential to the realization of the right to an effective remedy and the right to a fair and public hearing, as guaranteed under international human rights instruments.⁶⁷ International standards provide that time limits for lodging and deciding appeals must be short (three to five days for each at first instance).⁶⁸ In challenges against election results, it is advisable that a decision be made within two months.⁶⁹

The Judicial System

The judiciary of Guyana is composed of the Supreme Court of Judicature, which includes the Court of Appeal and the High Court, and a system of magistrates' courts. The chief justice presides over the High Court, while the chancellor of the judiciary, as head of the Court of Appeal, is the highest judicial authority. In 2003, Guyana acceded to the jurisdiction of the Caribbean Court of Justice

⁶⁶ ICCPR, art. 2(3).

⁶⁷ U.N. Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 32, para. 27.

⁶⁸ CoE (Venice Commission): Code of Good Practice in Election Matters, II.3.3.g.

⁶⁹ OSCE (ODHIR): Handbook for the Observation of Election Dispute Resolution, p. 16.

(CCJ), which serves as the country's court of final appeal, with decisions of the Court of Appeal subject to review by the CCJ.

The Constitution of Guyana vests the High Court with exclusive jurisdiction to adjudicate disputes concerning the results of elections, the allocation of seats, and the qualification of members of the National Assembly. Such challenges must be submitted through postelection petitions, as regulated by the National Assembly (Validity of Elections) Act, which provides a 28-day deadline following the formal declaration of results in the gazette. By contrast, the Court of Appeal can determine questions relating to the validity of the election of the president, limited to issues concerning the president's qualifications and compliance with the prescribed constitutional procedures.⁷⁰

The decisions of the High Court can be appealed to the Court of Appeal,⁷¹ with the CCJ serving as Guyana's final appellate court. However, no specific deadlines are established for the High Court to consider election petitions, affecting the right to legal remedy. Reportedly, a petition filed in 2015 remains pending. The law is generous and gives broad legal standing in postelection cases.

The chief justice and the chancellor are appointed by the president in agreement with the leader of the opposition.⁷² In cases where these positions remain vacant, the president may appoint the chief justice and the chancellor following meaningful constitutional consultation with the leader of the opposition, without requiring agreement. In practice, these provisions have resulted in the highest judicial positions being filled in an acting capacity for more than 20 years, which may undermine the independence of the judiciary and public confidence in the administration of justice.⁷³

Preelection Disputes

Judicial remedies before election day are limited. Under the RoPA, a rejection of a candidate list by GECOM may be appealed to the High Court by the representative of the list no later than the 26th day before election day. The court is required to decide such appeals in time to allow

GECOM to publish the final candidate list within the deadlines. The law also allows challenges on constitutional grounds through judicial review when either the law itself or its implementation is alleged to be inconsistent with the constitution. This remedy is often used during the preelection period.

Preelection Cases on Access to Ballots

On Aug. 20, less than two weeks before election day, FGM's presidential candidate filed a constitutional challenge with the High Court contesting the exclusion of that party from ballots in regions where it had not nominated geographical constituency candidates.⁷⁴ The application argued that GECOM's practice violates the principles of equal suffrage, nondiscrimination, and proportional representation, and requested that the court order GECOM to include all qualified parties on the ballots nationwide and to postpone elections until such inclusion was ensured. The court held two days of hearings, which were conducted transparently and allowed the parties to present their arguments. On Aug. 29, the court dismissed the case, finding that the applicant failed to show that GECOM restricted the party's participation or violated constitutional rights. It noted that the party itself chose not to contest certain constituencies, and GECOM could not lawfully place it on the ballots in those locations.

FGM appealed the ruling, and on Oct. 2, 2025, the Court of Appeal upheld the High Court decision, dismissing the appeal as unmeritorious, affirming that ballot access is tied to contesting that constituency, and ordering FGM to pay substantial court costs.

Cases Regarding the Electoral System

The electoral system was the subject of two legal disputes prior to the 2025 elections. The first contested the absence of a legal basis in the RoPA for independent candidates and small parties to effectively contest in geographical constituencies, alleging a violation of the rights to stand and to vote under the constitution and Article 25 of the ICCPR. The applicant further argued that historical records show that reforms were meant to expand participation, not restrict

70 Article 163 (1) and 177 (4) of the constitution.

71 In *AG of Guyana v. Monica Thomas & Ors* (2022), the CCJ held that the Court of Appeal lacked jurisdiction to review the High Court's dismissal of an election petition on procedural grounds, as Article 163(3) permits appeals only from a grant or refusal of leave, from a substantive determination, or from a consequential order.

72 Article 127 of the constitution

73 In 2024, the U.N. Human Rights Committee ((CCPR/C/GUY/CO/3)) raised concerns about the continued appointment of acting judges, which undermines judicial independence and competence, and recommended that Guyana ensure transparent and impartial procedures for judicial appointments in line with the ICCPR and the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary.

74 *Fisher v. GECOM*, August 2025

it, and that the current framework unlawfully excludes independents.⁷⁵

The second challenged the mandatory minimum requirement in section 11B of RoPA (six constituencies, 13 candidates), arguing it is unconstitutional, creates an unreasonable barrier for smaller/regional parties, infringes political participation and equal representation, breaches democratic rights, and exceeds parliament's authority.⁷⁶

In past election observation reports, The Carter Center has noted the complexity of Guyana's electoral system to elect the members of National Assembly, difficulties in ballot access, and challenges for newer or smaller political parties.

On July 29, the High Court dismissed both applications, stating that the electoral system is part of a carefully balanced representational framework, and maintaining that no constitutional provisions were violated. Acting Chief Justice Roxane George ruled that the challenges to the proportional representation electoral framework were without merit and upheld the legality of the existing party-list system, finding no inconsistency between the constitution and ROPA. The constitutional challenge was rejected, and the court upheld the current electoral system and structure. On Sept. 9, Christopher Ram appealed a case to the Court of Appeal.

2020 criminal cases

After the 2020 elections, several GECOM officials were charged with multiple electoral offenses. These cases remained unresolved and pending at the time of the 2025 elections. Court proceedings were ongoing in July, just before election day, and resumed in September following the elections. Reportedly, more than 100 witnesses have been called, which has contributed to the delay. The failure to conclude electoral cases within a reasonable time undermines public trust in the electoral process and diminishes the deterrent effect of the law.⁷⁷

Election Petitions

Petitions challenging election results must be submitted to the High Court of Guyana within 28 days of the formal declaration of results in the gazette. While APNU submitted a letter to GECOM Sept. 4 calling for an audit

and annulment of election results, ultimately no challenges to election results were filed with Guyana's High Court.

Conclusions

Effective, impartial, and timely remedies to electoral disputes are essential to protecting electoral integrity and maintaining public confidence. The judiciary—composed of the High Court, Court of Appeal, and final appellate Caribbean Court of Justice—has exclusive jurisdiction over election result disputes, while pre-election challenges are limited to appeals on candidate lists or constitutional grounds. Guyanese law is generous and gives broad legal standing in postelection cases. While deadlines are in place related to filing cases, no specific deadlines are established for the High Court to consider election petitions, affecting the international human right to legal remedy.

Review of the electoral dispute resolution system should seek to ensure that electoral offense cases are investigated and adjudicated in an effective and timely manner, in line with international standards, to strengthen accountability and enhance public confidence in the integrity of elections.

Postelection Developments

The postelection environment in Guyana was markedly different from that of previous elections, with no petitions filed challenging the conduct or results of the election. The 2025 election produced important shifts in Guyana's political landscape, the durability of which will be tested over the coming term of the National Assembly. The weeks and months following the elections were dominated by adjustments to the new political dispensation.

On Sept. 11, 2025, the WIN party issued a letter requesting the reinstatement of its party affiliates' bank accounts, but no action appears to have been taken. Several candidates sought relief through court action.

In October 2025, Azruddin Mohamed and his father, Nazar Mohamed, were indicted in the U.S. (Southern District of Florida) on multiple criminal charges, including wire fraud, mail fraud, money laundering, conspiracy, and customs-related violations, connected to an alleged US\$50 million gold export tax evasion and smuggling scheme involving at least 10,000 kg of gold, as well as alleged under-invoicing of a luxury vehicle shipment.

75 Christopher Ram v. the Attorney General of Guyana, April 2025

76 Vishnu Bandhu v. the Attorney General of Guyana, April 2025

77 Article 2(3) ICCPR. See also U.N. Human Rights Committee General Comment No. 31.

After the indictment, the U.S. submitted a formal extradition request to Guyana under an existing extradition treaty as reflected in the Fugitive Offenders Act, triggering legal proceedings in the Georgetown Magistrates' Courts beginning in late October 2025. The Mohameds were arrested and granted bail of GY\$150,000 each, and proceedings are underway related to extradition. Their defense has raised constitutional challenges to aspects of the extradition process. Meanwhile, local tax charges brought against them by the Guyana Revenue Authority were withdrawn to avoid conflict with the extradition process.

The members of the 13th parliament of Guyana were sworn in Nov. 3 at the Arthur Chung Convention Center. At the same sitting, the speaker and deputy speaker of the National Assembly were elected. By tradition, shortly after the first meeting of parliament, the speaker convenes a meeting of opposition party MPs where they elect from among their members the leader of the opposition, in accordance with Article 184 of the constitution. It took nearly three months for the speaker to call a meeting of opposition parliamentarians, during which time Guyana was without an opposition leader. It was not until after diplomats from the U.S., Canada, United Kingdom, and European Union joined calls from opposition parties for the speaker to convene the meeting without delay that Azruddin Mohamed finally was elected leader of the opposition Jan. 26, 2026.

Constitutional Reform

In 2024, Guyana took an important step toward constitutional modernization by establishing the CRC, mandated to conduct a comprehensive review of the constitution. In accordance with the Constitutional Reform Commission Act (2022), the CRC is empowered to examine a wide range of issues, including the functioning of Guyana's electoral system. This review is expected to consider potential reforms related to elections administration, such as the composition of GECOM, the method of appointing its members, its jurisdiction, and the broader electoral process. Additional areas identified for reform include the rights of Indigenous peoples, the protection and expansion of fundamental rights and children's rights, the eradication of discrimination, and measures to strengthen race relations.

At the swearing-in of the CRC's first commissioners, President Ali emphasized the importance of constitutional

evolution, noting: "A constitution must remain a living document, and not become archaic. It must possess the capacity for adaption to be relevant and to effectively address new challenges, societal changes, and emerging issues, while still upholding its core principles and protecting the rights of citizens, address new challenges, [and] emerging issues."⁷⁸

The CRC established in 2024 consists of 20 members and a chairperson. Ten members were nominated by political parties represented in the National Assembly at the time, while the remaining 10 represent civil society organizations. After the 2025 general elections, however, questions have emerged regarding whether the commission's composition should be revisited to reflect Guyana's evolving political landscape and the entry of newly elected parties into parliament.

According to the CRC Act, commissioners can be replaced only if they resign or are discharged by the nominating body, with replacements to be selected by that same entity. The act further specifies the political parties entitled to representation: five nominees from the PPP/C; four from APNU and AFC; and one shared nominee from the Liberty and Justice Party, A New and United Guyana (ANUG), and The New Movement. This formula reflects the 2020-2025 parliamentary configuration and provides no mechanism for incorporating political parties elected thereafter. As a result, parties such as WIN and FGM—both of which secured representation in the 2025 elections—have no seat on the CRC, while entities that did not contest the 2025 polls retain representation. This situation raises concerns that the commission's composition may no longer reflect the current political context, thereby limiting its inclusiveness and weakening its perceived legitimacy.

Although the enabling legislation was passed in 2022 and commissioners were appointed in 2024, the CRC has not yet commenced substantive deliberations. Beyond questions related to its composition, significant work remains to establish an inclusive, transparent, and participatory reform process capable of engaging the full diversity of Guyanese society.

Conclusions

The Carter Center welcomes the establishment of the Constitutional Reform Commission and urges the new parliament and government to ensure that the commission

⁷⁸ Constitutional Reform Commission sworn in – Department of Public Information, Guyana: <https://dpi.gov.gy/constitutional-reform-commission-sworn-in/>

is fully supported in undertaking its mandate. It is essential that all parliamentary parties are engaged in and represented throughout the reform process so that the work of the CRC is inclusive, transparent, and timely.

The Center further recommends that the CRC develop and implement a nationwide review process that integrates civic education and participatory dialogue, enabling Guyanese from all regions and communities to contribute to discussions on constitutional priorities and potential

reforms. Any constitutional amendments should be finalized with sufficient time to allow for subsequent adjustments to the electoral legal framework and to ensure that any new provisions can be effectively implemented before the next general and regional elections.

A successful constitutional reform effort must be grounded in transparency, broad political participation, and meaningful engagement with the public.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Guyana's 2025 elections were an important opportunity for the nation to put the challenges of the 2020 elections behind it. Newly implemented reforms strengthened the process overall. The 2025 elections were competitive, and Guyana must now strive to respect the will of the people in its politically diverse parliament and political institutions.

The preelection environment was dominated by concerns about the abuse of state resources, intimidation of opponents of the ruling party, a highly partisan media environment, and unregulated campaign spending. On election day, the voting process itself was the smoothest The Carter Center has observed in Guyana. The GECOM secretariat prepared and delivered on the technical and operational elements, despite a dysfunctional and polarized board of commissioners. The decentralized tabulation process was efficient, and the projection of SoPs on GECOM's website as soon as they arrived at RO offices worked well. Tabulation and recounts were not contentious, in part because it was clear to most that the election was not close.

These were the sixth elections observed by The Carter Center in Guyana. The Center notes positively the implementation of several recommendations from past assessments that had a beneficial impact on the 2025 elections, including improvements to the tabulation process. While these reforms are commendable, some previous recommendations remain unaddressed, limiting Guyana's full democratic potential. The Center acknowledges that certain primary recommendations require constitutional reform and, as such, fall beyond the mandate of any single national actor. In this regard, the Center urges Guyana's CRC to make a genuine effort to quickly advance these reforms.

Where The Carter Center recommends constitutional or legislative amendments or development of new legislation,

these changes should be developed in a transparent and consultative manner. Any such legal changes should be adopted well in advance of elections through an inclusive and transparent process, with broad stakeholder consultation.

The following recommendations outline critical steps to enhance the conduct of future elections in Guyana, strengthen democratic institutions, and improve representativeness. Reforms should prioritize creating a more level playing field and increasing voters' trust in the electoral process. The Carter Center urges Guyana's leaders to reform the campaign finance system and to ensure greater access to public information for their citizens. To address persistent questions about the size and integrity of the voter list, The Carter Center recommends an independent audit of the official list of electors, along with increased efforts to implement the new legal procedures for removing the names of voters who have died in Guyana, and to adopt systems for removing those who have died abroad.

The Carter Center welcomes the establishment of the CRC during the last parliament and encourages future commissioners to engage with the Guyanese people on ways to reform the election system, create an independent and less political election commission, and strengthen checks and balances in the government.

As a long-standing partner and champion of Guyana's democracy since the pivotal 1992 elections, The Carter Center offers these recommendations to support the development of a robust democratic system that can serve as a model. Strengthening Guyana's democracy while the nation's oil wealth booms could make Guyana a critical voice on the global stage.

Recommendations for Constitutional Reform

Priorities Regarding the Process of Reform

- **Review the composition of the Constitutional Reform Commission.** Following the 2025 elections and the changes brought to Guyana's political landscape and representation in parliament, The Carter Center recommends speedy review and reform of the CRC's establishing act. This review could be undertaken by the Parliamentary Standing Committee for Constitutional Reform under Article 119A of the constitution. The review should ensure that political party representation on the commission reflects the current mix of parties in parliament, including independence and representativeness of sectoral stakeholders.
- **Create an inclusive and transparent process.** The CRC should prioritize the development and communication of a process for constitutional reform that would begin in 2026 and conclude by the end of 2028. Inclusive participation is essential to ensuring legitimacy, fostering public trust, and securing durable constitutional outcomes. The process should be consultative and provide extensive genuine opportunities for community engagement and discussion across the country. The reform process should actively involve all segments of Guyanese society, including political parties, Indigenous peoples, civil society organizations, faith-based groups, youth, women, the private sector, and the Guyanese diaspora. Public engagement should go beyond consultation to enable meaningful influence over reform options. This should include sustained civic education, polling of diverse citizen voices, accessible public consultations across all regions, use of multiple languages and formats, and with clear feedback mechanisms to demonstrate how public input informs decisions.
- **Promote representative decision-making and long-term sustainability.** Decision-making should prioritize broad political and societal consensus rather than narrow majoritarian outcomes. International experience demonstrates that constitutions that are developed through consensus-based processes are more resilient and better able to manage political conflict.
- **Establish a roadmap for the constitutional reform process.** The CRC should establish a publicly available roadmap in 2026 outlining its stages, timelines,

decision-making procedures, and other criteria. Transparency at each stage will be critical to accountability and public confidence.

- **Explore comparative and international expertise.** While grounded in Guyana's constitutional history and sociopolitical realities, the process should draw on comparative constitutional experience and relevant international standards, including best practices from Commonwealth jurisdictions and guidance from international and regional bodies.

Priorities to Consider for Reforms Related to Democratic Elections

- **Composition of GECOM:** An election management body that operates with full independence of action, neutrality, and transparency is essential to ensuring that citizens can participate meaningfully in a genuine democratic process. The CRC must prioritize constitutional reform to ensure that GECOM is an independent body that operates free from partisan political influence to ensure that all stakeholders trust the integrity of the electoral system and its outcomes. The Carter Center reiterates its recommendation that Guyana consider reforming the articles of the constitution related to GECOM's composition to ensure that future elections are conducted by an election management body that is truly impartial, professional, and transparent in its operations.
- **Electoral System:** Guyana's electoral system interacts with a historical pattern of ethnic voting for its two major political parties, although this may have attenuated over time with demographic changes in the population. This has caused elections to be highly polarized, with relatively little crossover voting. The system does not allow the negotiation of postelection coalitions to form a government, so a party with a plurality of the vote can win the powerful executive presidency and with it the right to appoint the cabinet. This combination of factors gives Guyana's system a winner-take-all character that has been detrimental for social cohesion and ethnic relations. The system should be reviewed from this perspective as part of constitutional reform.

Guyana's electoral system is centralized, overly complex, challenging to implement, and falls short of ensuring either proportional or regional representation. When translated to the ballot paper, the current electoral

system ultimately undermines citizens' choices. The Carter Center recommends that the CRC explore the electoral system and consider options that would clarify and streamline the electoral system and the basis of representation. The CRC should consider options that can help ensure that the electoral system serves its purpose in effectively capturing the voice of the electorate and transforming the will of the people into a truly representative government.

- **Boundary Delimitation:** A constitutional review is needed to consider carefully Guyana's electoral system and corresponding methods of the delimitation of boundaries to ensure that equal suffrage is upheld. The delimitation of boundaries should ensure equal suffrage and be reviewed with regularity. Consideration should be given to amending the law to require regular review of the delimitation of boundaries, to adjust boundaries based on the current population, and to reduce deviation to under 10%. The apportionment criteria should be publicly available and include details such as the number of residents, number of registered voters, number of actual voters, or a combination thereof.
- **Right to Stand for Election:** The constitutional rules in Guyana prohibit independent candidates from standing for office to become either parliamentarians or president, though they are eligible to contest local government elections. Candidates for higher office must belong to a political party list to participate in elections. This is an unreasonable limitation on the freedom of association and on the right to stand for election, and consideration should be given to allowing candidates to run independently. The law and electoral system should be reformed to allow independent candidates to contest the presidency.

Recommendations for the Government of Guyana

- **On Women's Political Participation:** Under international law, states should take all appropriate measures, including temporary special measures, to eliminate discrimination against women in political and public life.⁷⁹ The Carter Center encourages election reform that supports the implementation of the constitutional

mandate that women should be in government in numbers that reflect their proportion among the electorate. When considering reform of Guyana's electoral system, the Center urges that legal framework changes include clear commitments to special measures that support women's political participation, consistent with Guyana's international obligations and with international election standards. In particular, legislation should require not only that parties include women on their party lists, but also that they put women in parliamentary seats reflecting at least proportional numbers.

- **On Electoral System Reform:** While structural electoral system reform is a matter for the CRC, Guyana's parliament can take steps to improve the current electoral system and strengthen its representativeness in advance of future elections. The Center recommends that parliament consider legislative reforms to require candidates on a party's list for a given geographical constituency to live in that constituency and to limit the national top-up calculation to 40 seats. The Center further recommends that parliament consider, at a minimum, legislation to close party lists to strengthen the connection between voters and their ultimate legislators and the executive. Such steps can help ensure that parties not only include women on their lists but also include them in electable slots.
- **On Campaign Finance:** Guyana needs legislation regarding party and campaign finance and the prohibition of misuse of state resources. New campaign finance laws and related regulations should be grounded in basic rights and principles that seek to balance democratic participation, political equality, and freedom of expression. The law should provide basic parameters regarding campaign contributions, establish reasonable limits to campaign spending, and ensure public reporting of campaign donations and expenditures before and after election day. Regulations on the use of state resources during a formally established campaign period should be defined to limit unfair incumbent advantage and ensure a level playing field. An independent body should be established to enforce campaign finance legislation.
- **On the Media:** Legislation related to media should be reviewed to strengthen the independence of the regulatory body and introduce clear requirements for

79 U.N. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

broadcasters to ensure fair and balanced coverage during election period. This could be achieved by establishing a system of free airtime for all political parties participating in elections.

- **On Census Data:** The timely public release of census data by the government of Guyana is essential to ensuring that the data fulfills its intended role in enhancing representativeness and supporting the effective functioning of Guyana's democratic institutions and public services. The late release of preliminary census data from 2022 (not released until January 2026) affected the representativeness of the 2025 elections. Future census data should be released in a timely manner.
- **On Boundary Delimitation:** Boundaries should be realigned in advance of future elections to reflect the most recent census conducted in 2022 and to ensure that the population is divided as evenly as possible across geographic seats. Reforming laws related to boundary delimitation and addressing the large gap between electoral quotients for obtaining seats in small and large electoral constituencies will allow Guyana to more fully respect the principle of equal suffrage.
- **On the Right to an Effective Remedy:** Review of the electoral dispute resolution system should seek to ensure that electoral offense cases are investigated and adjudicated in an effective and timely manner, consistent with international standards, to strengthen accountability and enhance public confidence in the integrity of elections.
- **On Political Party Registration:** Guyana should enact laws regulating political parties, including their registration and activities, while safeguarding freedom of association and promoting broad, multiethnic representation.
- **On the Representation of the People Act:** A thorough review of RoPA and other related legislation should be conducted to remove inconsistencies and technical errors to ensure coherence with other election-related laws.
- **On Election Laws:** Consideration could also be given to consolidating the various electoral laws into a single, accessible text, thereby enhancing legal certainty, clarity, and public confidence in the integrity of the electoral process. The new consolidated text should be made widely available in text and digital forms.
- **On Voter Education and Access to Information:** The new parliament should address the current obstacles to the public's right to information held by their government and take decisive action to address the obstacles that have plagued the system for too long.
- **On Political Participation of the LGBTI Community:** A history of discrimination and restrictive legislation in Guyana has limited the role of the LGBTI community in public life, including their participation in elections as candidates, political party officials, and election workers. Homosexuality is a criminal offense in Guyana. The Carter Center condemns Guyana's anti-gay legislation and is concerned that homophobic speech prevents members of the LGBTI community from full enjoyment of their rights to meaningful and open participation in the political life of the country. The Center recommends that discriminatory legislation be repealed.
- **On Support for Civil Society:** Civil society plays a vital role in a democracy by providing space for citizens to organize, express their interests, and hold governments accountable. By representing diverse voices, civil society strengthens democratic institutions and contributes to more inclusive and responsive governance. The Carter Center recommends that the government explore ways to reinvigorate and support development of a robust, effective civil society in Guyana through legislative reform to support and protect nongovernmental organizations, the establishment of an independent, nonpartisan foundation for the development of civil society, and addressing problems with the access to information regime.

Recommendations for the Guyana Elections Commission

- **Support an independent audit of the voter list.** An independent audit would verify the accuracy of the voter registry by checking registered voter information directly against eligible voters in the population, helping to identify any potential errors such as duplicate records, outdated information, or the inclusion of ineligible voters. By improving the accuracy and reliability of the voter registry, an audit would strengthen the integrity of elections, reduce tensions, and increase public trust in the electoral process.
- **Produce and publicize written tabulation procedures well in advance of election day.** This would

support training of GECOM staff as well as enhance transparency and increase political party and public understanding of the process.

- **List all qualified parties on the ballot in all electoral districts.** While long-term and sustainable electoral system reform should take place through constitutional and legal means, GECOM can take steps to better fulfill its responsibility to implement the current electoral system. The current qualification standards unnecessarily limit the rights of all citizens to vote for candidates of their choice.
- **Develop procedures to ensure the facilitation of prisoners' voting rights,** in compliance with the CRC's constitutional obligations.
- **Provide SoP carbon copies.** The Carter Center recommends that in future elections options be implemented for the procurement and preparation of SoPs to ensure that all who are entitled to a copy of the SoP receive one, and that the process of completing SoPs is fully transparent.
- **Publish a consolidated electoral calendar.** A consolidated electoral calendar, published well in advance of election day, could clarify important dates and timeframes. It should be published after a legislative review of RoPA to address any inconsistencies. Making a clear electoral calendar available and accessible to the public and political parties helps build trust in the electoral process and strengthens overall transparency.
- **Strengthen civic and voter education efforts.** GECOM should enhance civic and voter education, including between elections, by dedicating staff and resources, expanding education programs nationwide, and partnering with civil society and government bodies like the Ministry of Education. Increasing and sustaining civic and voter education efforts are critical to assuring the equal participation of an informed electorate.
- **Facilitate women's participation as candidates.** GECOM should develop and enforce procedures to advance women's political participation in future elections. This could include providing for a column on candidate lists for gender to help increase transparency and improve GECOM's ability to review and enforce political party compliance with current law, according to which at least one-third of candidates should be women.

- **Strengthen polling station layout and ballot secrecy.** International standards for democratic elections require that the secrecy of the ballot be maintained throughout the entire voting process. For future elections, polling station layout and the training of poll workers should be reviewed and adjustments made to ensure that ballot secrecy is fully protected.
- **Enhance political participation of people with disabilities.** To ensure equal access to the polling process for voters with disabilities, GECOM should guarantee that polling stations are accessible and consider expanding methods of voting for people with disabilities, such as assigning voters to accessible polling stations or consideration of curbside voting. GECOM should ensure the availability of tactile ballots to guarantee independent voting for individuals with visual impairments.

Recommendations for Political Parties

- **For all future elections, sign and abide by a code of conduct.** By signing the code, political parties pledge to uphold freedom of association and freedom of speech, as well as other international and domestic legal commitments. Political party codes of conduct are important tools to set standards for behavior and promote peaceful, fair competition among parties. A code can help reduce tensions and increase public confidence and participation in an electoral process, demonstrating parties' commitment to credible and transparent elections.
- **Submit campaign finance expenditure reports to GECOM in the postelection period.**
- **Ensure not only that women appear on candidate lists, but also that women are appointed to elected seats in appropriate numbers,** not less than their proportion of the population.

Recommendations for the Ethnic Relations Commission

- **Be more proactive in monitoring and addressing ethnically divisive rhetoric, misinformation, and tensions related to elections.**
- **Expand public outreach and education initiatives that promote tolerance, peaceful participation, and respect for diversity, particularly during the campaign period.**

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- Redouble efforts to engage with political parties and build trust and confidence in its role and assessments.

Recommendations for the Judiciary

- Adjudicate election-related disputes promptly and efficiently.
- Make election-related appeals and decisions publicly available and easily accessible in a timely manner.

Recommendation for the Security Sector

- Given historical sensitivities around the role of the police and tensions between the police and the general public, the presence of Guyana Police Force officers in otherwise orderly polling stations can raise concerns

about the potential for intimidation. In future elections, and in compliance with Guyana's domestic law, GPF officers should be clearly instructed to remain outside polling stations unless called upon by the presiding officer to assist in resolving a specific incident.

Recommendation for the International Community

- Consider ways to support Guyana in implementing the recommendations outlined in this report, as well as those from other international election observation organizations. The Center was encouraged by the strong collaboration and coordination observed in Guyana and hopes that this cooperation will be sustained.

Acknowledgments

The Carter Center's election observation mission in Guyana would not have been possible without the support of several individuals and organizations. The Center is especially grateful to the government of Guyana and the Guyana Elections Commission for accrediting the team to observe the elections and for their collaboration and dedication throughout the process. The Center also is grateful for financial support from the High Commission of Canada in Guyana, whose generous contributions allowed the mission to deploy additional observers throughout the country. The Center is grateful to all Guyanese government institutions and civil society members who graciously shared valuable information that informed our findings.

Jason J. Carter, chairperson of the Carter Center Board of Trustees, led the Center's short-term observer delegation. The Center deeply appreciates his hard work, dedication, and astute insights.

The Center recognizes the efforts of the other key international observation organizations involved in supporting Guyana's electoral process, including CARICOM, the commonwealth, and the European Union. The Center benefited greatly from the efforts of the skilled and talented Georgetown staff, including country director Jason Calder, who provided the mission with in-depth political analysis and staff leadership. Nicholas Jahr, deputy country director, coordinated field office operations, oversaw the coordination of international election observers, and made important analytical contributions throughout the electoral

process. Mariam Tabatadze, legal analyst, provided the mission with in-depth legal analysis and contributed to public statements released by the Center. Andrew (Andy) Jones, security manager, provided valuable information to the mission regarding the safety situation throughout the country. Carlos Valenzuela contributed to Carter Center statements and report analysis in his role as senior adviser. The team also was ably assisted by Sara Bharrat as political/media adviser to the core team during the immediate weeks around the election and by office manager/accountant Bodhan Nipan.

Special thanks are extended to the office staff in Georgetown, including drivers who assisted the field staff, and observers in the field. The Center greatly appreciates short-term observers from around the world for lending their diverse experiences and expertise to evaluating election-day procedures. Their reporting, diligent collection of data on the electoral process, logistical support, and engagement with Guyanese stakeholders across the country were crucial to the success of the mission. The Center's efforts were supported by a team of hardworking staff members in Atlanta who ensured the success of the mission to Guyana. These include Rama Alsaleh, Ron Borden, David Carroll, Jessica Cherof, Lena Corrado, Anthony DeMattee, Irene Ecker, Soyia Ellison, Rhea Epperson, Madeleine Evans, Brett Lacy, Olivia Leu, Travis Linger, Daniel Richardson, and Wyatt Schierman.

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List of Abbreviations

AFC	Alliance for Change	NDS	National Development Strategy
ALP	Assembly for Liberty and Progress	NGO	Nongovernmental organization
ANUG	A New and United Guyana	NRA	National Registration Act
APNU	A Partnership for National Unity	NRR	National Register of Registrants
APNU+AFC	A Partnership for National Unity + Alliance for Change	NRRDB	National Register of Registrants Database
APA	Amerindian People's Association	OAS	Organization of American States
CARICOM	Caribbean Community	OFAC	Office of Foreign Assets Control
CCJ	Caribbean Court of Justice	OLE	Official List of Electors
CEO	Chief election officer	PLE	Preliminary List of Electors
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease	PNC	People's National Congress
CRC	Constitutional Reform Commission	PPP	People's Progressive Party
DRO	Deputy returning officer	PPP/C	People's Progressive Party / Civic
DSRO	Deputy supernumerary reporting officers	PRP	People's Republic Party
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative	PSC	Private Sector Commission
ERC	Ethnic Relations Commission	RDC	Regional Democratic Council
FGM	Forward Guyana Movement	RLE	Revised List of Electors
GCOPD	Guyana Council of Organizations for Persons with Disabilities	RO	Returning officer
GDP	Gross domestic product	RoPA	Representation of the People Act
GECOM	Guyana Elections Commission	SOP	Statement of Poll
GNBA	Guyana National Broadcasting Authority	SRO	Supernumerary returning officer
GPF	Guyana Police Force	TNM	The New Movement
GRFF	Guyana Rain Forest Foundation	TUF	The United Force
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	UN	United Nations
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex	UNDP	U.N. Development Program
LJP	Liberty and Justice Party	URP	United Republican Party
		USAID	United States Agency for International Development
		WPA	Working People's Alliance
		WIN	We Invest in Nationhood

Statements



NEWS RELEASE

Carter Center Launches Mission to Observe Guyana’s 2025 Election

ATLANTA (June 30, 2025) — The Carter Center has launched an international election observation mission to Guyana in advance of the country’s general and regional elections scheduled for Sept. 1. The Center was invited to observe this year’s elections by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. A four-person core team of experts will begin arriving in Georgetown on June 30 from the United States, Georgia, and the United Kingdom. Additional electoral experts and observers will join them closer to election day.

“We look forward to engaging with Guyanese stakeholders across the political spectrum and civil society to provide an independent and impartial assessment of the electoral process. We hope our observation and reporting will help the Guyanese people assess the credibility of the elections, while providing useful recommendations for reform and encouraging transparency,” said Carter Center Field Office Director Jason Calder.

“The Carter Center has had a long-standing commitment to democracy in Guyana, and we are honored to launch this international election observation mission in support of the electoral process,” said David Carroll, director of the Carter Center’s Democracy Program.

The Carter Center’s election observation work is conducted in accordance with the 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and makes assessments based on relevant parts of national legal frameworks, as well as regional and international obligations for democratic elections. Since 1992, the Center has worked in Guyana to strengthen democracy, support civil society, encourage sustainable development, and reinforce the rule of law.

The Carter Center has organized more than 125 election observation missions in 100 countries, including in Guyana in 1992, 2001, 2006, 2015, and 2020. In addition to work on elections, the Center has conducted a range of activities in Guyana, including helping Guyanese articulate a comprehensive vision and development strategy; supporting civil society groups working to advance the status of women, youth, and Amerindians; assisting judicial system reform programs in partnership with the High Court, the chief justice, the Guyana Bar Association, and the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers; facilitating conflict resolution efforts in support of peace and political dialogue; and supporting government, industry, and civil society stakeholders to comply with the requirements of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

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NEWS RELEASE

Guyana Preelection Statement

Atlanta (Aug. 19, 2025) — The Carter Center’s limited election observation mission in Guyana has observed key preelection activities, including nomination day and a series of campaign launches and campaign events, as part of its effort to assess electoral preparations and the political environment in Guyana in advance of the Sept. 1 elections. The mission has conducted meetings with stakeholders, including the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM), the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC), key political parties, civil society leaders, business community leaders, members of the diplomatic community, and others.

This report provides a summary of observations to date. The mission will issue additional reports, including a preliminary report shortly after the election and a final comprehensive report in the months after the election, providing the Carter Center’s overall assessment and key recommendations.

Summary. The legal and electoral framework governing Guyana’s general and regional elections was amended in 2022 with the aim of improving the transparency of the tabulation process. Important changes also were made to voter registration. Concerns persist among some Guyanese stakeholders about issues such as the integrity of the voter list and the need for GECOM to improve public communications and engage with political parties. The Carter Center notes the ruling party has used state resources and benefited from biased state media coverage, undermining the equitable treatment of candidates. The Carter Center is concerned that only four of the six political parties contesting these elections signed the ERC code of conduct for political parties and strongly urges all parties to sign and uphold the code.

The Carter Center mission has noted that although political campaigning has been generally peaceful, several issues risk undermining the integrity of the electoral process, including local authorities’ approvals of campaign events, alleged intimidation of public workers, and overcompliance by local banks with recent U.S. sanctions, which threatens to hinder political participation. In addition, campaign finance continues to lack transparency — and, in the absence of clear regulations, media fairness remains a concern.

The Carter Center’s International Election Observation Mission in Guyana. The Center was invited in April 2024 to observe this year’s election by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. A four-person team of experts from the United States, Georgia, and the United Kingdom began arriving in

Georgetown on June 30, 2025. Additional electoral experts, observers, and delegation leadership will join them around election day. The Carter Center conducts election observation missions in accordance with the 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and makes assessments based on relevant national legal frameworks as well as regional and international obligations for democratic elections. The Center characterizes its observation mission in Guyana as a “limited mission” because no long-term observers were deployed outside of Georgetown in the preelection period, and the limited time period covered prior to election day.

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

Legal Framework

The legal and electoral framework governing Guyana’s general and regional elections has undergone important reform since the country’s last national election in 2020, particularly in the areas of tabulation and voter registration. The most substantial changes include subdistrict tabulation in select regions; new requirements for simultaneous electronic public posting and transmission of polling station results; obligations of presiding officers to ensure openness during the closing and counting procedures; designated cycles for continuous registration; the end of “house-to-house” registration; and updated requirements for removal of the deceased from the voter list. While these changes are welcome, the majority of the recommendations made by The Carter Center and other international observers following the 2020 election remain unaddressed. In addition, these changes to the legal framework are not well understood by Guyana’s civil society and some opposition political parties.

Tabulation. New administrative arrangements have been introduced to the Representation of the People’s Act (RoPA) that decentralize the tabulation process to the subdistrict level in the three most populous regions (regions 3, 4, and 6). Each of these subdistricts will have a supernumerary returning officer to perform functions within the subdistricts similar to those carried out at the district level by returning officers. Tabulation will now take place at a total of 17 locations across Guyana’s 10 electoral districts. The amendments provide for the immediate online publication of Statements of Poll (SoPs) and tabulation forms, and the electronic display of each SoP during the tabulation process. The amendments also reinforce the rights of party agents to observe all stages of the process. Severe penalties were introduced for violations, including noncompliance with the new provisions, such as failing to publish information, delivering false information, not providing certified copies to superiors, or obstructing party agents. While these changes could provide greater transparency, The Carter Center calls on GECOM to publish detailed tabulation procedures for the public as soon as possible.

Voter Registration. RoPA and the National Registration Act (NRA) were amended to remove residency requirements for voter eligibility. The NRA was further revised to discontinue house-to-house registration,

establish registration primarily at designated offices, and introduce a two-phase annual registration process not tied to a specific electoral cycle. In 2025, the High Court reaffirmed that residency is not a constitutional requirement for voting, including for the regional elections.¹ A noteworthy 2021 amendment to the Registration of Births and Deaths Act allows adults who lack a birth certificate to be issued one based on certain documents, including a declaration by a “person of high standing in the community,” including a Toshao in indigenous communities, where lack of documentation has historically been a problem. Adjustments were also made to enable GECOM to coordinate with a wider range of officials to verify deaths and remove names from the register accordingly.

Other amendments. While the most notable legal changes relate to tabulation and voter registration, other provisions were also modified, including requirements for election manuals to be provided to parties and posted online within 30 days of the proclamation of the election date, additional provisions for recount requests, and a mandate for the Chief Elections Officer (CEO) to prepare a report within 12 hours of the calculation of results. This report will serve as the basis for the commission’s declaration. Another new legal provision seeks to enhance electoral participation of persons with disabilities, mandating that when decisions are being made about subdividing polling places, the accessibility of polling stations should be taken into consideration.

Voter Registration and the Voter List

The Official List of Electors (OLE) for the 2025 election was released on July 30 and includes a total of 757,690 voters — 376,703 men and 380,987 women. The Carter Center did not observe voter registration and has not assessed the quality of the voter list.

In accordance with the amendments to the legal framework made in 2022, voter registration is now “continuous,” and takes place in two distinct periods every year. From January to May, and then again from July to November, individuals can visit GECOM offices to register as a new voter or make changes to their registration details, including their name or address. After each period of registration and modification, there is a month (June and December) dedicated to the production of a Preliminary List of Electors and a “claims and objections” period in which registered voters can challenge other voters’ registrations or amend their own. Following this period, a final Official List of Electors is produced, which is valid for six months after it is certified.

¹ For regional elections, it found that while the constitution refers to persons “residing in the region,” this language does not impose a substantive residency requirement but reflects the address declared by the voter at registration. Accordingly, voters must vote in the region where they are registered. While practical and inclusive, there is a need to further refine constitutional and legislative language to ensure consistency in this area.

GECOM conducted an abbreviated “claims and objections” exercise for the 2025 election from June 16-22. During this period, GECOM received a total of 6,563 claims and four objections. GECOM ultimately certified the Official List of Electors on July 29. Commendably, the OLE is available on GECOM’s website with searchable features and will be publicly displayed in all 10 regions.

Many interlocutors have raised concerns about the size of the OLE at 757,690.² The government conducted a new census in 2022, but the results have not been released. This regrettable lapse obscures public understanding of basic population demographics and their potential relation to the size of the voter list.

Following the recent court decisions and legislative changes, registered voters cannot be removed from the list on the grounds that they no longer reside in the country. While recent changes to the legal framework sought to be responsive to past concerns about removal of the deceased from the list and an expansion of GECOM’s ability to engage with a wider range of agencies, further efforts are required in this area. These factors contribute to the size of the list. While the relative size of the OLE raises concerns for many Guyanese, The Carter Center has not received evidence of inflation of the voter roll.

Electoral Preparations

Nomination day was held by GECOM on July 14, and six of the seven parties that submitted candidate lists were ultimately approved to contest the election.

GECOM is preparing to open 2,790 polling stations in 1,128 polling places. Recruitment of polling staff is underway. So far 11,718 polling staff have been drawn from a pool of candidates previously identified by the commission and will be given refresher training prior to the election. Ballots were printed in Canada and have arrived in Guyana. The procurement of other sensitive materials is reportedly well underway.

Many of the Carter Center’s interlocutors expressed concerns that GECOM is not communicating effectively with the broader public and political contestants, particularly beyond the two main parties. While the commission has been issuing regular press releases and maintains an active presence on social media, The Carter Center recommends that GECOM engage the press regularly and predictably in advance of election day and throughout the tabulation process to inform the public about the status of its preparations. Given the lack of public understanding of the tabulation process in particular, The Carter Center urges GECOM to clearly communicate tabulation procedures to enhance confidence in the process.

² Guyana’s last census results from 2012 estimated the country’s total population as 746,955 people. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated the population at 826,353 in 2023, and in 2025, Worldometer estimated the population at 836,639 based on U.N. figures.

GECOM currently lacks a legal officer and, in the absence of one, has at times sought advice from the Attorney General (AG), which in some interlocutors' eyes undermines the commission's impartiality. There may be questions for which it is appropriate to consult the Ministry of Legal Affairs, of which the AG is the subject minister. However, because the AG is a political appointee and a candidate in these elections, seeking legal advice from his office raises questions about conflict of interest. The Carter Center welcomes the commission's recent action to recruit a new legal officer and calls on the commissioners to take prompt action to ensure that it has adequate legal representation in the event of any legal challenges to the process.

Campaign Environment

Campaign Period. All of the political parties approved to contest the election are campaigning across the country. To date, the campaign has proceeded in a generally peaceful manner with no major incidents of violence, although some confrontations at public meetings and overheated rhetoric have been reported. There also have been some videos posted on social media of flags of one party being removed and replaced by those of another party. Political parties should instruct their supporters to refrain from these and other similar behaviors, as such incidents can escalate and infringe upon the right of people to organize and assemble in an environment free from fear.

Posters, billboards, and party flags are on wide display, and the parties are holding everything from large rallies to smaller public meetings. The Center has received complaints from new parties regarding delays in approval from the police for campaign events and notes that the police have indicated that they intend to approve campaign requests quickly.

The Carter Center notes with concern that the We Invest in Nationhood (WIN) presidential candidate has been denied interior airline service for campaign flights and reports that the party in some instances has been denied use of local public areas for campaign meetings. These campaign issues raise concerns about equal application of the rights of freedom of association.

Code of Conduct. On Aug. 5, political parties gathered to sign a code of conduct agreement developed by Guyana's Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC), in which parties committed to peaceful campaigns, avoidance of hate speech and ethnically divisive rhetoric, and prioritization of the nation over any political party. The Carter Center notes that two political parties, A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) and Forward Guyana Movement (FGM), have not signed the code of conduct. The Center calls on all parties to sign the code and to commit to its principles, which reflect the laws of Guyana and recognized international standards for democratic elections. The Carter Center further calls on all political parties to abide by Guyanese law and international standards for democratic elections in avoiding hate speech and encouraging peaceful political participation of all party supporters.

Freedom of Association and Reports of Intimidation. Freedoms of opinion and expression, as well as freedom of association and assembly, are essential elements of the right of political participation.³ The Carter Center has received allegations from opposition and new parties of an atmosphere of fear among public sector workers, local business owners, and community members, who are concerned about losing their jobs or future economic opportunities if they do not display support for the ruling party. In two instances reported to The Carter Center, an employee of Guyana Sugar Corporation (GuySuCo) and a police corporal appear to have been transferred to new posts after encounters with WIN’s presidential candidate. The Carter Center is also concerned about reports from the Guyana Press Association of attempts to censor and intimidate journalists by government officials, opposition candidates, and party supporters.

The Center urges all political parties and state bodies to respect the rights of individuals to associate freely and calls on all parties to refrain from any actions that could be construed as intimidation or victimization.

The Right to be Elected and the Right to Political Participation. Equitable treatment of candidates and political parties during elections, and the maintenance of an open and transparent campaign environment, are critical to ensuring the integrity of democratic elections and the right of every citizen to be elected. This right is a universal one and requires that states ensure that their citizens have the opportunity to run for elected office, free from unreasonable restrictions.

In June 2024, the U.S. government [sanctioned](#) WIN presidential candidate Azruddin Mohamed, his father Nazar Mohamed, several of their businesses, and Guyanese government official Mae Thomas Jr. for public corruption. The U.S. Department of Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) blocked Mohamed’s assets in the U.S. financial system, and aimed to prevent transactions of money, goods, and services that would benefit Mohamed or the others within the U.S. financial system.

Following approval of WIN’s list in July 2025, three local commercial banks reportedly closed the personal bank accounts of approximately 40 WIN candidates, party members, and their associates. Reportedly, some candidates also have been dismissed by private-sector employers for appearing on WIN’s list. Although the banks have not provided a detailed public explanation of their actions, they are reportedly concerned about secondary sanctions and their banking relationships with the U.S. financial system.

The Guyanese banking system operates within national laws and international regulatory standards to prevent the misuse of the international financial system. While the Center recognizes the banking sector’s caution, the relevant Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and [OFAC standards](#) and guidelines recommend a “[risk-based](#)” approach to such matters and discourages overcompliance with practices such as blanket account closures

³ U.N., ICCPR, Article 26. U.N. (CCPR), General Comment 25.

(“[de-risking](#)”). The relevant practice indicates that the risk of secondary sanctions arises when there is a prohibited transaction or other significant dealing with a sanctioned person. Mere political association, without evidence of such transactions or facilitation, does not constitute the proper basis for termination of accounts. The Carter Center is concerned that banks may be over-complying with U.S. sanctions, which undermines political participation and electoral integrity by discouraging people from participating fully in the political process. The private sector has an important role to play in safeguarding democratic rights and freedoms and, as such, must ensure decisions do not discriminate against individuals for exercising those rights.

Campaign Finance. Guyana lacks an effective framework or mechanism to ensure transparency or accountability in campaign financing. This contributes to disparities between campaigns and potentially limits voters’ ability to make informed choices. Guyana has campaign expenditure ceilings — which need revision — and a requirement for political parties to submit postelection financial reports to GECOM within 35 days of the declaration of results, and for their subsequent publication by the CEO. However, there are no effective enforcement mechanisms for these regulations, and the law lacks provisions regulating donations and expenditures, or mechanisms to ensure transparency to the public in advance of election day. While legal amendments in this area remain necessary, GECOM should at a minimum remind political parties to comply with existing reporting requirements within the legally prescribed timeframe as a step toward fostering a culture of transparency and accountability.

Misuse of State Resources and State Media. The Carter Center has received multiple allegations from political parties and civil society that the ruling party has misused state resources. Social media and news reports are also rife with photographs suggestive of this problem. The use of state resources for party campaigning runs contrary to Guyana’s international obligations with respect to campaign finance.⁴

The Carter Center has received reports alleging that the ruling party has used state-owned vehicles to campaign and taken advantage of “10-day workers” (employed part-time by the government) in campaign activities. Official government statements about the opening of schools and other public buildings regularly feature public officials in full ruling-party regalia, blurring the line between the state and the party. Since July 30, the president has announced he would promote over 2,800 Guyana Police Force officers. On Aug. 1, the government announced that bridge crossings would now be free. These and similar measures can be seen to afford the ruling party an unfair advantage. While Guyana’s laws do not prohibit new government spending after an election is called, such spending runs contrary to international standards and best practices intended to ensure a level playing field.

⁴ States must take measures to prevent corruption. Treaty obligations establish the general requirement and indicate that States shall promote transparency in public decision making as a means of combating corruption. U.N. Convention Against Corruption, articles 18 and 13.

Although The Carter Center is not conducting systematic media monitoring, the mission has noted and received reports indicating that state media coverage appears to be biased in favor of the ruling party. Several political parties reported limited access to state media, with their events receiving little or no coverage, and one party alleged they were denied the opportunity to place advertisements in state media. In the absence of specific legal provisions regulating media conduct during the electoral period, The Carter Center encourages state media to provide equal treatment to all political parties.

Access to Public Information

Access to information is a critical means of ensuring informed public participation, and transparency and accountability in the electoral process. Elections conducted in the absence of adequate public access to information, including on key election related matters, harm the electoral process. A well-informed electorate is essential to any electoral process and is an essential building block of a meaningful democracy.⁵

Cumulative shortcomings, such as timely completion and publication of the census, the absence of campaign and party finance data, limited information around GECOM decision-making, and obstacles faced by some media outlets and citizens in obtaining public information, constitute a lack of adequate public access to election-relevant information. The U.N. Human Rights Committee, in its May 2024 report, noted concerns that the commissioner of information does not respond to all requests and urged Guyana to ensure the right of access to information is effectively exercised.

The Carter Center in Guyana.

The Carter Center has worked in Guyana since 1991 to strengthen democracy, support civil society, encourage sustainable development, and reinforce the rule of law. The Carter Center is a recognized leader in the international election observation community and has conducted 125 election observation missions globally, including in Guyana in 1992, 2001, 2006, 2015, and 2020. In addition to work on elections, The Carter Center has conducted a range of activities in Guyana, including helping Guyanese articulate a comprehensive vision and development strategy; supporting civil society groups working to advance the status of women, youth, and Amerindians; assisting judicial system reform programs in partnership with the High Court, the chief justice, the Guyana Bar Association, and the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers; facilitating conflict resolution efforts in support of peace and political dialogue; and supporting government, industry, and civil society stakeholders to comply with the requirements of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

⁵ U.N. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 25(b). U.N. Human Rights Council, General Comment 25, “the Right to Participate in Public Affairs, Voting Rights, and the Right to Equal Access to Public Service,” para. 11.



NEWS RELEASE

Jason Carter to Lead Carter Center Election Mission in Guyana

GEORGETOWN, Guyana (Aug. 28, 2025) — The Carter Center’s election observers have arrived in Guyana and are undergoing training in advance of their observation of election day, tabulation, and the post-election environment.

Jason Carter, chairperson of The Carter Center Board of Trustees and grandson of the late U.S. President Jimmy Carter, will lead the Carter Center’s mission. He will meet with key stakeholders — including political party candidates, civil society organizations, government officials, and other international election observer missions — before observing polling, counting, and tabulation. Carter returns to Guyana after having co-led the Center’s 2020 election observation mission in the country.

“This is an important moment for Guyana’s democracy,” said Carter Center Country Director Jason Calder. “The Carter Center encourages every eligible voter to make their voice heard and is hopeful that the electoral process will be a fully transparent one that reflects the will of the people.”

The Center’s core team of electoral experts arrived in late June and issued [a preliminary statement](#) summarizing key observations in the preelection period on Aug. 19. After the election, it will issue reports that offer an independent and impartial assessment of the electoral process.

The Carter Center is here at the invitation of the government of Guyana. It has a longstanding commitment to Guyana and has worked in the country since 1991 to strengthen democracy, support civil society, encourage sustainable development, and reinforce the rule of law. The Carter Center is a recognized leader in the international election observation community and has conducted more than 125 election observation missions globally, including in Guyana in 1992, 2001, 2006, 2015, and 2020.

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The Carter Center

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NEWS RELEASE

Carter Center Commends Smooth Voting Process; Encourages Future Reforms

GEORGETOWN (Sept. 3, 2025) — Guyana should take pride in the peaceful, orderly way its election day unfolded, The Carter Center said in a preliminary statement released today. Looking ahead, though, its next leaders will need to institute reforms to create a more level playing field and increase voters' trust in the electoral process.

The Center's statement includes an initial assessment of preelection, election day, and early tabulation processes; however, tabulation has not concluded, nor have official results been announced. Carter Center observers will continue to monitor events and produce a final report sometime after any electoral disputes are resolved.

On election day, about 50 Carter Center observers visited 234 polling stations at 204 polling places in all 10 electoral districts. They also visited all 17 tabulation centers. They reported that in those stations, voters peacefully exercised their rights and that polling staff, party agents, and officials from the Guyana Elections Commission carried out their duties with integrity and professionalism.

Guyana has seen enormous economic gains since the discovery of offshore oil, heightening stakes and making the need for certain constitutional and legal reforms to its electoral processes even more critical. The Carter Center urges Guyana's leaders to reform the campaign finance system and to ensure greater access to public information for their citizens.

To address persistent questions about the size and integrity of the voter list, GECOM should implement the new legal procedures for removing the names of voters who have died within Guyana. It should also look to international experience for removing electors who have died overseas.

The Carter Center welcomes the establishment of the Constitutional Reform Commission during the last parliament and encourages future commissioners engage with the Guyanese people on ways to reform the election system, create an independent and less political election commission, and strengthen checks and balances in the government.

For more findings and recommendations, read the full preliminary statement.

Background

The Carter Center is here at the invitation of the government of Guyana. It has a longstanding commitment to Guyana and has worked in the country since 1991 to strengthen democracy, support civil society, encourage sustainable development, and reinforce the rule of law. The Center is a recognized leader in the international election observation community and has conducted more than 125 election observation missions globally, including in Guyana in 1992, 2001, 2006, 2015, and 2020.

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THE
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Waging Peace. Fighting Disease. Building Hope.

**GUYANA GENERAL ELECTION PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
SEPTEMBER 3, 2025**

The Carter Center election observation mission has been in Guyana since late June following an invitation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The mission is led by Jason Carter, chairperson of The Carter Center Board of Trustees and grandson of the late U.S. President Jimmy Carter. On election day, 47 observers from 21 countries visited 234 polling stations across Guyana’s 10 regions to observe voting and counting. Carter Center observers continue to assess the conclusion of counting and vote tabulation and will remain in Guyana to observe the postelection environment. All assessments are made in accordance with international standards for elections, and the observation mission was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation.

This statement is preliminary; a final report will be published after the end of the electoral process.

STATEMENT OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Sept. 1, 2025, Guyanese citizens cast their ballots in elections to select the nation’s next government. Carter Center observers visited 234 polling stations at 204 polling places in all 10 electoral districts on election day and reported that voters peacefully exercised their rights. In addition, Carter Center observers visited all 17 tabulation centers and will continue to monitor tabulation processes in the days ahead.

This is the sixth election that The Carter Center has observed in Guyana. And again, we congratulate the people of Guyana for the calm and quiet dignity with which they exercised their right to choose their leaders on election day. The 2025 election is the first since the traumatic experiences of 2020, and the nation faced important choices about its future and the use of its newfound economic wealth. While the campaign was at times fractious, the Guyanese people demonstrated that they can have lively rallies and impassioned debate while maintaining a peaceful election environment.

Carter Center observers across the country reported that polling staff, party agents, and officials from the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) carried out their duties with integrity and professionalism. Their efforts deserve recognition and appreciation. All Guyanese can take pride in how election day unfolded.

The Carter Center issued a statement on Aug. 19 that addressed several issues from the preelection period, including the size of the voter list, the lack of a level playing field for some aspects of the campaign, and the right to political participation. These and other matters are discussed further here and will be the subject of a comprehensive final report.

The final days before the election saw a court case about ballot access, a request from government-appointed election commissioners to change polling locations, a walkout of opposition-appointed commissioners from a GECOM meeting, and some racially charged and incendiary rhetoric by party officials and leaders. Nevertheless, the final political rallies took place in an atmosphere of hope and celebration.

On election day, all polling stations visited by Carter Center observers opened on time in a calm atmosphere, with some voters queued in long lines to cast their votes. Our observers rated the conduct of procedures positively at every station we visited, with no significant irregularities reported. The Carter Center is aware that as the day progressed, some on social media expressed concerns about citizens of other Commonwealth countries showing up to vote. Guyana's electoral laws generously permit Commonwealth citizens who reside in the country for a year to register to vote in national elections. This is an area that the new parliament may want to revisit.

There are persistent questions about the size and integrity of the voter list in Guyana, as the Center noted in its preelection statement. It is imperative for GECOM to implement procedures for removing voters who have died within Guyana using the new provisions under the law. GECOM should also look to international experience for removing electors who have died overseas. GECOM also could consider options for an independent test of the voter list before the next election, which could help identify priorities for future updates and increase confidence.

The Carter Center welcomes the establishment of the Constitutional Reform Commission during the last parliament and encourages future commissioners to engage with the Guyanese people on ways to reform the election system, create an independent and less political election commission, and strengthen checks and balances in government. Reforms should be in place at least two years before the next election.

The enormous economic gains that Guyana is experiencing from oil offer both promise and peril. It is critical for the next national assembly to take up further constitutional and legal reforms to protect and strengthen Guyana's democracy and elections. The Carter Center urges Guyana's leaders to ensure greater citizen access to public information, to reform the campaign finance system, and to work to provide a more level playing field for all who vie for the privilege of representing the Guyanese people.

The Carter Center notes that at the time of publication of this statement, tabulation is being finalized. GECOM is implementing a new tabulation process for these elections. Carter Center observers have assessed the process so far positively and remain deployed to observe and assess this important component of the electoral process.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

A critical factor in enhancing the transparency of an electoral process and facilitating citizens' active participation is an independent and impartial election management body. A transparent, accountable, and professional body is regarded as an effective means of ensuring that elections meet domestic and international obligations. The body should provide accountable, efficient, and effective public administration of elections and should ensure that the electoral process complies with Guyana's national laws as well as its regional and international obligations for democratic elections and human rights.¹

Guyana Elections Commission structure. GECOM is a constitutional body in Guyana composed of two parts: a secretariat of professional staff led by a CEO and Deputy CEO, and a policy-setting and decision-making commission composed of six commissioners and one chairperson. Unfortunately, the constitution does not explicitly establish the commission as an independent body. Based on the outdated Carter-Price formula, the chairperson is selected based on a list of persons "not unacceptable" to the president that is submitted by the leader of opposition. The current chairperson was appointed prior to the 2020 election. Three commissioners are nominated by the governing party and three by the opposition. In practice, these commissioners have been very closely aligned with Guyana's two historically dominant, ethnically based political parties.

Guyana's polarized political environment and deep lack of trust between parties, exacerbated by the 2020 election, limited the effectiveness of the commission. The commission struggled to reach consensus decisions, even on minor matters, which at times led to gridlock and hampered GECOM's ability to improve its operations. Many significant initiatives to enhance the administration of elections have faced obstacles because of the persistent polarization of the commissioners.

Lack of access to, and representation in, GECOM. In addition to the problems of gridlock, polarization, and dominant political party control, another important consequence of the current structure of GECOM is that most political parties are effectively left out of the process. While six parties ultimately registered to compete in the elections, only the two historically dominant parties have representation in the elections commission. Commissioners are perceived as acting as representatives of their parties rather than working to ensure the rights and interests of all stakeholders. This leaves other parties without equal access to information about the electoral process and no voice in decisions affecting the process. In short, the structure of GECOM contributes to a lack of trust among some of the political parties and the broader public, signaling that elections are the exclusive purview of politicians and not the Guyanese people.

¹ United Nations, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, General Comment 25, para. 20.

Depoliticization of GECOM. The Carter Center has long recommended that Guyana reform GECOM's structure to increase its independence, effectiveness, and professionalism, and to reduce the direct influence of Guyana's two leading political parties. The Carter Center is encouraged by the establishment of a Constitutional Reform Commission (CRC) and is hopeful that the CRC will resume its work immediately and consider alternative independent and depoliticized structures for the country's election management body.

Transparency and communication. Meetings of the commissioners are closed to the public and observers, and there is no public record of the agenda, minutes, or votes and decisions taken. This creates a vacuum that generates suspicion and can be filled with disinformation.² Despite some notable improvements, the administration of the 2025 election was characterized by deficits of communication and transparency that undermined public confidence in the institution and its work.

The Carter Center notes that there have been some positive changes in communication and information sharing, including an increase in the frequency of press releases and the introduction of weekly press conferences in the month before election day, as well as an improved website that made key information accessible to the public. The website includes a searchable version of the Official List of Electors, a "find my polling station" tool, key legal documents, and training manuals for polling station staff and others. The Carter Center commends these changes and recommends they be maintained for future elections.

Electoral procedures. Well in advance of the election, GECOM made two training manuals available to the public: one for presiding officers and polling day officials that summarized election day procedures, and one for returning officers (ROs) and supernumerary returning officers (SROs). These manuals provided helpful information and represented an important improvement in GECOM's public information efforts.

Unfortunately, tabulation procedures were not widely publicized in advance of the election in a form that made the important innovations in the process intelligible to the general public. Following the Carter Center's Aug. 19 preelection statement, which recommended that GECOM publicly release tabulation procedures, GECOM CEO Vishnu Persaud held a press conference in which he discussed the process. While this was helpful, GECOM should issue complete written polling and tabulation procedures for future elections to ensure that staff are well trained and can implement the process consistently across the country — and so that political parties and members of the public are familiar with the process.

Electoral preparations. Preparations for elections were conducted in an orderly and timely fashion, even though the secretariat's workplan compressed the timeline.

Throughout the preelection period, tensions between Guyana's leading political parties remained high and polarized, severely hampering the effectiveness of GECOM. On Aug. 28, opposition-appointed commissioners walked out of a meeting in protest of a late call to change some polling

² The law provides that no evidence of GECOM's internal deliberations or communications between its members is admissible in court. Commission members have used this provision to justify closed-door meetings and not publishing its decisions.

locations. Decisions prohibiting voters from taking cell phones into polling booths were adopted late.

Ballots were printed in Canada and arrived in Guyana in adequate time, and the procurement of other sensitive materials was conducted successfully, as was the packing and distribution of all materials. Polling staff, including presiding officers, were recruited in sufficient numbers and trained on time. Polling places were identified on time. Accreditation of important stakeholders, including the media and observers, went smoothly. Public and voter information efforts were reportedly conducted throughout the 10 regions, but the Center was unable to observe the breadth and depth of those efforts.

Political party agents. Several of the smaller and new political parties were unable to meet the deadline for registering their party agents with returning officers. This required GECOM to consider whether to extend the deadline for AFC, ALP, FGM, and WIN, which it quickly did by unanimous decision on Aug. 30. The Carter Center commended GECOM for this decision, highlighting that the presence of political party agents at the polling place for voting and counting on election day is fundamental to the election process and critical to transparency.

ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

Access to information is a critical means of ensuring informed public participation, transparency, and accountability in the electoral process. Elections conducted in the absence of adequate public access to information, including key elements of the electoral process, undermine their integrity. A well-informed electorate is essential to any electoral process and is a fundamental building block of a meaningful democracy.³

In its Aug. 19 preelection statement, The Carter Center noted several shortcomings that undermine public access to election-relevant information, such as the failure to publish the census, the absence of campaign and party finance data, limited information around GECOM decision-making, and obstacles faced by some media outlets and citizens in obtaining public information. The U.N. Human Rights Committee, in its May 2024 report, noted concerns that the commissioner of information does not respond to all requests and urged Guyana to ensure that the right of access to information is effectively exercised.

VOTING

The quality of voting operations on election day is crucial to determining the degree to which an election is consistent with its democratic obligations.⁴ On the eve of the election, GECOM Chairperson Justice Claudette Singh issued a welcome public statement, noting that “elections are

³ U.N. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 25(b) U.N. Human Rights Council, General Comment 25, para. 11.

⁴ United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 25 (b); United Nations Human Rights Committee, General Comment 25, para. 21; United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 21 (3); Inter-Parliamentary Union Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections, Article 2 (6).

regarded as the cornerstone of our democracy, a time for the expression of the people’s will, and this expression must occur in an atmosphere free from intimidation, misinformation, and unrest.” She went on to write, “Let us all, therefore, work together to ensure that the September 1, 2025, General and Regional Elections are a testament to Guyana’s democratic maturity and a beacon of peace and stability.”⁵

On Sept. 1, voting took place at 2,790 polling stations in 1,140 polling places across the country, with a maximum of 400 voters per station.⁶

Carter Center observers reported that citizens across Guyana queued peacefully to cast their votes. On election day, observers from the Center visited 234 polling stations across all 10 regions, representing approximately 8 percent of the total — providing a substantial level of observation coverage. They observed all key phases of the process, including opening, voting, closing, and counting procedures. Overall, the atmosphere throughout the day was described as calm and orderly. Observers rated the conduct of procedures positively at every station visited, with no significant irregularities reported. In most polling stations observed, polling staff appeared well-trained and demonstrated reasonable or better knowledge of the voting process. Voting proceeded smoothly, with minimal technical issues in the stations observed, providing an important pillar supporting election integrity.

Observers reported a strong presence of political party agents at polling stations visited, with PPP/C at 97%, APNU at 90%, WIN at 85%, AFC at 7%, FGM at 3%, and ALP at 2%. No objections were made to presiding officers at 97% of stations observed.

Opening. Ninety-four percent of polling stations visited by Carter Center observers opened on time. Opening was calm and conducted according to procedure in almost all polling stations observed. All material was present and correct in 92% of the polling stations visited. Carter Center observers reported high turnout at the start of the day, with electors queuing before opening of the polls. Carter Center observers also reported that opening procedures were followed fully or adequately in all stations observed.

Polling. The Carter Center observed voting at 234 polling stations across Guyana’s 10 regions. Seventy-four percent of polling stations visited by Carter Center observers were in urban areas and 26% in rural areas.

Overall, polling stations were evaluated as calm, efficient, and peaceful. Voter identification, ballot issuing, inking, and other voting procedures were followed to a substantial degree in observed stations. Party agents were present in 99% of the polling stations visited. Procedures were followed fully or adequately in almost all polling stations visited. Unfortunately, domestic observers were noted at very few polling stations.

Closing. The Carter Center observed the closing of the polls at 17 stations. All polling stations visited closed on time and all voters in the queue at 6 p.m. were allowed to cast their ballot, as

⁵ GECOM Office of the Chairman. Statement from Chairman of the Guyana Elections Commission, Justice of Appeal (Ret’d) Claudette Singh. Aug. 31, 2025.

⁶ A number of polling stations did exceed this ceiling, but none by more than 420 voters.

required by law. Overall, the observer teams concluded that closing procedures were mostly or always followed. The electoral atmosphere at the closing was generally described as calm. Party agents were present in all observed polling stations, and no team reported any case of their interference.

Disciplined Services Voting (DSV). On Friday, Aug. 22, members of Guyana’s disciplined services had the opportunity to cast their ballots at over 80 polling locations across the country. The practice allows for members of Guyana’s disciplined services, who will be serving the country on election day, to cast their ballots in secret and in person. The ballots are stored in secure envelopes and sorted and distributed to some of Guyana’s 2,790 polling stations. On election day, the ballots of Guyana’s disciplined services are “intermixed” with other ballots, added to ballot boxes, and counted along with other ballots at the end of election day.⁷ The practice allows members of the disciplined services to vote in person and in secret and, importantly, ensures that any overall political leaning of the disciplined forces remains unknown, as their ballots are not disclosed as a block.

The Carter Center observed DSV on Aug. 22, including the sorting of ballots the following day, and found the process to be well administered.

Proxy voting. Certain voters on the Official List of Electors (OLE) are allowed to vote by proxy, including election officials working on election day, candidates, transport and harbors department workers, people with disabilities, and members of the disciplined forces who did not vote on the day set aside for them to vote in person. Applications for proxy voting are submitted to ROs and were due by Aug. 11. The Carter Center observed seven instances of proxy voting (3% of observations); polling staff conducted this aspect of the process in accordance with law.

COUNTING

The counting process should be transparent and easily verifiable. Following the close of polls on Sept. 1, Carter Center observers continued to observe the polling, counting, and tabulation of results at all levels. The Carter Center observed counting in 17 polling stations across the country. Generally, Carter Center observers reported that, during counting, the atmosphere was “reasonable” or “very good” in a significant majority of locations observed. However, lack of command of procedures slowed the process in some. The counting of ballots, ballot sorting, and reconciliation adhered to regulations either fully or adequately in most polling stations visited, although observers did report some confusion with ballot counting procedures. Representatives of the two biggest parties were present in almost all polling stations observed (PPP/C at all and APNU at all but one).

⁷ GECOM’s DCEO told The Carter Center that the commission tries to intermix no more than 25 ballots at a given polling station and looks for polling stations with between 50% and 75% of the maximum number of 400 voters so as not to cause turnout to exceed that threshold.

TABULATION

The Carter Center observed the tabulation process in all centers. Observers assessed the implementation of tabulation procedures as “reasonable” or “very good” in all tabulation centers and assessed the environment as “reasonable” or “very good” in 96% of all tabulation observations.

The statements of poll (SoPs) began appearing on GECOM’s website before midnight on election day. Although the system was newly introduced, it functioned efficiently, with ROs and SROs uploading electronic copies of the SoPs — displayed on a screen to all present — immediately upon receipt. Once all SoPs were uploaded, the ROs and SROs commenced compiling district and subdistrict tabulation forms, displaying each SoP a second time as they recorded the results. In some centers, the process began late because of the delayed submission of SoPs (for example, in Region 6, the display of SoPs and compilation of results at the subdistrict level started as late as 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 2). The SoPs were displayed for tabulation purposes, and party agents were able to follow the process. Observers witnessed party agents raising objections at 24% of tabulation centers.

The new provisions require that SoPs be uploaded immediately upon receipt, while also stipulating that tabulation may only begin once all SoPs have been received. As a result, ROs/SROs uploaded SoPs through the night and late into the morning after election day, which delayed the start of tabulation. Consequently, as described above, GECOM staff were required both to upload the statements and display them again for tabulation, effectively doubling their workload, placing further strain on already exhausted staff, and delaying the ascertainment of the result.

VOTER REGISTRATION

Voter registration is an important means of ensuring that the right of universal suffrage is guaranteed.⁸ The credibility of elections requires a voter register that is complete, accurate, and up to date. In advance of the 2025 election, the quality and accuracy of the voter registry was a primary point of concern for political party leaders and the general public.

Voter eligibility. In Guyana, citizens 18 and older are eligible to vote, along with Commonwealth citizens who have resided in Guyana for over one year in advance of an election.⁹ The 2022 amendments removed references to residency requirements, in line with the 2019 judgment that held that the constitution does not require residency for general elections. In April 2025, the High Court further ruled that residency is not required for regional elections.¹⁰

A noteworthy 2021 amendment to the Registration of Births and Deaths Act allows adults who lack a birth certificate to be issued one based on certain documents, including a declaration by a

⁸ ICCPR, Article 25(b); and UNHCR, General Comment 25, para 11.

⁹ Eligibility to vote is discussed in a number of areas of Guyana’s constitution, including articles 59 and 159.

¹⁰ For regional elections, the constitution emphasizes that council members should be elected by the persons “residing in the region.” The High Court ruled that this language does not impose a substantive residency requirement but reflects the address declared by the voter at registration for the purposes of voting. While practical and inclusive, there is a need to further refine constitutional and legislative language to ensure consistency in this area.

“person of high standing in the community,” such as a Toshao in Indigenous communities, where lack of documentation has historically been a problem.

Improvements to the voter registration process, and other areas needing further strengthening. Following the 2020 election, important changes were made to Guyana’s legal framework for elections to try to respond to past concerns about the voter registry and improve its accuracy.

Establishment of a true continuous registration system and removal of house-to-house registration. In past elections, the voter registry was established by visiting homes during a set period of time to register eligible Guyanese. The last complete house-to-house registration was conducted in 2008, and another was started and halted in 2019. Periodic reviews of this register led to it becoming the basis for elections in 2011, 2015, 2020, and now 2025.

Legal amendments made in 2022 explicitly removed house-to-house registration from Guyana’s legal framework and established a system of near-continuous voter registration. The Official List of Electors (OLE) from the 2020 election became the basis for a register that is now regularly updated twice a year to add new registrants. Following these open periods, a Preliminary List of Electors (PLE) is prepared. This PLE is then open for a period of claims and objections during which the public can view the list and request updates. GECOM conducted an abbreviated claims and objections exercise July 16-22, during which the commission received 6,563 claims and four objections.¹¹ After vetting and processing these changes, GECOM released the OLE on July 30; it was shared on the commission’s website in a searchable format, an important improvement in transparency. The final OLE is valid for six months after it is certified.

Improvements to remove names of deceased people. Other legal amendments in 2022 sought to address previous concerns about difficulties in removing the names of dead people from the list. In the past, the names could not be removed from the voter list unless a death certificate was provided.

In response to these concerns and complications in 2020, the 2022 amendments strengthened GECOM’s ability to remove the names of deceased persons from the list by allowing GECOM to act based on a wider range of official documentation, including both death certificates from the General Registry Office (GRO) and quarterly reports of deaths by the commissioner of police and the country’s chief medical officer. While The Carter Center welcomes these recent reforms, they have not been fully implemented. Stakeholders say that the information received via these channels is frequently insufficient to identify voters with full confidence, and the commission has not agreed upon an effective modality to fully operationalize the new provisions. Some deaths, including those that occur overseas or in villages far from the country’s major towns, are never reported to the authorities.

The 2025 Official List of Electors (OLE). The final OLE for the 2025 election was released on July 30 and included a total of 757,690 voters — 376,703 men and 380,987 women. This represents an increase of 14.6% over the final OLE used for the 2020 election, which in turn was an increase of 15.5% from the OLE used for the 2015 election.

¹¹ All four objections were dismissed.

	2015	2020	2025
R1	14,830	18,952	24,453
R2	33,596	37,979	42,596
R3	84,518	100,758	116,875
R4	256,140	285,617	323,437
R5	40,177	44,663	50,796
R6	91,120	99,132	111,554
R7	12,548	14,887	17,846
R8	6,057	7,280	9,192
R9	14,272	17,922	22,481
R10	30,187	33,808	38,460
TOTAL	585,727	660,998	757,690

Many of the Carter Center’s interlocutors raised concerns about the size of the OLE, particularly as the previous census, conducted in 2012, estimated the country’s total population at [746,955 people](#). The government conducted a new census in 2022, but the results have yet to be released, further obscuring public understanding and fueling mistrust. After decades in which many Guyanese left seeking opportunities abroad, Guyana now has a large diaspora. A [2024 U.N. survey](#) estimated there may be as many as 470,000 Guyanese living outside the country. Some share of the sizeable Guyanese diaspora is validly registered.

As The Carter Center noted in its Aug. 19 preelection statement, the failure to publish the 2022 census is a regrettable lapse that obscures public understanding of basic population demographics and their potential relation to the size of the voter list. Following the recent court decisions and legislative changes, registered voters cannot be removed from the list on the grounds that they no longer reside in the country. While recent changes to the legal framework have sought to be responsive to past concerns about removal of the deceased, further efforts are required. While many expressed concern about the relative size of the OLE, The Carter Center has not received evidence of inflation of the voter roll.

The next parliament should revisit this issue. It is imperative for GECOM to implement procedures for removing voters who have died within Guyana using the new provisions under the law and explore innovative measures to remove registered voters who have died in the diaspora.

The Center also recommends that GECOM consider an independent test of the voter list before the next election. This could be modeled on the “people test” conducted on the voter list prior to the 1992 election, in which a sample of names was tested to determine the registrant’s current status. This could help increase confidence in the list and identify needs for reform and updates.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK & ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Legal Framework

Guyana is party to international and regional instruments that impose obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights standards in the conduct of elections.¹² General and regional elections are primarily governed by the constitution, the Representation of the People Act (RoPA), the National Registration Act (NRA), and the Local Democratic Organs Act. The framework is further supplemented by other laws, including the National Assembly (Validity of Elections) Act.

The legal framework forms a sufficient basis for the conduct of democratic elections. The Carter Center, in its preelection statement, welcomed the 2022 amendments aimed at improving the transparency of the process, in particular changes aimed at improving the voter registration process as well as improvements to the transparency of the counting and tabulation processes.

However, the legal framework continues to exhibit notable gaps, as it does not comprehensively regulate several key aspects of the electoral process. These include, among other things, the absence of comprehensive and enforceable provisions concerning party and campaign finance, prohibition of the misuse of state resources, media coverage and oversight during election period, and the registration and functioning of political parties. It is unfortunate that the 2022 amendments did not address these longstanding issues, despite repeated recommendations by The Carter Center and other international observers. The reform process thus represented a missed opportunity to bring the legal framework further in line with international standards and electoral best practice. Regrettably, the consolidated single text of RoPA was not available for the public, limiting stakeholders' familiarity with the applicable legal provisions, including among political parties.

Legal certainty is a fundamental component of the rule of law and is essential to the integrity of elections.¹³ It demands that electoral laws be clear, accessible, stable, and foreseeable for all stakeholders. Guyana's legal framework contains several inconsistencies¹⁴, with some sections containing contradictory provisions, resulting in GECOM's inability to implement them.¹⁵

Constitutional Reform Commission. The Constitutional Reform Commission (CRC) was constituted in 2024 with a mandate to review the constitution, including provisions on electoral

¹² Guyana is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Guyana is also a party to the U.N. Convention against Corruption, and OAS Inter-American Convention Against Corruption. Guyana is not a party to the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention.

¹³ ICCPR GC 34, para. 25: "A norm to be characterized as a law, must be formulated with sufficient precision to enable an individual to regulate his or her conduct accordingly and it must be made accessible to the public." See also ICCPR, Article 2(2) A/HRC/RES/19/36, 2012, p. 16: [The Human Rights Council] calls upon states to make continuous efforts to strengthen the rule of law and promote democracy by: (c) "Ensuring that a sufficient degree of legal certainty and predictability is provided in the application of the law, to avoid any arbitrariness."

¹⁴ For example, the law refers to "polling places" and "polling stations" inconsistently.

¹⁵ Section 47 of RoPA requires that non-resident electors' ballot papers be printed in a different color; however, this provision is not implemented, reportedly to protect voter secrecy. Part X of the RoPA is also not applied, owing to uncertainty regarding its implementation. Article 39 and 39A define two different requirements for the ballot papers. Besides that, the framework contains several technical mistakes.

reform, and the composition of GECOM and its jurisdiction. According to the Establishing Act, the commission comprises 10 members nominated by parliamentary parties, 10 by civil society organizations, and a chairperson. Substantive discussions have not yet taken place, and the commission is expected to resume its work after the election. The Center welcomes this initiative and calls on the new parliament and government to ensure that the commission is adequately supported and that its work proceeds in an inclusive, transparent, and timely manner. The Center calls on the CRC to establish a review process that includes civic education and engagement across the country to include broad sectors of the Guyanese public in discussions about the constitution and areas for change. The CRC's work should be completed so that its core recommendations can be fully implemented at least two years before the next general and regional elections.

Voting of Prisoners. Concerns also persist about the ability of people in custody to exercise their right to vote. Despite constitutional provisions that disqualify only those convicted of electoral offenses, no legal or procedural framework exists to enable the participation of other prisoners. As a result, some 2,500 prisoners, including pretrial detainees, remain effectively disenfranchised.

Electoral System

The 2025 general and regional elections were to choose the 65 members of the National Assembly and select members of 10 regional democratic councils, both under the system of proportional representation.

Of the 65 members of the National Assembly, 25 are elected from geographic constituency lists in the 10 regions, while 40 are elected from a national “top-up” list. The president is elected by plurality linked to the national assembly vote. Voters cast a single vote for a political party, which in fact reflects three choices. First, for their geographical constituency list; second, for the national top-up list; and third, for the president. This uncommon variant of proportional representation results in a bizarre arrangement in which not all parties contesting National Assembly elections appear on the ballots in all 10 regions, creating uncertainty for political actors, which in this election led to legal disputes (See Election Dispute Resolution section). This situation places new and smaller parties at a disadvantage, as those unable to nominate candidates in all 10 regions cannot fully translate their countrywide support into seats.

The Center has previously highlighted that the electoral system is neither a “closed list” system nor an “open list” system. The lists of candidates presented by parties to GECOM have an order, but after the election, the party representative (head of list) has full discretion to select the candidates from that list to fill the seats won. As a result, voters do not know which candidates will be allocated seats.

ELECTORAL OBSERVATION

GECOM accredited 18 groups of observers. In total, there were around 650 local observers, including those from diplomatic missions, and around 200 international observers. Guyana's civil society is weak. While some long-established organizations representing particular constituencies

persevere, most civil society organizations are small, under-resourced, and often engage in partisan behavior. Guyana does not have an organization of respected nonpartisan domestic election observers that has the capacity to deploy countrywide and assess elections with independence and credibility. Creative ways should be found to help support and sustain such capacity.

On election day, Carter Center observers noted local observers at 23 polling stations (10% of the total observed) and international observers at 16 polling stations (7%).

CANDIDATES, PARTIES, AND THE CAMPAIGN ENVIRONMENT

Campaign period. The Carter Center observed nomination day, which took place on July 14. Six of the seven parties that submitted candidate lists were ultimately approved to contest the election. All of the approved political parties campaigned across the country, although some faced restrictions. The campaign proceeded in a generally peaceful manner, with no major incidents of violence reported. The Center received complaints from parties about delays in police approval for campaign events and noted that the police indicated intent to approve campaign requests quickly.

The Carter Center noted with concern that a presidential candidate had been denied interior airline service for campaign flights because of fear of secondary U.S. sanctions, as well as reports that parties had been denied use of local public areas for campaign meetings. These campaign issues raise concerns about equal application of the rights of freedom of association.

On Aug. 5, most political parties signed a code of conduct developed by Guyana's Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC), in which parties committed to peaceful campaigns, and avoidance of hate speech and ethnically divisive rhetoric. Two political parties, A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) and Forward Guyana Movement (FGM), did not sign the code of conduct.¹⁶

The Carter Center received allegations from opposition and new parties of an atmosphere of fear among public sector workers, local business owners, and community members who were concerned about losing their jobs or future economic opportunities if they did not display support for the ruling party. Others worried that political parties might pay electors to vote, prompting GECOM to issue a bulletin reminding voters that this is illegal and eventually decided not to allow phones in the polling compartment.

Misuse of state resources. The Carter Center received multiple credible allegations from political parties and civil society that the ruling party used state-owned vehicles to campaign and took advantage of public workers in campaign activities. Public officials opened new public buildings and infrastructures in full ruling party regalia, which blurred the line between the state and the party. Social media and news reports also were rife with photographs suggesting this problem. While these actions during openings did not violate the law, they raised concerns about state resources creating undue influence on voters, contrary to the international standards and best practice.

¹⁶ FGM argued that the code was unenforceable and should cover other institutions such as the police force and election commission.

Campaign finance. The legal framework does not provide comprehensive legislation on party and campaign finance. Existing provisions are limited to expenditure ceilings (which require revision), and a requirement that declarations of electoral expenses be submitted to GECOM within 35 days after the declaration of results. The CEO must publish a summary of these reports in the official Gazette, and the reports may be inspected for two years by anyone who pays a fee.

There is no state funding of political parties in Guyana, nor are there regulations on donations, and enforcement of the existing provisions on expenditure reporting is not ensured in practice. While the High Court may impose fines, these provisions have never been applied, and no oversight exists. These gaps in the legal framework contribute to significant inequities between political parties, particularly newly established ones, and limit transparency about the sources and use of campaign funding, contrary to Guyana’s international obligations.

Parties conducted fundraising events throughout the course of the election campaign. However, the substantial advantage of the ruling party over its competitors was evident. The Center calls on all parties to provide their financial reports to GECOM to comply with the existing requirements as a step toward greater transparency in campaign finance.

OFAC sanctions and the right to political participation in Guyana. In its Aug. 19 preelection statement, The Carter Center noted that Guyanese banks had acted against WIN candidates, party members, and their associates in response to U.S. sanctions imposed on the party leader and presidential candidate in June 2024. The Carter Center has learned that the banks closed the personal accounts of more than 70 WIN candidates and people associated with the party. The Center expressed concern that an excessive response to U.S. sanctions could negatively affect rights of political participation. The Center noted the role of the private sector in safeguarding the democratic rights and freedoms of these individuals.

On Aug. 26, the U.S. embassy asserted that the Guyanese would only face challenges if they engaged in financial transactions directly with a sanctioned individual and that “simply belonging to a party led by a sanctioned individual does not automatically trigger penalties.” The Carter Center notes that this additional information was provided very late in the campaign period.

PPP/C complaint to the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC). On Wednesday, Aug. 27, the PPP/C submitted a formal complaint to the ERC regarding threats of postelection violence. While the complaint is an active case and was not released publicly in advance of election day, it seems to be related to alleged comments by the leaders of APNU and WIN that could be interpreted as threatening violence should they lose elections they considered to be unfair.

MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

The media play a vital role in elections by providing voters with the information they need to make informed choices on election day. In Guyana, freedom of expression and press freedom are safeguarded by both the national constitution and international law. The Guyana National Broadcasting Authority (GNBA), established under the Broadcasting Act of 2011, serves as the regulatory body overseeing the media. However, some stakeholders question its impartiality.

There are no specific provisions regulating media conduct during the election period. The only exception in the Broadcasting Act requires that, at election time, broadcast licensees work with political parties and consult with GECOM to allocate airtime to parties. However, this weak provision is not enforced, and no consultations with GECOM on this matter have taken place.

The Carter Center mission did not conduct systematic media monitoring. Nevertheless, it noted reports of state media coverage favoring the ruling party. Some state media representatives reported difficulties in engaging and communicating with opposition parties, while opposition representatives alleged mistrust and rejection by state outlets for the coverage of their campaign events.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

Women are active and visible in public life in Guyana. The judiciary includes many female magistrates, and the chief magistrate and acting chancellor are women. GECOM's chair is also a woman, but the other six members are men. Some senior management posts at GECOM's secretariat are held by women, and five of 10 SROs are women, but only three of the 10 ROs are women.

Women were highly visible participants in all aspects of election day, constituting 50.28% of registered voters. They also were very active among those engaged in electoral duties. Women composed 85% percent of polling staff in stations observed by The Carter Center, and 82% percent of presiding officers in stations observed were female. Where party agents from the two major political parties were present in stations observed, women made up 78% and 74% of APNU and PPP/C party agents, respectively. Eighty-three percent of WIN's party agents were women in the stations observed by the Center.

Women candidates. In the 2025 election, two women ran for president, and there were several women among the prime ministerial running mates. Some women candidates reported being subjected to offensive language and degrading portrayals on social media. By law, female candidates must make up a third of a party's list for the "national top-up" (proportional representation) election, the combined geographic constituencies, and the elections for regional democratic councils. While at least one-third of candidates on all party lists must be women, there is no requirement to seat them.

In future elections, The Carter Center recommends that political parties be required to denote gender on their party lists, and that published party lists include gender information. The Carter Center calls upon GECOM to engage in proper due diligence to ensure that all party lists meet the requirement to have at least one-third women and calls upon GECOM to reject any party list that does not meet this requirement.

PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

An inclusive election process requires that all voters can vote, unimpeded by physical barriers at polling stations. Reasonable accommodations should be put in place to ensure that the secrecy of the vote is guaranteed for voters with disabilities.

Regrettably, the secrecy of the vote for people with disabilities is not ensured. These voters may cast their ballot in person (where polling stations are accessible), through proxy voting, or with the assistance of a person of their choice. While the Persons with Disabilities Act mandates that GECOM ensure barrier-free polling stations and adequate arrangements for people with disabilities, these provisions were not implemented.

The majority of polling stations did not afford the elderly or people with physical disabilities independent access. Nor did GECOM provide special measures, such as ramps for wheelchair users or stencils for visually impaired voters, reportedly because of lack of time. Positively, on the initiative of GECOM and in collaboration with the Guyana Council of Organisations for Persons with Disabilities (GCOPD), more than 5,000 polling staff received sensitivity training ahead of election day. Special brochures were disseminated to polling officials to guide their interaction, and GECOM reportedly improved voter education advertisements targeting people with disabilities. On election day, 75 of the 234 polling stations that The Carter Center observed were found unsuitable for voters with reduced mobility.

In past elections, GECOM provided tactile ballot guides to ensure the secrecy of the vote for the visually impaired and has also previously procured portable ramps to improve the accessibility of some polling locations. Unfortunately, these and other steps were not implemented in 2025.

PARTICIPATION OF THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND INTERSEX (LGBTI) COMMUNITY

Guyana's legal framework criminalizes homosexuality, and Guyana remains the only country in the Americas outside of the Caribbean where homosexual acts remain illegal. The Carter Center has recommended that discriminatory legislation be repealed, as it undermines the right of equal participation in public life and recommends that the issue be considered by Guyana's CRC.

Most contesting parties publicly endorsed the rights of LGBTI persons and pledged reforms to ensure equal access to fundamental rights. At a town hall hosted by the Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD) Guyana, several parties committed to championing the rights of the community. The Carter Center welcomed these initiatives aimed at advancing the enforcement of fundamental rights in Guyana and hopes that all parties will fully support the rights of LGBTI persons in future elections.

PARTICIPATION OF ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

Protecting religious and ethnic minorities is essential to maintaining a democratic society. The right to be free from discrimination and to receive equal treatment under the law must be upheld throughout the electoral process, including during voter registration.¹⁷

Guyana is home to an estimated 78,000 Indigenous people who reside in approximately 200 villages and communities across the country. Indigenous communities in Guyana have historically been marginalized, both in terms of their geographic isolation and their limited political representation. Some legal framework changes made before these elections sought to increase inclusivity, including making it easier for Toshaos to help people secure birth certificates and accepting information from Toshaos regarding deaths — changes discussed elsewhere in this report.

Issues related to Indigenous peoples featured in most party manifestos, with pledges ranging from improving access to education and health, to addressing land demarcation, to amending the Amerindian Act (2006). Parties campaigned in Indigenous-populated areas. However, according to some interlocutors, some parties lacked the financial resources to effectively conduct outreach because of high transportation costs, while others reported instances of intimidation. In addition, one presidential candidate was denied air services to campaign.

Although no official figures are available, The Carter Center was informed that a portion of the adult Indigenous population remains unregistered to vote, primarily because of the lack of birth certificates, which prevents their inclusion on the voter list. In some villages, voter education remains limited, mostly because of the limited outreach capacity of the radio or broadcasters.

ELECTORAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Electoral dispute resolution and the right to an effective remedy are critical in ensuring the rule of law and protecting any electoral process from bias or fraud.¹⁸ The High Court has exclusive jurisdiction to hear disputes about results, recounts, and candidate qualification — along with all preelection matters — but these must be submitted via postelection petitions within 28 days of the formal publication of results. The law is generous and gives broad legal standing in postelection cases. However, there are no deadlines for rendering decisions, affecting the right to legal remedy.¹⁹

The law also allows challenges on constitutional grounds, through judicial review, where either the law itself or its implementation is alleged to be inconsistent with the constitution. The decisions of the High Court can be appealed to the Court of Appeal, with the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) serving as Guyana's final appellate court.

¹⁷ UNGA ICCPR, Article 26.

¹⁸ United Nations Center for Human Rights. Human Rights and Elections: A Handbook on the Legal, Technical, and Human Rights Aspects of Elections. United Nations, para. 47, 1994.

¹⁹ Reportedly, a 2015 petition is still pending at the High Court.

Preelection case regarding ballot access. On Aug. 20, FGM’s presidential candidate filed a constitutional challenge with the High Court contesting the exclusion of FGM from ballots in regions where it had not nominated geographical constituency candidates. The application argued that GECOM’s practice violates the principles of equal suffrage, nondiscrimination, and proportional representation, and requested that the court order GECOM to include all qualified parties on the ballots nationwide and to postpone elections until such inclusion was ensured. The court held two days of hearings, which were conducted transparently and allowed the parties to present their arguments. On Aug. 29, the court dismissed the case, finding that the applicant failed to show that GECOM restricted the party’s participation or violated constitutional rights. It noted that the party itself chose not to contest certain constituencies, and GECOM could not lawfully place it on the ballots in those locations. Although the ruling was issued on the last business day before the election, FGM informed The Carter Center that they filed an appeal with the Court of Appeal on Aug. 30.²⁰

In past election observation reports, The Carter Center has commented on the complexity of Guyana’s electoral system to elect the members of National Assembly, difficulties in ballot access, and challenges for newer or smaller political parties. In addition, the electoral system has been the subject of legal disputes prior to the elections.²¹

The Carter Center in Guyana

The Carter Center has worked in Guyana since 1991 to strengthen democracy, support civil society, encourage sustainable development, and reinforce the rule of law. The Carter Center is a recognized leader in the international election observation community and has conducted more than 125 election observation missions globally, including in Guyana in 1992, 2001, 2006, 2015, and 2020. In addition to work on elections, The Carter Center has conducted a range of activities in Guyana, including helping Guyanese articulate a comprehensive vision and development strategy; supporting civil society groups working to advance the status of women, youth, and Amerindians; assisting judicial system reform programs in partnership with the High Court, the chief justice, the Guyana Bar Association, and the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers; facilitating conflict resolution efforts in support of peace and political dialogue; and supporting government, industry, and civil society stakeholders to comply with the requirements of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

²¹ On July 29, the High Court dismissed on the merits two constitutional applications concerning the electoral system. The first contested the absence of a legal basis in the Representation of the People Act for independent candidates and small parties to effectively contest in geographical constituencies, alleging a violation of the rights to stand and to vote under the constitution and Article 25 of the ICCPR. The second challenged the requirement for parties to contest in at least six constituencies and 13 seats, claiming it creates an unreasonable barrier for smaller and regional parties and infringes on the right to political participation and equal representation.



NEWS RELEASE

The Carter Center Urges Guyana’s Political Parties to Submit Campaign Finance Reports

ATLANTA (Oct. 17, 2025) — Under Guyana’s Representation of the Peoples Act, political parties that contested the recent election are required to submit postelection financial reports to the Guyana Elections Commission within 35 days of the declaration of results.

With publication of the results in the Official Gazette on Sept. 16, these reports are due for submission to the chief election officer of GECOM imminently. The Carter Center encourages all parties to comply with this reporting requirement as a step toward fostering a culture of transparency and accountability. The Carter Center will include recommendations related to campaign finance reform in its upcoming final report.

###

Contact: media@cartercenter.org

The Carter Center

Waging Peace. Fighting Disease. Building Hope.

A not-for-profit, nongovernmental organization, The Carter Center has helped to improve life for people in over 80 countries by resolving conflicts; advancing democracy, human rights, and economic opportunity; preventing diseases; and improving mental health care. The Carter Center was founded in 1982 by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, in partnership with Emory University, to advance peace and health worldwide.

Visit our website [CarterCenter.org](https://www.CarterCenter.org) | Follow us on X [@CarterCenter](https://twitter.com/CarterCenter) | Follow us on Instagram [@thecartercenter](https://www.instagram.com/thecartercenter) | Like us on Facebook [Facebook.com/CarterCenter](https://www.facebook.com/CarterCenter) | Watch us on YouTube [YouTube.com/CarterCenter](https://www.YouTube.com/CarterCenter)

Letters of Invitation



Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

254 South Road & Shiv Chanderpaul Dr.,
Georgetown, Guyana.

Telephone: 592-226-9080.

Email: minister@minfor.gov.gy

Website: www.minfor.gov.gy

April 15, 2024

Ms Paige Alexander
Chief Executive Officer
The Carter Centre
453 John Lewis Freedom Parkway
NE Atlanta, Georgia 30307-1406
USA

Dear Ms Alexander,

General and Regional Elections will be held in Guyana in 2025 on a date still to be decided upon. In the interest of ensuring that electoral best practices are maintained and respected, the Government of Guyana intends to invite regional and international bodies to observe these elections.

On behalf of the Government of Guyana, I wish to extend an invitation to the Carter Centre to mount an Electoral Observer Mission to Guyana. The Mission will be allowed to operate independently in keeping with international best practices for such Missions.

It is our hope that the Carter Centre would find it possible to accept this invitation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hugh Hilton Todd', written over a horizontal line.

Hugh Hilton Todd
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

THE
CARTER CENTER



May 30, 2025

The Honorable Hugh Hilton Todd
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
254 South Road and Shiv Chanderpaul Drive
Georgetown
Cooperative Republic of Guyana

To the Honorable Hugh Hilton Todd,

Thank you for your invitation, extended on April 15, 2024, for The Carter Center to observe Guyana's upcoming elections anticipated on September 1, 2025. We are pleased to officially accept your government's letter of invitation.

Carter Center election observation missions provide a trusted and independent assessment of the electoral process. The Center conducts its observation work in accordance with the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Observers, which provide guidelines for professional and impartial methods of international election observation. Our election observation missions are international non-governmental teams composed of expert delegates from a range of countries that assess the extent to which Guyana's electoral process is conducted in accordance with the constitution, election laws, other pertinent legislation, and international standards and best practices. Public reports of the Center's findings may be issued during the electoral process.

In the ensuing weeks, we plan to deploy a small team of international experts to begin observing the pre-election period. In August 2025, we plan to deploy a contingent of short-term observers to observe polling, counting, and tabulation processes in the days surrounding the planned polls.

We will contact your office when our core team of electoral experts arrives in Guyana. I know they look forward to a close and collaborative relationship with you and the Government of Guyana.

Sincerely,

Paige Alexander
Chief Executive Officer
The Carter Center

DEMOCRACY PROGRAM
ONE COPENHILL · 453 FREEDOM PARKWAY · ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30307 · (404) 420 5188 · FAX (404) 420 5196



Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

254 South Road & Shiv Chanderpaul Dr.,
Georgetown, Guyana.
Telephone: 592-226-9080.
Email: minister@minfor.gov.gy
Website: www.minfor.gov.gy

6 June 2025

Ms. Paige Alexander
Chief Executive Officer
The Carter Center
453 John Lewis,
Freedom Parkway
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Ms. Alexander,

I write to acknowledge and thank you for your positive response to the invitation by the Government of Guyana in support of the maintenance of our national democratic institutions during the upcoming General and Regional Elections scheduled for 1 September 2025. Your official acceptance serves as a demonstration of the Carter Centre's continued commitment to democratic practices in Guyana and across the hemisphere.

We look forward to welcoming the advance team to initiate pre-election observations, followed by the arrival of the full delegation closer to the polling period. The expertise and professionalism of your team will continue to be a valuable asset, significantly contributing to ensuring a fair, transparent, and credible electoral process.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Hilton Todd
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Co-operative Republic of Guyana

Guyana 2025 Opening Form

STO Team Number

1. Start of Observation (at station)

hh:mm

2. Electoral District

Please select the electoral district:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Region 1 | <input type="radio"/> Region 2 | <input type="radio"/> Region 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 4 | <input type="radio"/> Region 5 | <input type="radio"/> Region 6 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 7 | <input type="radio"/> Region 8 | <input type="radio"/> Region 9 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 10 | | |

3. Polling Place Name

Please fill in the polling place name.

4. GPS Location

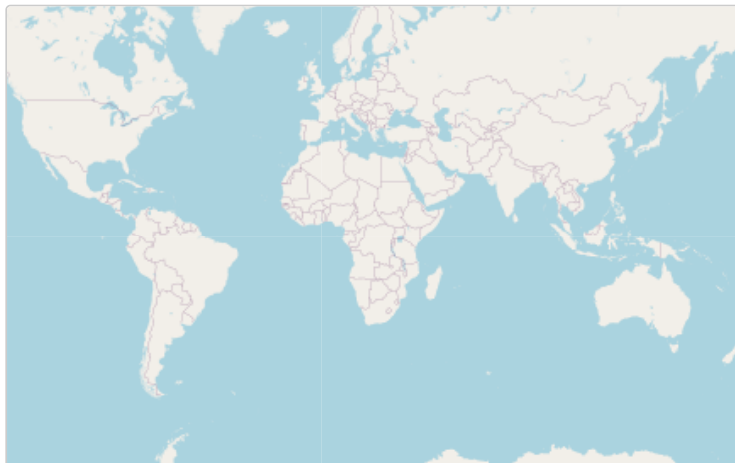
Please capture your location below:

latitude (x.y °)

longitude (x.y °)

altitude (m)

accuracy (m)



5. Polling Place Type

What type of facility is the polling place?

- Public/Government Building
- Private Establishment (home, business, etc.)
- GECOM Tent
- Religious Building

6. Number of Polling Stations

Please indicate the number of polling stations at the polling place. If the place and the station are the same, answer "1".

7. Polling Station Number

Please indicate the polling station number.

8. Urban or Rural

Is the polling place in an urban or rural area?

- Urban
- Rural

9. Were there obstacles or barriers on the way to the polling place that could have inhibited general access?

Examples of barriers might include distance from villages or a dysfunctional bridge.

- Yes
- No

9.1. If "Yes", please describe:

Describe the barriers to public access and to what extent it affected voters.

10. Did the polling staff post all required signs at the polling station?

Look for the polling station sign, polling place notice, anti-molestation sign, and maintenance of secrecy at the polling station sign.

- Yes
- Some, but not all
- No

11. Which, if any, prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe OUTSIDE the POLLING PLACE?

If there is only one station per "polling place," then please answer this question as "OUTSIDE the STATION." Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Campaigning
- Campaign material
- Interfering with voters
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Bussing activities
- Other
- None

11.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process? Remember that interfering with voters is prohibited within 200 yards of a polling place.

12. Which, if any, of the following prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe INSIDE the POLLING PLACE (but outside the stations)?

Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Campaigning
- Campaign material
- Interfering with voters
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Other
- None

12.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

13. Presiding officer's gender (if present)

If the presiding officer is not present now but appears before departure, please adjust this answer.

- Female
 Male
 Not observed

14. Number of officers working at the polling station (excluding presiding officer)

15. Number of FEMALE officers present (excluding presiding officer)

16. Number of registered voters at this polling station

17. Which, if any, prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe INSIDE the STATION? (Select 'None' if none)

Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Prohibited campaigning
 Prohibited campaign material
 Ineffective queue management
 Intimidation
 Violence
 Significant disorder
 Security (beyond regulations)
 Other
 None

17.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

18. Were any of the following materials missing, insufficient, or incorrect?

18.1. Posted Signs

- A = Present and correct
 B = Missing (entirely absent)
 C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
 D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.2. Electoral Ink

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.3. Booths/screens

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.4. Ballot Papers

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.5. Ballot Box

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.6. Official List of Electors (OLE)

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.7 Poll Book

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.8 Official Stamp

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.9. Seals

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.10. Forms

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.11. Envelopes

(e.g. Tamper Evident Envelopes (TEEs) for submissions of SoPs)

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.12. Folio

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.13 If materials are missing, insufficient, or incorrect, please describe, including any "other" materials noted:

19. Does the station appear to be independently accessible to persons with disabilities (PWDs), including the elderly?

Does the station appear to be accessible to persons with disabilities, including the elderly? The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities establishes an obligation for states to take measures to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility. This requires that people with disabilities will have an opportunity to participate on an equal basis in both rural and urban areas.

- Yes
- No

19.1. If 'No', describe impediments and any efforts to assist.

20. Did the polling station open during your observation?

Yes

No

20.1. If "No", why did the polling station fail to open on time?

Why did the polling station fail to open on time?

21. If opened, at what time did the polling station open?

hh:mm

22. If the station opened >30 minutes late, select reasons (choose 'Not applicable' if <30 minutes late).

Missing materials

Absent polling staff

Unrest

Other

Not applicable

22.1. If the polling station opened more than 30 minutes late, please describe the reasons, including any "other" reasons noted:

Definitions for procedure ratings:

FULLY – Always/almost always correct; minor errors only.

ADEQUATELY – Mostly correct; errors did not affect integrity/transparency.

INADEQUATELY – Often incorrect or error may compromise integrity.

NOT AT ALL – Omitted or not followed meaningfully.

NOT OBSERVED – Unable to assess.

23. ROOM CONFIGURATION – How closely did procedures adhere to regulations?

The Poll Clerk, Assistant Presiding Officer, and the Presiding Officer are generally stationed between the entrance and the ballot box. - The Poll Clerk is stationed near the entrance. - The Presiding Officer and Assistant Presiding Officer are stationed near the center of the station. -The Ballot Clerk is stationed next to the ballot box. - Polling Agents should have an assigned seating area so that the process can be observed, but in a way that avoids interference with the elector. - The voting compartment should be positioned to protect secrecy of the ballot.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

24. STAMP PREPARATION – How closely did the procedure adhere to regulations?

Before opening of the poll, the PO writes 0 to 9 on separate slips of paper, places them in a paper bag, and requests any six people present from Polling Station Staff or Polling Agents to alternately take a slip each from the bag. Whenever a digit is drawn, it is replaced in the bag for the next drawing. The PO sets the stamp to reflect the digits in the order of extraction. The digits drawn should be recorded from left to right on the six-digit stamp.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

25. EXAMINATION OF THE BALLOT BOX – How closely did procedures adhere to regulations?

The Presiding Officer, in the presence of all members of the Polling Station Staff and Polling Agents, displays the empty ballot box for all witnesses within the Polling Station to see.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

26. BALLOT BOX SEALING – How closely did procedures adhere to regulations?

The Presiding Officer shall open the ballot box and empty its contents so that all present can witness the box is empty – direct the Poll Clerk to make an entry in the Poll Book to the effect that the ballot box was properly examined before the opening of the poll and invite the witnesses to attest to this fact – place the cover over the ballot box and use the yellow seals provided to seal the box.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

27. If not 'Fully'/'Adequately' (or 'Very good'/'Reasonable'), please explain.

28. Please identify and capture the number and gender of party polling agents for the following political parties. If there are none- leave blank.

28.1. AFC – Males

28.2. AFC – Females

28.3. ALP – Males

28.4. ALP – Females

28.5. APNU – Males

28.6. APNU – Females

28.7. FGM – Males

28.8. FGM – Females

28.9. PPP/C – Males

28.10. PPP/C – Females

28.11. W.I.N. – Males

28.12. W.I.N. – Females

**29. Please identify and capture the number and gender breakdown of observers.
If there are none- leave blank.**

29.1. CARICOM – Males

29.2. CARICOM – Females

29.3. Commonwealth – Males

29.4. Commonwealth – Females

29.5. EU – Males

29.6. EU – Females

29.7. Local observer – Males

29.8. Local observer – Females

29.9. OAS – Males

29.10. OAS – Females

29.11. Other Observer – Males

29.12. Other Observer – Females

30. Which local observer or other groups not listed did you observe at the polling station?

If none, write N/A

31. What level of access did each of the following groups have?

31.1. Party polling agent – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

31.2. Candidate – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

31.3. International observers – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

31.4. Local observers – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

31.5. GECOM staff – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

31.6. Security – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

31.7. Voters – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

31.8. Other - Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

32. If any groups were not allowed sufficient access, please describe:

How were groups denied access and what was the impact?

33. Did you observe any interference in the election process?

Please indicate which group(s) interfered. Select "No interference observed" if no interference was observed.

- Candidate
- Party agents
- International observers
- Local observers
- Polling staff
- Media
- Voters
- Security
- Local officials
- Religious/traditional leaders
- Other
- No interference observed

33.1. If any interference, please describe:

How were groups causing interference and what was the impact?

34. End of Observation (at station)

hh:mm

35. Has anyone lodged an objection about the process?

Note there are no official procedures for filing an objection at the polling station level.

- Yes
- No

35.1. If "yes", please describe:

Who filed objections? What were the reasons? How were they filed (e.g. verbally or in writing) and addressed?

36. Were there any problems reported to you by those present rather than those observed directly by you?

(Reported by e.g., agents, observers, voters)

- Yes
- No

36.1. If 'Yes', describe actors involved, resolution, impact, and any corroboration.

Please note the actors involved, how it was resolved, the apparent impact, and any supporting evidentiary corroboration.

37. How would you evaluate party agents' /candidate's performance?

- Adequate
- Inadequate
- Not Observed/Observable

37.1. If not 'Adequate', please describe reasons.

38. Before moving ahead, please review the following definitions regarding the overall assessment of IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES BY STAFF. Mark the selection below to indicate that you understand the definitions and refer back to this page if needed.

VERY GOOD — Procedures were always or almost always applied correctly. Any procedural errors observed were very minor and did not affect the integrity or transparency of the process.

REASONABLE — Procedures were mostly applied correctly. Procedural errors observed did not appear to affect the integrity or transparency of the process.

POOR — Procedures were not applied correctly; OR procedural errors significantly affected the transparency of the process and/or may have compromised the integrity of the process.

NOT CREDIBLE — Important procedures were not followed correctly and these problems likely compromised the integrity of the process.

- I have read and understand the definitions.

39. What is your team's evaluation of the implementation of procedures by staff at this station?

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

39.1. What were the main reasons for not choosing "Very Good" or "Reasonable"?

Definitions – overall assessment of OPENING ENVIRONMENT AND PROCESS:

VERY GOOD – No significant problems; fully transparent.

REASONABLE – Problems did not significantly affect integrity/transparency.

POOR – Significant problems (procedures errors; intimidation/interference; observers restricted) may have compromised integrity.

NOT CREDIBLE – Observed problems likely compromised integrity.

40. Team's overall assessment of the election environment and process at this station

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

40.1. Main reasons for not choosing 'Very Good' or 'Reasonable'

41. Any other comments?

Guyana 2025 Polling Form

STO Team Number

1. Start of Observation (at station)

hh:mm

2. Electoral District

Please select the electoral district:

Region 1

Region 2

Region 3

Region 4

Region 5

Region 6

Region 7

Region 8

Region 9

Region 10

3. Polling Place Name

Please fill in the polling place name.

4. GPS Location

Please capture your location below:

latitude (x.y °)

longitude (x.y °)

altitude (m)

accuracy (m)



5. Polling Place Type

What type of facility is the polling place?

- Public/Government Building
- Private Establishment (home, business, etc.)
- GECOM Tent
- Religious Building

6. Number of Polling Stations

Please indicate the number of polling stations at the polling place. If the place and the station are the same, answer "1".

7. Polling Station Number

Please indicate the polling station number.

8. Urban or Rural

Is the polling place in an urban or rural area?

- Urban
- Rural

9. Were there obstacles or barriers on the way to the polling place that could have inhibited general access?

Examples of barriers might include distance from villages or a dysfunctional bridge.

- Yes
- No

9.1. If "Yes", please describe:

Describe the barriers to public access and to what extent it affected voters.

10. Did the polling staff post all required signs at the polling station?

Look for the polling station sign, polling place notice, anti-molestation sign, and maintenance of secrecy at the polling station sign.

- Yes
- Some, but not all
- No

11. Which, if any, prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe OUTSIDE the POLLING PLACE?

If there is only one station per "polling place," then please answer this question as "OUTSIDE the STATION." Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Campaigning
- Campaign material
- Interfering with voters
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Bussing activities
- Other
- None

11.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process? Remember that interfering with voters is prohibited within 200 yards of a polling place.

12. Which, if any, of the following prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe INSIDE the POLLING PLACE (but outside the stations)?

- Campaigning
- Campaign material
- Interfering with voters
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Other
- None

12.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

13. Presiding officer's gender (if present)

If the presiding officer is not present now but appears before departure, please adjust this answer.

- Female
- Male
- Not observed

14. Number of officers working at the polling station (excluding presiding officer)

15. Number of FEMALE officers present (excluding presiding officer)

16. Number of registered voters at this polling station

16.1 Number of voters who have cast a ballot at the time of your observation

Please ask the PO how many ballots have been cast total.

17. Which, if any, prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe INSIDE the STATION? (Select 'None' if none)

Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Prohibited campaigning
- Prohibited campaign material
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Other
- None

17.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

18. Were any of the following materials missing, insufficient, or incorrect?

18.1. Posted Signs

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.2. Electoral Ink

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.3. Booths/screens

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.4. Ballot Papers

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.5. Ballot Box

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.6. Official List of Electors (OLE)

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.7 Poll Book

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.8 Stamp/Official Mark

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.9. Seals

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.10. Forms

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.11. Envelopes

(e.g. Tamper Evident Envelopes (TEEs) for submissions of SoPs)

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.12. Folio

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.13 If materials are missing, insufficient, or incorrect, please describe, including any "other" materials noted:

19. Does the station appear to be independently accessible to persons with disabilities (PWDs), including the elderly?

Does the station appear to be accessible to persons with disabilities, including the elderly? The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities establishes an obligation for states to take measures to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility. This requires that people with disabilities will have an opportunity to participate on an equal basis in both rural and urban areas.

- Yes
- No

19.1. If 'No', describe impediments and any efforts to assist.

20. Which of the following political parties appear on the ballots at your polling station?

The other four registered political parties (AFC, APNU, PPP/C, and W.I.N.) should appear on every ballot, regardless of region (if one of these four parties is missing from the ballot at your polling station, please select "incorrect" for question 18.4). Leave this question blank if neither ALP nor FGM appear on the ballot at your polling station.

- FGM
- ALP

Procedures Assessment

Before moving ahead, please review the following definitions regarding assessment of PROCEDURES. Mark the selection below to indicate that you understand the definitions and refer back to this page if needed.

FULLY — The procedure was always or almost always applied correctly. Any procedural errors observed were very minor.

ADEQUATELY — The procedure was mostly applied correctly. Procedural errors observed did not appear to affect the integrity or transparency of the process.

INADEQUATELY — The procedure was often not applied correctly; OR the procedural error may have compromised the integrity of the process (even if few instances were observed).

NOT AT ALL — The procedure was omitted or was not followed meaningfully.

NOT OBSERVED — Due to circumstances other than those described by the above, the observer was not able to assess the procedure.

I have read and understand the definitions.

- I have read and understand the definitions.

21. How closely did each of the following procedures adhere to regulations?

Select One per item: A = Fully; B = Adequately; C = Inadequately; D = Not at all; E = Not observed

21.1. COULD VOTERS FIND THEMSELVES ON THE LIST

If not "Fully" or "Adequately", please describe in Question #22 whether voters who could not find themselves on the list were at the incorrect polling station, or if the voter list appeared to be incorrect.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

21.2. ORDINARY VOTER IDENTIFICATION

Voter presents ID to Poll Clerk; Poll Clerk checks List of voters and announces serial number and name; tick is placed next to serial number; voter shows ID to Assistant Presiding Officer who verifies identity.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

21.3. CHECKING FOR INK

Assistant Presiding Officer inspects voter's finger for Electoral Ink, displays National Identification Card to Polling Agents, then returns the ID to the voter.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

21.4. BALLOT STAMPING

Assistant Presiding Officer writes voter's serial number on ballot counterfoil; detaches the ballot along the perforation; stamps the six-digit number on the back of the ballot at both the top and bottom.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

21.5. VOTER INSTRUCTION

Assistant Presiding Officer shall - provide instructions to the voter on how to mark the ballot - show the voter how to fold the ballot paper - deliver folded ballot paper to the voter - direct voter to the voting compartment and the Ballot Clerk.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

21.6. INKING FINGERS

Ink reaches beneath the fingernail and covers the first phalanx; allowed to dry naturally (blotting only to remove excess at the tip). If injured, stain the other finger.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

21.7. BALLOT CASTING

Voter marks ballot in the voting compartment and proceeds to Ballot Clerk; Clerk verifies the Official Mark (six-digit number) on both sides; if not folded correctly, voter is directed to return and refold as instructed.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

22. Please describe the reasons for not choosing 'Fully' or 'Adequately', if you did so:

Special Procedures

23. Did you observe any of the following SPECIAL PROCEDURES? Select Multiple.

Select all that apply (choose 'None' if none observed).

- Voting with discrepancy on OLE / Voting without ID
- Voter assistance (blind or incapacitated)
- Voting by proxy
- Voting with certificate of employment
- Voting with tendered ballot
- Voting with language assistance
- Intermixing of special ballots (during day)
- Spoiled ballot
- None

All voters requiring special assistance for any of the reasons below should be directed by the Poll Clerk to the Presiding Officer, who will administer special polling procedures.

23.1. How closely did procedures for VOTING WITHOUT ID/WITH DISCREPANCY ON OFFICIAL LIST OF ELECTORS adhere to regulations?

Voter states name to Poll Clerk but has no ID or the ID details do not match the List of Electors. Poll Clerk confirms name on the List; Presiding Officer interviews and checks the Folio; once satisfied, PO administers Oath of Identity and allows voting.

Select One (A-E)

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

23.2. How closely did ASSISTED VOTING procedures adhere to regulations?

Blind or disabled voters may be accompanied by another voter from the same station; if unaccompanied, the Presiding Officer may assist in marking the ballot upon request.

Select One (A-E)

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

23.3. How closely did VOTING BY PROXY procedures adhere to regulations?

Voter presents both ID cards and Appointment as Proxy; Poll Clerk checks against lists; Presiding Officer administers procedures and files Appointment (PE 10); voter marks ballots, shows official marks; Ballot Clerk inks finger; Presiding Officer ticks relevant lists.

Select One (A-E)

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

23.4. How closely did LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE procedures adhere to regulations?

If the voter or staff cannot understand each other: Presiding Officer either appoints an interpreter (who takes Oath – Form 20), or if no interpreter is available, the Presiding Officer may assist using sign language.

Select One (A-E)

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

23.5. How closely did SPOILED BALLOT procedures adhere to regulations?

If a ballot is spoiled, Presiding Officer writes 'cancelled' on ballot and counterfoil, places in PE 3, issues new properly-stamped ballot and an entry is recorded in the Poll Book. If no Official Mark is visible when shown to Ballot Clerk, voter is redirected to refold; if still absent, treat as spoiled ballot.

Select One (A-E)

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

23.6. How closely did the INTERMIXING OF SPECIAL ELECTOR BALLOTS procedures adhere to regulations?

At some point before the close of poll, when there are no voters in the queue, Presiding Officer verifies the number, if any, special elector ballots received, counts without unfolding, checks Ballot Envelope Account, announces intermixing, stamps each ballot, and inserts them into the Ballot Box for observation.

Select One (A-E)

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

23.7. How closely did TENDERED BALLOT procedures adhere to regulations?

Tendered Ballot Papers are issued when an voter's name is on the OLE but a tick has already been made next to their voter number, the voter's serial number has been entered on a counterfoil, and the Presiding Officer (PO) confirms that the voter's fingers are not inked - If voter presents an identity document, PO then administers Oath of Identity and established voting procedures. - PO instructs voter to return ballot paper to him/her and endorses the back of the tendered ballot paper by affixing his or her initials and signature and writes the voter's serial number and name. - PO places tendered ballot paper in envelope PE 5 and enters information into the Poll Book.

Select One (A-E)

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

23.8. How closely did VOTING WITH CERTIFICATE OF EMPLOYMENT procedures adhere to regulations?

Voter presents his/her ID card and Certificate of Employment to the Poll Clerk (PC). - PC adds a new serial number for the voter to the end of the Official List of Electors and records the voter's information - PC announces the voter's and name and indicates that, that voter will vote at the Polling Station with Certificate of Employment. - Poll Clerk instructs voter to take ID and Certificate of Employment to the Presiding Officer, who checks list of persons issued with Certificates of Employment - PO makes comparison for purposes of identity, inspects voter's finger for Electoral ink stain and once satisfied, displays the National Identification Card to the Polling Agents - By this point, PO or PC should add name of voter to the Official List of Electors and instructs all persons in the station to do likewise. - PO makes an entry in the Poll Book and attaches Certificate of Employment. - Voting procedures are administered.

Select One (A-E)

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

23.9. Please describe the reasons for not choosing 'Fully' or 'Adequately':

24. Which, if any, of the following ineligible voters were allowed to vote?

If you select 'No ineligible voters allowed', it must be the only choice.

- Persons not on list — unauthorized
- Persons with unauthorized ID / No oath
- Voters already crossed off list
- Voters already inked
- Underage persons
- Security personnel — unauthorized
- Voters by proxy (e.g., relatives)
- Voters improperly assisted
- Other
- No ineligible voters allowed

24.1. Please describe, including any 'others' noted:

25. Which, if any, of the following eligible voters were NOT allowed to vote?

If you select 'No eligible voters prevented', it must be the only choice.

- Persons on list with ID
- Polling staff
- Local observers
- Party agents
- Security personnel — authorized
- Candidates
- Other
- No eligible voters prevented

25.1. Please describe, including any 'others' noted:

26. Are ballot boxes correctly sealed?

All seals should be correctly applied and ballot boxes should be secure from tampering.

- Yes
- No

26.1. If 'no', please describe:

27. Are additional polling materials secured from potential theft or misuse?

Additional materials should be stored compactly and out of the way of traffic. Disorganized or poorly stored materials are vulnerable to tampering.

- Yes
 No

27.1. If 'no', please describe:

28. Is the polling station layout in accordance with regulations?

PO Manual suggests: Poll Clerk by entrance; supplies against one wall; observers against other wall; Presiding Officer, Assistant Presiding Officer, Ballot Clerk, and Ballot Box in the center; voting compartments against the far wall.

- Yes
 No

28.1. If 'no', please describe:

29. Does the polling station layout effectively facilitate the flow of voters?

Layout should allow voters to move without skipping steps or crossing paths with other parts of the queue.

- Yes
 No

29.1. If 'no', please describe:

30. Are voters able to cast their ballots in secret?

Secrecy of the ballot should not be undermined by crowding or exposed booths.

- Yes
 No

30.1. If 'no', please describe:

31. Was the number of staff working in the polling station sufficient for an efficient and orderly process?

- Yes
 No
 Not Observed

31.1. If 'no' or 'not observed', please describe:

32. How long did a typical voter have to wait in the queue before entering the polling station? (minutes)

If there is no queue, enter 0. Otherwise, ask the second or third voter in line how long they have waited so far to inform your estimate.

33. How long did it take a typical voter to complete the voting process once they entered the polling station? (minutes)

Begins when the voter enters and ends when the voter has cast the ballot and can leave. Observe 2-3 voters and estimate the minutes.

34. Which, if any, of the following irregular processes did you observe?

If you select 'No irregularities observed', it must be the only choice.

- Multiple voting
- Ballot stuffing
- Interruption of voting
- Voter intimidation
- Illicit assistance
- Family voting
- Possible vote buying/selling
- Violation of secrecy of the ballot
- Other
- No irregularities observed

35. If any irregularities, please describe:

Comment on frequency and severity, and the extent of their impact on the voting process.

36. Please identify and capture the number and gender of party polling agents for the following political parties. If there are none- leave blank.

36.1. AFC - Males

36.2. AFC - Females

36.3. APNU - Males

36.4. APNU - Females

36.5. ALP - Males

36.6. ALP - Females

36.7. FGM - Males

36.8. FGM - Females

36.9. PPP/C - Males

36.10. PPP/C - Females

36.11. W.I.N. - Males

36.12. W.I.N. - Females

**37. Please identify and capture the number and gender breakdown of observers.
If there are none- leave blank.**

37.1. CARICOM - Males

37.2. CARICOM - Females

37.3. Commonwealth – Males

37.4. Commonwealth – Females

37.5. EU – Males

37.6. EU – Females

37.7. Local observer – Males

37.8. Local observer – Females

37.9. OAS – Males

37.10. OAS – Females

37.11. Other Observer – Males

37.12. Other Observer – Females

38. Which local observer or other groups not listed did you observe at the polling station?

If none, write N/A

39. What level of access did each of the following groups have?

39.1. Party agent – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

39.2. Candidate – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

39.3. International observers – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

39.4. Local observers – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

39.5. GECOM staff – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

39.6. Security – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

39.7. Voters – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

39.8. Other – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

40. If any groups were not allowed sufficient access, please describe:

How were groups denied access and what was the impact?

41. Did you observe any interference in the election process?

Please indicate which group(s) interfered. Select "No interference observed" if no interference was observed.

- Candidate
- Party agents
- International observers
- Local observers
- Polling staff
- Media
- Voters
- Security
- Local officials
- Religious/traditional leaders
- Other
- No interference observed

41.1. If any interference, please describe:

How were groups causing interference and what was the impact?

42. End of Observation (at station)

hh:mm

43. Has anyone lodged an objection about the process?

Note there are no official procedures for filing an objection at the polling station level.

- Yes
- No

43.1. If "yes", please describe:

Who filed objections? What were the reasons? How were they filed (e.g. verbally or in writing) and addressed?

44. Were there any problems reported to you by those present rather than those observed directly by you?

(Reported by e.g., agents, observers, voters)

- Yes
- No

44.1. If 'Yes', describe actors involved, resolution, impact, and any corroboration.

Please note the actors involved, how it was resolved, the apparent impact, and any supporting evidentiary corroboration.

45. How would you evaluate party agents' / candidates' performance?

- Adequate
- Inadequate
- Not Observed/Observable

45.1. If not 'Adequate', please describe reasons.

46. Before moving ahead, please review the following definitions regarding the overall assessment of IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES BY STAFF. Mark the selection below to indicate that you understand the definitions and refer back to this page if needed.

- I have read and understand the definitions.

Definitions – overall assessment of IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES BY STAFF:

VERY GOOD – Always/almost always correct; minor errors; no integrity/transparency impact.

REASONABLE – Mostly correct; errors did not affect integrity/transparency.

POOR – Not applied correctly; significant transparency impact and/or possible integrity compromise.

NOT CREDIBLE – Important procedures not followed; integrity likely compromised.

47. What is your team's evaluation of the implementation of procedures by staff at this station?

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

47.1. What were the main reasons for not choosing "Very Good" or "Reasonable"?

Definitions – overall assessment of OPENING ENVIRONMENT AND PROCESS:

VERY GOOD – No significant problems; fully transparent.

REASONABLE – Problems did not significantly affect integrity/transparency.

POOR – Significant problems (procedures errors; intimidation/interference; observers restricted) may have compromised integrity.

NOT CREDIBLE – Observed problems likely compromised integrity.

48. Team's overall assessment of the election environment and process at this station

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

48.1. Main reasons for not choosing 'Very Good' or 'Reasonable'

49. Any other comments?

Guyana 2025 Closing Form

STO Team Number

1. Start of Observation (at station)

hh:mm

2. Electoral District

Please select the electoral district:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Region 1 | <input type="radio"/> Region 2 | <input type="radio"/> Region 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 4 | <input type="radio"/> Region 5 | <input type="radio"/> Region 6 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 7 | <input type="radio"/> Region 8 | <input type="radio"/> Region 9 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 10 | | |

3. Polling Place Name

Please fill in the polling place name.

4. GPS Location

Please capture your location below:

latitude (x.y °)

longitude (x.y °)

altitude (m)

accuracy (m)



5. Polling Place Type

What type of facility is the polling place?

- Public/Government Building
- Private Establishment (home, business, etc)
- GECOM Tent
- Religious Building

6. Number of Polling Stations

Please indicate the number of polling stations at the polling place. If the place and the station are the same, answer "1".

7. Polling Station Number

Please indicate the polling station number.

8. Urban or Rural

Is the polling place in an urban or rural area?

- Urban
- Rural

9. Were there obstacles or barriers on the way to the polling place that could have inhibited general access?

Examples of barriers might include distance from villages or a dysfunctional bridge.

- Yes
- No

9.1. If "Yes", please describe:

Describe the barriers to public access and to what extent it affected voters.

10. Did the polling staff post all required signs at the polling station?

Look for the polling station sign, polling place notice, anti-molestation sign, and maintenance of secrecy at the polling station sign.

- Yes
- Some, but not all
- No

11. Which, if any, prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe OUTSIDE the POLLING PLACE?

If there is only one station per "polling place," then please answer this question as "OUTSIDE the STATION." Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Prohibited campaigning
- Prohibited campaign material
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Bussing activities
- Other
- None

11.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process? Remember that interfering with voters is prohibited within 200 yards of a polling place.

12. Which, if any, of the following prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe INSIDE the POLLING PLACE (but outside the stations)?

Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Prohibited campaigning
- Prohibited campaign material
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Other
- None

12.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

13. Presiding officer's gender (if present)

If the presiding officer is not present now but appears before departure, please adjust this answer.

- Female
- Male
- Not observed

14. Number of officers working at the polling station (excluding presiding officer)

15. Number of FEMALE officers present (excluding presiding officer)

16. Number of registered voters at this polling station

17. Which, if any, prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe INSIDE the STATION? (Select 'None' if none)

Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Prohibited campaigning
- Prohibited campaign material
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Other
- None

17.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

18. Were any of the following materials missing, insufficient, or incorrect?

18.1. Posted Signs

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.2. Electoral Ink

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.3. Booths/screens

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.4. Ballot Papers

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.5. Ballot Box

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.6. Official List of Electors (OLE)

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.7 Poll Book

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.8 Official Stamp

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.9. Seals

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.10. Forms

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.11. Envelopes

(e.g. Tamper Evident Envelopes for submissions of SoPs)

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.12. Folio

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.13 If materials are missing, insufficient, or incorrect, please describe, including any "other" materials noted:

Ballot Box Seals

19. Please indicate how many seals are on the ballot box?

- 1 Seal
- 2 Seals
- 3 Seals
- 4 Seals
- 5 Seals
- 6 Seals

19.1. Please record the serial number of the first seal.

19.2. Please record the serial number of the second seal.

19.3. Please record the serial number of the third seal.

19.4. Please record the serial number of the fourth seal.

19.5. Please record the serial number of the fifth seal.

19.6. Please record the serial number of the sixth seal.

20. Does the station appear to be independently accessible to persons with disabilities (PWDs), including the elderly?

The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities establishes an obligation for states to take measures to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility. This requires that persons with disabilities will have an opportunity to participate on an equal basis in both rural and urban areas.

- Yes
- No

20.1. If 'No', describe impediments and any efforts to assist.

21. Did you observe the official closing of the polling station?

- Yes
- No

21.1. If "No", please describe:

22. At what time was the closing of the polling station announced?

The law specifies the polls should close at 6pm unless an emergency change is made by GECOM.

hh:mm

23. Approximately how many voters were waiting in the queue at the time of closing?

- 0
- 1-10
- 11-25
- 26-50
- 51-100
- More than 100

24. Did you observe the last vote at the polling station?

- Yes
- No

24.1. If 'Yes', at what time did the last voter vote?

hh:mm

25. Were all eligible persons in the queue at the time of closing allowed to vote?

- Yes
- No
- Not observed

26. Were voters prevented from joining the queue after closing?

- Yes
- No
- Not observed

27. Before moving ahead, please review the following definitions regarding assessment of PROCEDURES. Mark the selection below to indicate that you understand the definitions and refer back to this page if needed.

FULLY — The procedure was always or almost always applied correctly. Any procedural errors observed were very minor.

ADEQUATELY — The procedure was mostly applied correctly. Procedural errors observed did not appear to affect the integrity or transparency of the process.

INADEQUATELY — The procedure was often not applied correctly; OR the procedural error may have compromised the integrity of the process (even if few instances were observed).

NOT AT ALL — The procedure was omitted or was not followed meaningfully.

NOT OBSERVED — Due to circumstances other than those described by the above, the observer was not able to assess the procedure.

I have read and understand the definitions.

28. CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENT AND QUEUE MANAGEMENT

At 6:00 p.m., the Presiding Officer - announces the close of polls if no voters are in line OR - if voters are still in line, directs a Police Officer to stand at the end of the queue - records the name of the last person in the queue - directs the Poll Clerk to make an entry in the Poll Book - allows all persons in the queue to vote - announces the close of polls - directs the Poll Clerk to make another entry in the Poll Book - requests all Polling Agents to sign as witnesses.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

29. SEALING OF BALLOT BOXES (incl. slot)

Presiding Officers are not clearly instructed in the PO Manual to close and seal the Ballot Box while preparing for the count. In the past, POs were instructed to request all Polling Agents sign as witnesses, before closing the ballot box and affixing the appropriate seal.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

30. Please describe the reasons for not choosing 'Fully' or 'Adequately', if applicable.

31. Please identify and capture the number and gender of party polling agents for the following political parties. If there are none- leave blank.

31.1. AFC – Males

31.2. AFC – Females

31.3. ALP - Males

31.4. ALP - Females

31.5. APNU - Males

31.6. APNU - Females

31.7. FGM - Males

31.8. FGM - Females

31.9. PPP/C - Males

31.10. PPP/C - Females

31.11. W.I.N. - Males

31.12. W.I.N. - Females

**32. Please identify and capture the number and gender breakdown of observers.
If there are none- leave blank.**

32.1. CARICOM - Males

32.2. CARICOM – Females

32.3. Commonwealth – Males

32.4. Commonwealth – Females

32.5. EU – Males

32.6. EU – Females

32.7. Local observer – Males

32.8. Local observer – Females

32.9. OAS – Males

32.10. OAS – Females

32.11. Other Observer – Males

32.12. Other Observer – Females

33. Which local observer or other groups not listed did you observe at the polling station?

If none, write N/A

34. What level of access did each of the following groups have?

34.1. Party polling agent – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

34.2. Candidate – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

34.3. International observers – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

34.4. Local observers – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

34.5. GECOM staff – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

34.6. Security – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

34.7. Voters – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

34.8. Other – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

35. If any groups were not allowed sufficient access, please describe:

How were groups denied access and what was the impact?

36. Did you observe any interference in the election process?

(Select 'No interference observed' if none)

- Candidate
- Party agents
- International observers
- Local observers
- Polling staff
- Media
- Voters
- Security
- Local officials
- Religious/traditional leaders
- Other
- No interference observed

37. If any interference, please describe:

How were groups causing interference and what was the impact?

38. End of Observation (at Station)

hh:mm

39. Has anyone lodged an objection about the process?

Note there are no official procedures for filing an objection at the polling station level.

- Yes
- No

39.1. If 'Yes', please describe:

Note there are no official procedures for filing an objection at the polling station level.

40. Were there any problems reported to you by those present rather than those observed directly by you?

(Reported by e.g., agents, observers, voters)

- Yes
- No

40.1. If 'Yes', note actors, resolution, impact, and any corroboration.

41. How would you evaluate party agents' /candidates' performance?

- Adequate
- Inadequate
- Not Observed/Observable

41.1. If not 'Adequate', please describe reasons.

Definitions – IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES BY STAFF: Very Good; Reasonable; Poor; Not Credible

42. Team evaluation of implementation of procedures by staff at this station

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

42.1. Main reasons for not choosing 'Very Good' or 'Reasonable'

Definitions – CLOSING ENVIRONMENT & PROCESS: Very Good; Reasonable; Poor; Not Credible

43. Team's overall assessment of the election environment and process at this station

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

43.1. Main reasons for not choosing 'Very Good' or 'Reasonable'

44. Any other comments?

Guyana 2025 Counting Form

STO Team Number

1. Start of Observation (at station)

hh:mm

2. Electoral District

Please select the electoral district:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Region 1 | <input type="radio"/> Region 2 | <input type="radio"/> Region 3 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 4 | <input type="radio"/> Region 5 | <input type="radio"/> Region 6 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 7 | <input type="radio"/> Region 8 | <input type="radio"/> Region 9 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 10 | | |

3. Polling Place Name

Please fill in the polling place name.

4. GPS Location

Please capture your location below:

latitude (x.y °)

longitude (x.y °)

altitude (m)

accuracy (m)



5. Polling Place Type

What type of facility is the polling place?

- Public/Government Building
- Private Establishment (home, business, etc.)
- GECOM Tent
- Religious Building

6. Number of Polling Stations

Please indicate the number of polling stations at the polling place. If the place and the station are the same, answer "1".

7. Polling Station Number

Please indicate the polling station number.

8. Urban or Rural

Is the polling place in an urban or rural area?

- Urban
- Rural

9. Were there obstacles or barriers on the way to the polling place that could have inhibited general access?

Examples of barriers might include distance from villages or a dysfunctional bridge.

- Yes
- No

9.1. If "Yes", please describe:

Describe the barriers to public access and to what extent it affected voters.

10. Which, if any, prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe OUTSIDE the POLLING PLACE?

If there is only one station per "polling place," then please answer this question as "OUTSIDE the STATION." Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Campaigning
- Campaign material
- Interfering with voters
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Bussing activities
- Other
- None

10.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process? Remember that interfering with voters is prohibited within 200 yards of a polling place.

11. Which, if any, of the following prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe INSIDE the POLLING PLACE (but outside the stations)?

Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Campaigning
- Campaign material
- Interfering with voters
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Other
- None

11.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

12. Presiding officer's gender (if present)

If the presiding officer is not present now but appears before departure, please adjust this answer.

- Female
- Male
- Not observed

13. Number of officers working at the polling station (excluding presiding officer)

14. Number of FEMALE officers present (excluding presiding officer)

15. Number of registered voters at this polling station

16. Approximate number of votes cast at the polling station

If the number of voters is not directly recorded by the polling staff, it may be necessary to ask the presiding officer or other staff to estimate the number of voters or calculate by other means.

17. Which, if any, prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe INSIDE the STATION? (Select 'None' if none)

Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Prohibited campaigning
- Prohibited campaign material
- Ineffective queue management
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Other
- None

17.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

18. Were any of the following materials missing, insufficient, or incorrect?

18.1. Polling Envelopes

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.2. Official List of Electors (OLE)

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.3. Forms

SoP (23A), BPA (23), Tally Sheet (A23), SoP Account (23B)

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.4. Writing Instruments

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.5. Other

- A = Present and correct
- B = Missing (entirely absent)
- C = Insufficient (fewer than required, but some present)
- D = Incorrect (wrong)

18.6 If materials are missing, insufficient, or incorrect, please describe, including any "other" materials noted:

19. Does the station appear to be independently accessible to persons with disabilities (PWDs), including the elderly?

The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities establishes an obligation for states to take measures to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility. This requires that persons with disabilities will have an opportunity to participate on an equal basis in both rural and urban areas.

- Yes
 No

19.1. If 'No', describe impediments and any efforts to assist.

20. Which of the following political parties appear on the ballots at your polling station?

The other four registered political parties (AFC, APNU, PPP/C, and W.I.N.) should appear on every ballot, regardless of region (if one of these four parties is missing from the ballot at your polling station, please select "incorrect" for question 18.4). Leave this question blank if neither ALP nor FGM appear on the ballot at your polling station.

- FGM
 ALP

21. Please record the number of votes for the following parties:

21.1. Please record the number of votes for AFC:

21.2. Please record the number of votes for ALP:

21.3. Please record the number of votes for APNU:

21.4. Please record the number of votes for FGM:

21.5. Please record the number of votes for PPP/C:

21.6. Please record the number of votes for W.I.N.:

22. Before moving ahead, please review the following definitions regarding the overall assessment of PROCEDURES. Mark the selection below to indicate that you understand the definitions and refer back to this page if needed.

VERY GOOD — The procedure was always or almost always applied correctly. Any procedural errors observed were very minor.

ADEQUATELY — The procedure was mostly applied correctly. Procedural errors observed did not appear to affect the integrity or transparency of the process.

INADEQUATELY — The procedure was often not applied correctly; OR the procedural error may have compromised the integrity of the process (even if few instances were observed).

NOT AT ALL — The procedure was omitted or was not followed meaningfully.

NOT OBSERVED — Due to circumstances other than those described by the above, the observer was not able to assess the procedure.

- I have read and understand the definitions.

How closely did each of the following procedures adhere to regulations?

23. How closely did the PREPARATION OF THE BALLOT PAPER ACCOUNT procedures adhere to regulations?

Presiding Officer - counts: 1) Spoiled Ballot Papers 2) Spoiled Tendered Ballot Papers 3) Destroyed Ballot Papers 4) Used Tendered Ballot Papers 5) Unused Ordinary Ballot Papers 5) Unused Tendered Ballot Papers 6) Used Counterfoils. - commences preparing Ballot Paper Account (Form 23) for both General and Regional Elections, which includes 1) Ordinary Ballot Papers received 2) number of Used Ballot Papers 3) number of Unused Ballot Papers 4) Spoiled Ballot Papers 5) Destroyed Ballot Papers 6) Ballot Papers received and Disciplined Forces/Non-Resident voters' ballot envelopes received, if any - prepares the Tendered Ballot Paper Account (Form 23), which includes 1) number of Tendered Ballot Papers received 2) number of Used tendered Ballot Papers 3) number of unused Tendered Ballot Papers 4) number of Spoiled Tendered Ballot Papers 5) number of Destroyed Tendered Ballot Papers. See Section 3.2.10 (page 17) in the PO Manual for more details.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

24. How closely did the BALLOT SORTING adhere to regulations?

Presiding Officer and Counting Assistant will - upon opening the ballot box, place used seals in envelope (PE 17) - distribute tally sheets (incl to Polling Agents) - count Ballot Papers from the box in batches of 25 - record the number of Ballot Papers that were in the box on the Ballot Paper Account - tear ballots along the perforations to separate ballots for General Election from ballots for RDC Elections - sort ballots on the basis of those cast for each list of candidates (first for the General Election, then the RDC Election) by: 1) checking ballots for the Official Mark 2) announcing the name of the party for which the vote was cast 3) displaying the front of each ballot paper as well as the Official Mark on the back to Polling Agents and Polling Station staff 4) directing staff and Polling Agents/Counting Agents to record votes on Tally Sheets

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

25. How closely did the GENERAL BALLOT COUNTING adhere to regulations?

Upon the announcement of the name of the political party, the Assistant Presiding Officer and Poll Clerk, mark a stroke in one of the small squares under that party's name on the Tally Sheet and repeat that action. The fifth stroke is drawn diagonally to complete the small box. This action is repeated until all the votes are counted

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

26. How closely did the REGIONAL BALLOT COUNTING adhere to regulations?

Regional ballot counting should follow similar procedures to general ballot counting.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

27. How closely did QUESTIONED BALLOTS procedures adhere to regulations?

Questioned ballots are marked "Q" on the back and initialed by the Presiding Officer to indicate that a Duly Appointed Candidate or Polling Agent has questioned the PO's decision. After the "Q" ballot has been endorsed (initialed) by the Presiding Officer, he/she places it with the valid ballots for the List of Candidates he determines it should be awarded. The decision of the Presiding Officer is subjected to the review by the Returning Officer only if a Counting/Assistant Agent for the district requests a limited or general Recount by noon of the next day.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

28. How closely did REJECTED BALLOTS procedures adhere to regulations?

A Presiding Officer must reject Ballot Papers on their own initiative or upon the initiative of a Polling Agent, etc. Ballot Papers shall be rejected for 1) lack of the Official Mark 2) lack of a clear mark or any mark by the voter 3) marks for multiple lists 4) a mark that identifies the voter

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

29. How closely did BALLOT ACCOUNTING adhere to regulations?

When all the Ballots have been examined, the Presiding Officer, using the completed Tally Sheet must : 1) count votes recorded for each List of Candidates 2) compare and verify totals with Polling Agent and Counting Agents 3) place ballots counted for each List of Candidates in separate envelopes, on which the PO records the name of each List of Candidates, the number of votes obtained, and the number of Questioned Ballots 4) count rejected Ballot Papers and place them in envelope PE 8 and record the number on the envelope, giving a breakdown of the four types.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

30. Did the Presiding Officer complete all required forms and fill out all necessary fields?

The Presiding Officer shall complete the - Ballot Paper Account (Form 23) - Statement of Poll (Form 23 A) - Statement of Poll Account (Form 23 B)

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

31. Were party agents allowed to closely follow the process, including the counting and ascertainment of results?

At the conclusion of the count, the Presiding Officer shall give Party Agents the opportunity to ascertain the accuracy of the information recorded on the forms and to sign all forms

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

32. How closely did DISTRIBUTION OF RESULTS (copies of results sheets) procedures adhere to regulations?

The Presiding Officer prepares and certifies a sufficient number of copies of Form 23 A (Statement of Poll) for both the General and Regional Elections to distribute to the RO / SRO, the APO, the CEO, the Chair, and as many Party Agents as are present.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

33. How closely did the TRANSFER OF MATERIALS adhere to regulations?

After envelopes PE 7 and PE 8 have been sealed and signed, and Party Agents have been given an opportunity to affix their seals to them, materials are packed in the following manner for submission: (A) RETURNING OFFICER'S / SUPERNUMERARY RETURNING OFFICER'S PACKAGE (THIS MUST NOT BE PLACED IN THE BALLOT BOX) - Poll Book, Certificate of Employment, and used Oath Forms (in PE 11) - Ballot Paper Account - Statement of Poll Account (in PE 12) - Statements of Poll and all Tally Sheets (in PE 13) (B) CHAIR + CEO'S PACKAGE (THESE MUST NOT BE PLACED IN THE BALLOT BOX) - Copies of the Ballot Paper Account, Statement of Poll Account, and Statement of Poll - Party Agents should be given the opportunity to sign the package in the space provided - The PO should affix the PO seal to the package (C) TO BE PLACED IN THE BALLOT BOX AND SEALED - PE 7 (Used Ballot Papers) and PE 8 (Rejected Ballot Papers) - The PO shall invite Party Agents to affix their seals to the ballot box (D) TO BE PLACED IN THE SECURE RECEPTACLE AND SEALED - Registration Folio - Spoiled and Tendered Ballots - Unused Ballot Papers and Unused Tendered Ballot Papers - Counterfoils of used Ballot Papers - Used Tendered Ballot Paper - Ballot cast for each List of Candidates - Rejected Ballot Papers - Marked lists of Electors - Appointment of Proxy & List of Proxies - Destroyed Ballot Papers - Used ballot box seals - Six-digit stamp and Presiding Officer's seal - The PO shall give Party Agents the opportunity to affix their seals to the receptacle (E) POLL BAG WITH ELECTION SUPPLIES All other items/materials not stated at A or B must be placed and submitted in a large carton provided for that purpose.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

34. Were party agents allowed to accompany the Ballot Box to its destination?

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

35. How closely did POSTING OF RESULTS procedures adhere to regulations?

The Presiding Officer declares and posts the original Statement of Poll (the PO Manual instructs POs to post "one of the first leaves") for the General and Regional Elections outside the Polling Station in a conspicuous place.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

36. Please describe the reasons for not choosing "Fully" or "Adequately", if you did so:

37. Did party agents have an opportunity to sign the Statement of Poll?

- Yes
- No
- Not Observed

37.1. If "no" or "not observed", please describe:

37.2. If "yes", did any party agents elect not to sign the results?

- Yes
- No

37.3. If "yes", please describe:

38. Please identify and capture the number and gender of party polling agents for the following political parties. If there are none- leave blank.

38.1. AFC - Males

38.2. AFC - Females

38.3. ALP - Males

38.4. ALP - Females

38.5. APNU - Males

38.6. APNU - Females

38.7. FGM - Males

38.8. FGM - Females

38.9. PPP/C - Males

38.10. PPP/C - Females

38.11. W.I.N. - Males

38.12. W.I.N. - Females

**39. Please identify and capture the number and gender breakdown of observers.
If there are none- leave blank.**

39.1. CARICOM - Males

39.2 CARICOM - Females

39.3. Commonwealth - Males

39.4. Commonwealth - Females

39.5. EU - Males

39.6. EU - Females

39.7. Local observer - Males

39.8. Local observer - Females

39.9. OAS - Males

39.10. OAS - Females

39.11. Other Observer - Males

39.12. Other Observer - Females

40. Which local observer or other groups not listed did you observe at the polling station?

If none, write N/A

41. What level of access did each of the following groups have?

41.1. Party polling agent - Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

41.2. Candidate - Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

41.3. International observers - Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

41.4. Local observers - Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

41.5. GECOM staff – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

41.6. Security – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

41.7. Voters – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

41.8. Other – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

41.9. If any groups were not allowed sufficient access, please describe:

How were groups denied access and what was the impact?

42. Did you observe any interference in the election process?

Please indicate which group(s) interfered. Select "No interference observed" if no interference was observed.

- Candidate
- Party agents
- International observers
- Local observers
- Polling staff
- Media
- Voters
- Security
- Local officials
- Religious/traditional leaders
- Other
- No interference observed

42.1. If any interference, please describe:

How were groups causing interference and what was the impact?

43. End of Observation (at station)

hh:mm

44. Has anyone lodged an objection about the process?

Note there are no official procedures for filing an objection at the polling station level.

- Yes
- No

44.1. If "yes", please describe:

Who filed objections? What were the reasons? How were they filed (e.g. verbally or in writing) and addressed?

45. Were there any problems reported to you by those present rather than those observed directly by you?

(Reported by e.g., agents, observers, voters)

- Yes
- No

45.1. If 'Yes', describe actors involved, resolution, impact, and any corroboration.

Please note the actors involved, how it was resolved, the apparent impact, and any supporting evidentiary corroboration.

46. How would you evaluate party agents' / candidates' performance?

- Adequate
- Inadequate
- Not Observed/Observable

46.1. If not 'Adequate', please describe reasons.

Definitions – overall assessment of IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES BY STAFF:
VERY GOOD – Always/almost always correct; minor errors; no integrity/transparency impact.
REASONABLE – Mostly correct; errors did not affect integrity/transparency.
POOR – Not applied correctly; significant transparency impact and/or possible integrity compromise.
NOT CREDIBLE – Important procedures not followed; integrity likely compromised.

47. What is your team's evaluation of the implementation of procedures by staff at this station?

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

47.1. What were the main reasons for not choosing "Very Good" or "Reasonable"?

Definitions – overall assessment of COUNTING ENVIRONMENT AND PROCESS:
VERY GOOD – No significant problems; fully transparent.
REASONABLE – Problems did not significantly affect integrity/transparency.
POOR – Significant problems (procedures errors; intimidation/interference; observers restricted) may have compromised integrity.
NOT CREDIBLE – Observed problems likely compromised integrity.

48. Team's overall assessment of the election environment and process at this station

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

48.1. Main reasons for not choosing 'Very Good' or 'Reasonable'

49. Any other comments?

Guyana 2025 Tabulation Form

STO Team Number

1. Start of Observation Period

hh:mm

2. Tabulation Center

Please select the tabulation center you are observing:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Region 1 | <input type="radio"/> Region 2 | <input type="radio"/> Region 3 - Subdistrict 1 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 3 - Subdistrict 2 | <input type="radio"/> Region 3 - Subdistrict 3 | <input type="radio"/> Region 4 - Subdistrict 1 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 4 - Subdistrict 2 | <input type="radio"/> Region 4 - Subdistrict 3 | <input type="radio"/> Region 4 - Subdistrict 4 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 5 | <input type="radio"/> Region 6 - Subdistrict 1 | <input type="radio"/> Region 6 - Subdistrict 2 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 6 - Subdistrict 3 | <input type="radio"/> Region 7 | <input type="radio"/> Region 8 |
| <input type="radio"/> Region 9 | <input type="radio"/> Region 10 | |

3. GPS Location

Please capture your location below:

latitude (x.y °)

longitude (x.y °)

altitude (m)

accuracy (m)



4. Were there obstacles or barriers on the way to the facility that could have inhibited general access?

Examples of barriers might include distance from villages or a dysfunctional bridge.

- Yes
- No

4.1. If "Yes", please describe:

Describe the barriers to public access and to what extent it affected voters.

5. Which, if any, prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe OUTSIDE the CENTER?

Select "None" if you did not observe any prohibited or disruptive circumstances.

- Campaigning
- Campaign material
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Other
- None

5.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

6. Which, if any, of the following prohibited or disruptive circumstances did you observe INSIDE the CENTER?

- Campaign material
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Significant disorder
- Security (beyond regulations)
- Other
- None

6.1. If any issues, please describe:

What were the prohibited/disruptive circumstances and how did they affect the process?

7. Were any of the following materials missing?

7.1. SOP Capturing Device

The apparatus that electronically captures the Statements of Poll; potentially a camera

- Yes
- No

7.2. Forms

- Yes
 No

7.3. Two Screens

One screen will display the current SOP, while the other screen will display the District Tabulation Form.

- Yes
 No

7.4. Other

- Yes
 No

7.5. If materials are missing, insufficient, or incorrect, please describe, including any "other" materials noted:

8. Does the center appear to be independently accessible to persons with disabilities, including the elderly?

The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities establishes an obligation for states to take measures to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility. This requires that people with disabilities will have an opportunity to participate on an equal basis in both rural and urban areas.

- Yes
 No

8.1. If 'No', describe impediments and any efforts to assist.

9. Did the layout of the tabulation center facilitate transparency for all individuals present?

- Yes
 No

9.1 If 'No', please describe the lack of transparency observed:

10. Before moving ahead, please review the following definitions regarding the overall assessment of PROCEDURES. Mark the selection below to indicate that you understand the definitions and refer back to this page if needed.

FULLY — The procedure was always or almost always applied correctly. Any procedural errors observed were very minor.

ADEQUATELY — The procedure was mostly applied correctly. Procedural errors observed did not appear to affect the integrity or transparency of the process.

INADEQUATELY — The procedure was often not applied correctly; OR the procedural error may have compromised the integrity of the process (even if few instances were observed).

NOT AT ALL — The procedure was omitted or was not followed meaningfully.

NOT OBSERVED — Due to circumstances other than those described by the above, the observer was not able to assess the procedure.

- I have read and understand the definitions.

11. How closely did each of the following procedures adhere to regulations?

12. Display of SOPs as they're processed

A screen in the tabulation center will display the SOP under consideration, an image of which will be captured by camera (this is not done in advance). On that screen, all present should be able to see a technician confirm certain info on the SOP (general vs. RDC election, district, polling place name, ballot box #) and the image itself and then hit 'upload'.

- Yes
- No
- Not Observed

13. Display of Tabulation Form

A separate screen in the tabulation center will display the tabulation form. Each row of the form is dedicated to a given polling station, and all present should be able to see another staffer enter the results from the SOP, and watch those results be added into the overall tally.

- Yes
- No
- Not Observed

14. Correction of a Statement of Poll

An SoP may be corrected if a material error is discovered by (1) an election officer or (2) party agent. The person who identified the error informs the RO or SRO. The RO or SRO then informs the relevant PO. PO then prepares a corrected SoP which must be signed by the PO and the original signatories. Finally, the RO/SRO must post the corrected SoP on the GECOM website.

- A = Fully
- B = Adequately
- C = Inadequately
- D = Not at all
- E = Not observed

15. Please describe the reasons for not choosing "Fully" or "Adequately", if you did so:

16. Total number of Statements of Poll this center is responsible for:

Leave blank if unknown/not observable.

17. Number of Statements of Poll received as of time of report:

Leave blank if unknown/not observable. Include TOTAL number of results received as of the end of the observation period.

18. Number of Statements of Poll processed as of time of report:

Leave blank if unknown/not observable. Include TOTAL number of results processed as of the end of the observation period.

19. Number of Statements of Poll quarantined as of time of report:

Leave blank if unknown/not observable. Include TOTAL number of results quarantined as of the end of the observation period.

20. Did anyone request a recount?

- Yes
 No

21.1 Was the requested recount GENERAL or LIMITED?

A general recount is all ballots at all polling stations in a district. A limited recount can be for a limited number of polling stations (one or more, up to a whole district). Limited recounts do NOT recount all the ballots-- only questioned or rejected ballots.

- General Recount
 Limited Recount

21.2. How many recounts have been conducted?

Include TOTAL number of recounts conducted as of the end of the observation period.

21.3. Please describe recount(s):

E.g., overall situation, who requested the recount, etc

21.4. How many of the recounts confirmed earlier tallies?

Leave blank if unknown/not observable.

21.5. Were any recount requests denied?

- Yes
 No

21.6. If "yes", please describe:

Why was the recount denied?

22. Number of Statements of Poll corrected as of time of report:

Leave blank if unknown/not observable. Include TOTAL number of results corrected as of the end of the observation period.

23. Did party agents object to the processing of any Statements of Poll?

- Yes
 No
-

23.1. If so, approximately how many Statements of Poll were objected to?

23.2. Which party (or parties) objected to the processing of any SoPs?

24. How long, on average, did it take to process an SoP?

Please provide a rough estimate.

25. Were there any results that should have received scrutiny but did not?

Yes

No

25.1 If "Yes", please describe:

26. Please identify and capture the number and gender of party agents for the following political parties. If there are none- leave blank.

26.1. AFC - Males

26.2. AFC - Females

26.3. ALP - Males

26.4. ALP - Females

26.5. APNU - Males

26.6. APNU - Females

26.7. FGM – Males

26.8. FGM – Females

26.9. PPP/C – Males

26.10. PPP/C – Females

26.11. W.I.N. – Males

26.12. W.I.N. – Females

**27. Please identify and capture the number and gender breakdown of observers.
If there are none- leave blank.**

27.1. CARICOM – Males

27.2. CARICOM – Females

27.3. Commonwealth – Males

27.4. Commonwealth – Females

27.5. EU – Males

27.6. EU – Females

27.7. Local observer – Males

27.8. Local observer – Females

27.9. OAS – Males

27.10. OAS – Females

27.11. Other Observer – Males

27.12. Other Observer – Females

27.13. Which local observer or other groups not listed did you observe at the polling station?

If none, write N/A

28. What level of access did each of the following groups have?

28.1. Party counting agent – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

28.2. Candidate – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

28.3. International observers – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

28.4. Local observers – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

28.5. GECOM staff – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

28.6. Security – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

28.7. Other – Access level

- A = Sufficient access
- B = Deficient access (within regulations)
- C = Deficient access (violation of regulations)
- D = Not present
- E = Not observed

28.8. If any groups were not allowed sufficient access, please describe:

How were groups denied access and what was the impact?

29. Did you observe any interference in the election process?

Please indicate which group(s) interfered. Select "No interference observed" if no interference was observed.

- Candidate
- Party agents
- International observers
- Local observers
- Center staff
- Media
- Voters
- Security
- Local officials
- Religious/traditional leaders
- Other
- No interference observed

29.1. If any interference, please describe:

How were groups causing interference and what was the impact?

30. End of Observation

hh:mm

31. Has anyone lodged an objection about the process?

- Yes
- No

31.1. If "yes", please describe:

Who filed objections? What were the reasons? How were they filed (e.g. verbally or in writing) and addressed?

32. Were there any problems reported to you by those present rather than those observed directly by you?

(Reported by e.g., agents, observers, voters)

Yes

No

32.1. If 'Yes', describe actors involved, resolution, impact, and any corroboration.

Please note the actors involved, how it was resolved, the apparent impact, and any supporting evidentiary corroboration.

33. Did you observe the conclusion of the tabulation process?

Yes

No

33.1. If 'yes', were the party agents able to receive a certified tabulation form?

Yes

No

33.2. If 'no', please describe:

Why were party agents not able to receive a certified tabulation form?

34. How would you evaluate party agents' / candidates' performance?

Adequate

Inadequate

Not Observed/Observable

34.1. If not 'Adequate', please describe reasons.

Definitions – overall assessment of IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES BY STAFF:

VERY GOOD – Always/almost always correct; minor errors; no integrity/transparency impact.

REASONABLE – Mostly correct; errors did not affect integrity/transparency.

POOR – Not applied correctly; significant transparency impact and/or possible integrity compromise.

NOT CREDIBLE – Important procedures not followed; integrity likely compromised.

35. What is your team's evaluation of the implementation of procedures by staff at this center?

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

35.1. What were the main reasons for not choosing "Very Good" or "Reasonable"?

Definitions – overall assessment of TABULATION ENVIRONMENT AND PROCESS:

VERY GOOD – No significant problems were observed with the implementation of procedures or environment. The tabulation process was fully transparent.

REASONABLE – Observed problems did not significantly affect the integrity or transparency of the tabulation process, but there is room for improvement.

POOR – Significant problems with any of the following may have compromised the integrity of the results: errors in implementing tabulation procedures; election staff subject to intimidation or interference; observers restricted; sensitive materials not secured.

NOT CREDIBLE – Observed problems with the tabulation likely compromised the integrity of the results; OR there are significant, unexplained differences between counting results and tabulation results.

36. Team's overall assessment of the tabulation environment and process at this center

- Very Good
- Reasonable
- Poor
- Not Credible

36.1. Main reasons for not choosing 'Very Good' or 'Reasonable'

37. Any other comments?

| The Carter Center at a Glance

The Carter Center was founded in 1982 by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, in partnership with Emory University, to advance peace and health worldwide. A not-for-profit, nongovernmental organization, the Center has helped to improve life for people in more than 80

countries by resolving conflicts; advancing democracy, human rights, and economic opportunity; preventing diseases; and improving mental health care. Please visit www.cartercenter.org to learn more about The Carter Center.



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