



Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda

FDC PARTY ELECTIONS

OBSERVATION REPORT

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1.0 Introduction

Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU) is a non-partisan, non-profit broad civil society coalition whose overriding agenda is to advocate for and promote integrity, transparency and active citizen participation in Uganda's electoral process. The coalition is cognizant of the fact that building and strengthening internal political party democracy is vital in assuring good governance and free and fair elections.

In advancing this objective, CCEDU sought accreditation and deployed a technical team of eight to observe the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) Elections held at a Special Delegates' Conference on 12th June 2015 at the UMA main exhibition Hall, Lugogo, Kampala.

The team's findings and recommendations are presented in this report, which provides an analysis of the electoral process.

2.0 Methodology

The observer mission used a standard observation tool and respected set guidelines as to reporting and departure times, arriving well before the conference and election processes formally started and staying through-out the process. Observers looked at compliance to the FDC Party Constitution; party electoral guidelines for FDC NEC Elections; Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections generally and related laws.

3.0 Candidate Nominations and Campaigns

A total of 147 candidates offered themselves and were duly nominated to compete for the 35 vacant party positions. Contrary to the FDC Party laws, only 13% of the contestants were women. (The party policy spells out that at least 40 percent of positions must be filled by women in a spirit of affirmative action).

The highest position and most hotly contested was that of the Party Secretary General. Four candidates had initially expressed interest in vying for the position including Nabilah Sempala Naggayi, Nathan Nandala Mafabi, Ezati Kassiano Wadri and Odonga Otto. All are Members of Parliament in the 9th Parliament and members of the party's National Executive Committee (NEC).

Ms Nabillah Nagayi, the only woman contender for the seat withdrew from the race early in the day citing unfair processes of selecting delegates leaving the race between three contenders. Mr Odonga Otto also later pulled out of the race leaving it a two horse race between Mr. Mafabi and Mr. Wadri. Each of the candidates for Secretary General was given 10 minutes to make their pitch before the voters.

Contenders for other positions were officially given three (3) minutes to campaign. Nearly all candidates did not present manifestos to back their candidature. CCEDU was not able to verify if this was because of the limited campaign time accorded to candidates or they did not have the manifestos.

The FDC party membership was also cognizant and sensitive to the issue of gender mainstreaming which was perceived in positions where male contestants stood down and handed leadership opportunity to the female counterparts.

The campaigns run generally smoothly save for incidents where candidates descended into character assassination of opponents and use of foul language. Several candidates withdrew from the race at the last minutes in favour of opponents. Ms. Angeline Osege for example exited in favour of Mr. Geoffrey Ekanya for the position of Treasure General.

4.0 Delegate Accreditation and Voters Register

A credible and transparent accreditation process for a non-universal suffrage election is essential to the credibility of any election. The FDC made an effort in this regard giving delegates accreditation tags with photographs to improve on security.

The same was to be done for Observers and invited guests though CCEDU observed that, while delegates had their photographs on the accreditation tags, tags for Observers and invited guests did not have their photographs. The reason for this could be put down to logistical challenges and the enormous amount of work the accreditation team had to deal with.

The accreditation process caused some controversy including weaknesses in the distribution system — some delegates could not find their tags despite claiming they had duly submitted their photographs. There were also reports that some people were found to possess illegal accreditation tags. The claim, made by a polling official could not be independently verified.

The accreditation team should however be commended for being generally helpful in assisting both delegates, observers and other invited guests trace their accreditation tags for those that were traceable.

5.0 Election Set up and Administration

There were 13 polling stations overseen by 3 polling assistants for each station, 2 presiding officers and one supervisor. At each polling station a different position was voted for. Therefore, every voter had to go through the 13 polling stations.

At the start of polling, there was only one polling station that had a candidate agent¹ as other candidates hadn't taken the initiative to delegate their agents. Voters were called into the hall district by district. The FDC-EC team was announcing over speakers who they were letting in, which district and number of voters, which made the process more transparent and crowded at the polling stations.

There was sufficient security by both FDC party security officials and Uganda Police security personnel.

¹ This was polling station seven (7) which had been allocated for the voting of the Secretary General position.

6.0 Ballot Casting / Voting

Time keeping presented a challenge to the process. Voting started very late in the evening at about 5:40pm. By midnight the process was still going on and yet the election had been split into two phases with 13 positions being voted in the first set of polls and another 6 contested positions were to be held in the second phase.

The polling assistants and presiding officers appeared professional and competent.

Delegates complained that absence of photo bearing ballot papers was a challenge because some voters had difficulty writing the names of their preferred on the ballot paper.

7.0 Security

CCEDU observed that there was deployment of security provided by both party vigilantes and the police. The police were dressed in their uniforms and clearly identifiable. The party also provided extra security on its own who were dressed in reflector jackets clearly marked as FDC security. The party security took the lead especially in manning the gate while the national police provided back up support. The two groups appeared to be working together smoothly as no clashes were observed.

The whole event ended peacefully without any major incident a sign of good preparation of both the party security team and the national police.

Other Observations

Electoral Malpractices

- **Vote buying**

Claims of vote buying were received by the observers. Allegedly, some camps were sending delegates mobile money in a bid to secure their votes. These claims were not verified. A pledge by one of the candidates vying for the position of Secretary General to supply smart phones to districts secretaries general and another candidate for the post of Treasury General to contribute Shs10m to a party Savings and Credit Society were interpreted by some as an effort to induce support.

- **Campaigning during polling**

It was noted that delegates did not heed the call by the Electoral Commission that no campaigns should take place during polling time. Unfortunately, there were no measures to curb this vice.

8.0 Recommendations

a) To FDC

- **Timely development and display of the voters Register:** CCEDU encourages the timely development and display of the delegates' voters' register as well as accreditation of the relevant voters.
- **Deployment of Candidates Agents:** Candidates are encouraged to exhibit a high level of responsibility and vigilance by ensuring that they deploy agents at polling stations.
- **Avoidance of Character Assassination:** Observers are concerned about the effects of character assassination during campaigns. This could raise the anxiety of the delegate voters and lead to violence.
- **National Electoral Tribunal:** In order to increase trust and confidence as well as quell tension of the delegates in the electoral process, CCEDU recommends that the National Electoral Tribunal be activated and all delegates are educated and aware of its role.
- **Candidate Verification:** CCEDU has had the opportunity to observe 90% of the 2011-2015 by-elections. It was noted that most of the by-elections that cost hefty tax payers money could be avoided if political parties screened the candidates that represented in elections. It is with this background that CCEDU recommends stringent candidate verification process that start with these internal elections.

b) To Government of Uganda

- At the Delegates Conference, government support to political parties as provided for under the Political Parties and Associations (PPOA) Act was acknowledged. However, CCEDU noted complaints about logistical challenges blamed on insufficient funding. FDC officially receives funding from elected members especially in parliament, party members, well-wishers and government. The government needs to revise ways of funding political parties in-order to not only create a level playing field but also strengthen the internal processes.

9.0 Final Results

Table showing results for select party positions.

No.	Position	Name	Results
1.	Secretary General	Nathan Nandala Mafabi	809
		Kassiano Wadri	161
		Nabilah Naggayi	09
2.	Treasurer	Geoffrey Ekanya	859
		Tibenda Samuel	116
3.	Secretary for Mobilisation	Anita Among	162
		Ingrid Turinawe	497
		Alfred Oketcho	36
		Meddie Musisi	25
		Ibrahim Kasozi	101
		Hassan Kaps Fungaroo	113
4.	Deputy Secretary General	Harold Kalija	546

	(Admin)	Florence Ibi Ekwau	394
5.	Deputy President Western	Mwijukye Francis	284
		Patrick Baguma	293
		Katembeya Stenery	123
		Jack Sabiti	230
6.	Deputy President Central	Joyce Sebugwawo	(Unopposed)
7.	Deputy President Northern	Okumu Ronald Reagan	(Unopposed)
8.	Deputy President Eastern	Alaso Alice Asianut	(Unopposed)

10.0 Conclusion

The Observer team wishes to recognize the cooperation and commitment exhibited by the FDC party towards the bigger picture of good governance and democratic elections.

CCEDU also applauds the logistical support by Electoral Commission Uganda to the FDC Party commission through contribution of polling material.

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