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At the invitation of the office of the Governor of the Turks and Caicos Islands, Citizens Action for Free and Fair Election (CAFFE), mounted an observation mission to cover the general elections held in the territory on Friday, February 7, 2025. The team from CAFFE, comprising four members of the organization, led by Deputy Chairman, Anton Thompson were able to witness the opening of the poll, voting and the close of poll process.

Members of the team began arriving from Tuesday February 4, 2025 and, prior to the elections, meetings were held with the Supervisor of Elections and members of his team, the Acting Commissioner of Police and other stakeholders. Voting was conducted in thirty (30) polling stations across the ten electoral districts in the territory. On election day, each of the four CAFFE observers was deployed to one of the four main island groups namely, Grand Turk, Middle and North Caicos, Providenciales and South Caicos. CAFFE's observer team visited all the polling locations during the course of the day and, in many cases, was able to visit some locations more than once.

The elections provided a particular challenge in that, for the first time, an electronic tabulating system was being used in all polling stations, which meant that the ballots were not, in the first instance, going to be counted manually. This involved voters shading oval spaces next to the names of their preferred candidates on the ballot, rather than marking an "X" as had been the case in the past. The introduction of this system was intended to speed up the tabulation of the votes and the announcement of the results.

We wish to mention that the teams from the Elections Department were well-trained and approached their assignments with enthusiasm and diligence. In addition, there was adequate security at all locations with the officers displaying a high level of professionalism. There were no reports of disruptive behaviour on the part of voters or any other persons during the conduct of the polls. We witnessed no instances of treating, bribing or intimidation of voters. And, we saw no breach of the regulations prohibiting congregation within 100 yards of polling locations.

On the other hand, there were some challenges with the use of the new electronic tabulating system for voting. The set-up arrangements in the morning took some time and were delayed if all the required persons, including agents, were not present. This meant that most polling locations opened late – some by as much as an hour late. Although, the Presiding Officers did their very best to provide detailed explanations as to how to mark the ballots, using this new system, some, mostly older, voters had problems and had to return for a second ballot – as is provided for in the law.

In the view of the CAFFE Observer Team, the elections were free and fair, were conducted with high professional standards and, as such, the results would have reflected the wishes of the electorate. A full report will be submitted to the Governor's office in approximately thirty days.

Caffe wishes to congratulate the staff of the Electoral Commission, the Poll Workers, the Political Parties and their Candidates, the Security Forces and the People of the TCI for the mature way in which the Elections were conducted with no reported incidents of violence, and the high level of patience displayed while waiting in queues.

CAFFE also wishes to thank the Office of the Governor of the Turks and Caicos Islands for the opportunity to participate in this exercise and the invaluable support they provided and the Supervisor of Elections and his team for their facilitation of our visits to the various polling locations.

Yours truly,

Grace Baston (Mrs.)

Chairman



Directors

Mrs. Grace Baston (Chairman) Mr. Anton Thompson (Deputy Chairman) Ms. Audré Lois Reynolds Mr. Linvern Wright
Mrs. Connie Champagnie (Secretary) Mrs. Pauline Henry-Blake Mr. Neco Pagon Mrs. Lorna James-Dobson
Ms. Kathryn Stewart Ms. Ingrid Blackwood Dr. Lloyd Barnett Mr. Keith Wellington Mr. Damion Fisher