

Frequently Asked Questions About Election Observation Missions

How many elections has The Carter Center observed?

The Center has observed more than 110 elections in 39 countries since 1989. In addition, the Center has sent smaller teams of experts to assess key aspects of scores of other elections around the world, including the 2018 Zimbabwe election.

How big is a typical election observation mission?

Sizes vary but typically a Carter Center delegation ranges from 40 to 120 accredited observers, including Carter Center staff.

What is The Carter Center's status

Fundamentally, election observation is about providing transparency and objective information and analysis about election processes. In that way, observers can help facilitate peaceful, democratic, and credible elections, and offer recommendations for improvement. Observation missions commend the parts of electoral processes that are functioning well, highlight areas that fall short of standards or legal requirements, and provide constructive recommendations for improving them. Their reports can provide information that might bolster the legitimacy of successful electoral processes and increase public confidence in them. In addition, the presence of observers can sometimes ease citizens' fears of election-related intimidation and violence. Observer reports also can attract attention to poorly conducted elections, and possibly deter political violence.

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