



Sunlight

Shams sends
a beam of sunlight
On every day of the election



Outside Iraq's Vote

Today - the fifth of March – was the first day of voting for voters abroad, Iraqis and the whole world followed the development pertaining to this process through media which conveyed images of the voting at polling stations in various countries where IHEC has opened stations for the Iraqis.

The launch of the voting of Iraqis abroad was characterized by a good presence of the representatives of the political parties, a significant voter turnout, and the presence of dense media participation. The voting process proceeded based on voter data in official documents proving Iraqi citizenship first and then his belonging to the province concerned.

The positive atmosphere in which the voting took place was evident, which would encourage other voters outside Iraq, to go to the polls in the specified period, particularly given that it coincides with the weekend in many countries.

Our observers had recorded some observations about the process which can be summarized as follows:

- Limited number of polling stations in proportion to the intensity of the number of Iraqis in the countries that have opened polling centers, and being far away from areas with large concentrations of Iraqis.
- Voters faced a problem in the documents that prove Nationality and belonging to the province. The majority, had brought passports and alone while the voting process required other documents as well.
- Those Iraqis who have lost their documents or had damaged ID were deprived of their right to vote, IHEC was unable to find a mechanism to deal with these cases.
- Some voters and representatives of political entities complained about the issue of independence of some of the staff of the polling stations in terms of their affiliation to specific political entities.
- Observers noted the poor performance of the staff of the polling stations, which raises the question about the effectiveness of training.
- Observers also noted the failure to remove banners and campaign posters and materials from within and around the polling stations in more than one polling station.

These observations, which will be detailed in the comprehensive report of Shams Network does not negate the significant role played by IHEC for the preparation of polling stations abroad, in coordination with the embassies of Iraq and host countries, and we can be certain that the current arrangements encourage the Iraqi voter, who is keen to actively participate in the elections. However, it is the responsibility of IHEC over the next two days to find quick solutions to some problems that occurred so that the electoral process concludes in the best image possible.