



GEOM MOROCCO 2021

Gender Election Observation Mission

GEOM Morocco 2021

Preliminary Statement

Gender Election Observation Mission (GEOM) Morocco 2021

Rabat, 9th of September 2021

Following the invitation of the National Human Rights Council (CNDH) of the Kingdom of Morocco, [Gender Concerns International](#) is pleased to have observed the Legislative, Regional and Municipal Elections in Morocco held on 8th September 2021.

GEOM Morocco 2021, headed by [Sabra Bano](#), observed Pre-election activities in Casablanca city centre and in its neighbourhoods, such as Hey Hassan, and further in Rabat city as well as outside in the areas of Sikharat and El Baharoui.

GEOM Morocco 2021 marks and celebrates 10 years of its continuous relationship with CNDH, women rights, human rights and other civil society organisations and national institutions in Morocco.

Since the November 2011 elections, the organisation has observed a gradual and steady progress in terms of strengthening rooted democracy and its further transformation that promotes parity, prosperity and participation for all in Morocco. The 2021 Election has been an extraordinary event, not only because of the holding of all three Elections on the same day, but also under the challenging conditions of the current pandemic.

Gender Concerns International congratulates the National Human Rights Council, the Ministry of Interior, Election Management Bodies and Civil Society actors and all relevant stakeholders for their diligent contribution in organising and conducting Free and Fair elections.

GEOMs are women-led, women-managed and women-reported international missions observing elections from a distinct gender perspective, including women's electoral participation as voters, candidates and their role and position in the Election Management Bodies.

This statement reflects only the initial findings and observations made on Election Day and during the Pre-election phase. The Final report will be issued later detailing the findings and recommendations indicated here after internal analysis and tabulation procedures are concluded.

On Election Day, the GEOM team of all 7 women International Observers was deployed mainly in the cities of Casablanca, El Jadida and Fes. The Mission observed all-day-long election proceedings, including **Opening** and **Closing** of the polls, from a gender perspective. The El Jadida and

Casablanca team was headed by Joint Head of Mission Lucyna de Graaf. The Mission also observed the **Counting of the votes** in Fes and Casablanca.

The **GEOM Morocco 2021** is a Short-term Mission that followed the previously conducted GEOMs in 2011, 2015 and 2016 held in Morocco with a focus of promoting and supporting gender parity in electoral processes and women's participation at the decision-making level.

Findings

- The Mission observed a significant number of female voters at almost all polling stations that it observed.
- The Mission noted that a dominated majority of polling station Heads were male. There were a significant number of women holding a position as Vice-President. Other polling staff were dominated by male members, including youth staff. A majority of women was found at the level of counting of the votes.
- Political party agents included many women, but the majority was still represented by men.
- Furthermore, the observed polling staff was found assisting and helpful in the voting process.
- The Mission found the current voter lists at polling stations hindersome to identifying the gender of the voters. Thus, not transparent and remains insufficient to identify gender inequalities and support that could be provided to promote voter parity.

Recommendations

- More female Heads of polling stations should be appointed to reflect gender parity.
- Women Electoral Management and staffing should reflect gender parity.
- Youth engagement in Electoral Management is encouraging, however parity among young women and men in selection procedure is recommended.
- GEOM highly recommends that a gender-segregated voter list should be prepared for transparent voter observation.

More about Gender Concerns

Gender Concerns International is a Gender and Development organisation based in The Hague, the Netherlands. The organisation has offices in Asia and the MENA region. GEOM primarily focuses on promoting inclusive governance and it supports gender parity in electoral processes in order to enable women to obtain leadership positions and key decision-making roles. As a signatory to the [Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation \(DoP\)](#), the GEOM instrument represents the importance of incorporating and enhancing a gender dimension to international election observation.

Following the success of the 2011 Morocco GEOM for Parliamentary elections and the Morocco GEOM for 2015 local elections, the 2016 Morocco GEOM for Parliamentary elections were successfully conducted. Gender Concerns International has extensive international experience having

conducted GEOMs in countries including Pakistan ([2008](#) and [2013](#)), Tunisia ([2011](#) and [2014](#)), Libya ([2012](#)), Myanmar ([2015](#)), and The Netherlands ([2017](#), [2021](#)).

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