



2011 Referendum – Protecting the integrity of the process

The Southern Sudan Referendum Act 2009 requires several measures to be put in place to ensure the voting process is fair, credible and transparent.

Official Stamp

The stamp, which is used to validate ballot papers, is placed on the reverse of the ballot paper. Ballot papers with no stamp will be considered invalid, so voters must make sure it is on the back of the ballot paper issued to them.

Indelible ink

Each Referendum Centre will have indelible ink to mark the fingers of voters. This is to ensure that a voter votes only once. Each voter will dip the left index finger in the indelible ink after posting their ballot paper in the ballot box.

Voting Screens

The use of voting screens will facilitate efficient, orderly and secret voting. Screens must be placed in such a way that it is impossible for anyone inside the Referendum Centre - or in its immediate external perimeter - to see how a voter has voted.

Security Seals

Seals are plastic pull-through strips that, once engaged, can only be released by cutting. These seals are used to secure ballot boxes and guarantee that boxes remain sealed and are not tampered with at any stage of the process, or during transportation. At the end of each polling day, as soon as the last voter has cast his/her ballot, the ballot box slot is secured with a new seal. Each seal has a unique serial number that is recorded on a form which keeps track of all the seals used in a Referendum Centre during the entire polling process.

Observation and Mass Media Representatives

Observers help ensure that voting is conducted with a high degree of transparency and credibility. Mass media representatives are close partners in the SSRC's efforts to disseminate timely and accurate information to voters. All the above representatives - who possess official SSRC accreditation - will be

granted unrestricted access to the Referendum Centres at all times during the polling and counting processes. The Chairperson of the Referendum Centre may decide to limit the number of observers and media representatives simultaneously present by alternating their presence when overcrowding impedes the smooth flow of the polling process or the transparent conduct of counting activities.

Lodging a Complaint

Any registered voter can lodge a complaint regarding irregularities observed during polling, sorting and counting. If a registered voter believes that any established procedure in the polling process has been infringed, he or she shall be allowed to submit a complaint to the Chairperson of the Referendum Centre in which that infringement has occurred.

The Chairperson of the Referendum Centre shall immediately resolve the case in compliance with established procedures and regulations:

1. If the complainant is satisfied with the Chairperson's decision, the incident shall be closed and no further action shall follow.
2. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Chairperson's decision and wishes to file a complaint, the Chairperson of the Referendum Centre shall record the complaint following the "Record of Complaint" template provided in the Referendum Center Journal.

The Chairperson of the Referendum Centre shall follow these guidelines:

- Draft two identical copies of the complaint, and sign each of the two copies;
- Request the complainant also to sign each of the two copies;
- Stamp both copies;
- Provide the Complainant with one of the two (identical) copies;
- Inform the complainant that he or she may lodge a formal appeal to the Consideration Committee;
- The Committee must decide on the appeal within 24 hours from its receipt.