ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION FINAL REPORT

Organization of American States

GENERAL ELECTIONS
THE FEDERATION OF SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS
FEBRUARY 16, 2015

Secretariat for Political Affairs (SPA)
Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation (DECO)
Electoral Observation Missions (EOMs)
Organization of American States (OAS)
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION FINAL REPORT

General Elections in Saint Kitts and Nevis
February 16, 2015

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<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<td>EOMs</td>
<td>Electoral Observation Missions</td>
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<td>Department for Electoral Cooperation and Observation</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>SKNLP</td>
<td>St. Kitts and Nevis Labour Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECSC</td>
<td>Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRP</td>
<td>Nevis Reformation Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAM</td>
<td>Political Action Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCM</td>
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<td>NAEA</td>
<td>National Assembly Elections Act</td>
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<td>Constituency Boundaries Commission</td>
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<td>People’s Labour Party</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Concerned Citizen’s Movement</td>
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<td>ZIZ</td>
<td>State television channel</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On February 16, 2015, the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis held elections to choose a Prime Minister and members of the National Assembly for the next five years. A total of 22 candidates ran for election in 11 constituencies. Over 72% of St. Kitts and Nevis' 42,185 registered voters went to the polls.

In response to an invitation from the government of St. Kitts and Nevis to observe the general elections, OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza appointed Ambassador Frank Almaguer to lead a team of 11 experts and observers, representing eight nationalities. This was the third mission the OAS has deployed in St. Kitts and Nevis; it had previously observed the general elections of January 25, 2010, and the Nevis Island Assembly elections of July 11, 2011.

The core group was composed of specialists on logistics, political analysis, gender, and political finance, as well as electoral organization. A specialist on constituency boundaries, who focused specifically on analyzing the legal framework and gathering information on the effect of this process on the pre-electoral period, was also part of the Mission.

On Election Day, observers visited 89% of polling stations in all 11 constituencies of St. Kitts and Nevis. They were present from the opening of the polls until the counting of the ballots. Observers reported that most of the polling stations opened on time and were adequately staffed and fully equipped with all of the materials required for the election.

On February 18, Dr. Timothy Harris was sworn in as the new Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis. Final results gave seven seats to the opposition coalition, Team Unity; three seats to the St. Kitts and Nevis Labor Party; and one seat to the Nevis Reformation Party.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The OAS Mission wishes to thank the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis for the invitation to observe the process and the different political actors and citizens for their cooperation and openness in facilitating the observation tasks of the delegation. In addition, the Mission would like to thank the governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, France, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States for their contributions that made the mission possible.
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

A. ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS/EOMs)

OAS Electoral Observation Missions (EOMs) constitute a key instrument in the defense and promotion of democracy in the Americas. They help guarantee the integrity, impartiality, and accountability of numerous electoral processes, as well as strengthen the credibility of democratic institutions in Member States.

The presence of an OAS Electoral Observation Mission (OAS/EOM) represents the Inter-American community’s solidarity and its support of the efforts undertaken by democratic institutions in Member States that organize and administer their own electoral processes. OAS Missions promote the recognition of political rights, particularly the right to suffrage, as the legitimate expression of every citizen’s opportunity to elect and be elected in an inclusive and free manner, as well as respect for the will of the people as expressed through the polls.

Since 2007, the OAS has refined its election observation methodology, based on key documents of the Inter-American and international systems, such as the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation, and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers. The Inter-American Democratic Charter emphasizes the importance of observing the diverse phases of an electoral process, as well the need to carry out EOMs that are conducted in an “objective, impartial, and transparent manner and with the appropriate technical expertise.” The Declaration of Principles emphasizes the potential of international electoral observation to “enhance the integrity level of electoral processes, by deterring and exposing irregularities and fraud and by providing recommendations for improving electoral processes.”

The OAS has observed more than 200 electoral processes in the Hemisphere since 1960, with most of these initiatives taking place within the last 15 years. During this time period, the OAS has observed many different types of elections—general, presidential, parliamentary, and municipal elections, referenda, signature validation and collection processes, as well as primary elections within political parties—always at the request of the Member States involved.

B. ORGANIZATION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE MISSION

In a letter dated January 21, 2015, the Cabinet Secretary of St. Kitts and Nevis requested that the OAS send a team of observers to witness the electoral process “with a view to ensuring that the general elections scheduled for February 16, 2015, were free, democratic and fair and conducted according to international standards.” On January 22, 2015, the OAS Secretary General confirmed the intention of the OAS to observe the electoral process and set in motion preparations for an
Electoral Observation Mission to witness the final days of campaigning, the conduct of the poll, the counting of ballots, and the immediate post-election process. The Secretary General designated Frank Almaguer, former Ambassador of the United States to Honduras and former Secretary for Administration and Finance at the GS/OAS, to lead the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in St. Kitts and Nevis. He was assisted by Marcela Garzon, Specialist in the OAS Department for Electoral Cooperation and Observation (DECO) as Deputy Chief of Mission. The mission was the third deployed by the OAS in St. Kitts and Nevis, following observation of the general elections of January 25, 2010 and the Nevis Island Assembly Elections of July 11, 2011.

The EOM team was comprised of 11 international experts and observers from seven OAS Member States (Antigua and Barbuda, Canada, Colombia, Mexico, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States of America) and one observer country (Spain). The Mission initiated its activities in the country with the arrival of the Deputy Chief of Mission and General Coordinator on February 9, 2015. The Chief of Mission arrived on February 11, 2015. At that point the Mission installed itself permanently, with the staggered arrival of the remainder of the core group specialists: electoral boundaries, electoral analyst, political financing and gender, electoral organization and the financial officer.

In the days prior to the election, the OAS/EOM met with representatives of political parties, electoral authorities, government officials, members of civil society organizations, local media representatives, as well as local and international observers to gather information and discuss perspectives on the electoral process.

The OAS/EOM closely followed key developments of the pre-electoral period related to the organization of the electoral process, such as the appeal filed by members of the opposition with regard to the parliamentary approval of the constituency boundary changes suggested by the Constituencies Boundaries Commission, the nomination of candidates, the publication of the Voters’ List, the voting and counting processes and the publication of results.

On election day, observers visited 89% of polling stations in all 11 constituencies of St. Kitts and Nevis. Observers reported that most of the polling stations opened on time, were adequately staffed and fully equipped with all of the materials required for the election. The Observation Mission congratulated Presiding Officers, Returning Officers and Poll Clerks for their extraordinary commitment in the exercise of their duties and the citizens of the country for their active participation in the election, reflected in a high voter turnout. The Mission concluded its activities on February 18, 2015 following the official declaration of results.
CHAPTER II. POLITICAL SYSTEM AND ELECTORAL ORGANIZATION

A. POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Administrative Organization

The Federation of St. Christopher (Kitts) and Nevis is a two-island nation located in the Eastern Caribbean, with a population of approximately 54,000² and an area of 261 km², of which Nevis covers 93 km². Saint Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla became an associated state of the United Kingdom, with full internal autonomy, in 1967. Following Anguilla’s secession in 1971, the remaining islands moved forward to independence in 1983 as St. Kitts and Nevis, with a Constitution that granted Nevis a high degree of autonomy as well as the right of secession.

Economically speaking, the federation is highly dependent on tourism. Nonetheless, St. Kitts and Nevis is performing well economically. A report published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in September 2014 predicted that growth will continue at a relatively rapid pace, following a strong recovery of nearly four percent in 2013³. This growth was primarily attributed to the robust performance of the construction sector, large inflows from the Citizenship-by-Investment program and a substantial increase in public sector investment. The IMF also commended the Government’s “home-grown economic program,” highlighting improvements in fiscal sustainability as well as the reduction in debt, the stability of the financial sector and the implementation of key structural reforms.

According to the 2001 census the combined population of St. Kitts and Nevis was 46,325 in 2001 (compared to 40,613 in 1991), of which 35,217 were in Saint Kitts and 11,108 in Nevis. The estimated mid-year population of 2014 is 54,800. The number of registered electors for the 2015 general election was 42,185⁴.

2. Political System

The Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis is a constitutional parliamentary democracy that operates on the Westminster model. A member of the Commonwealth of Nations, the nominal head of state is Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom, who is represented in the Federation by the Governor-General. Though the head of government is the Prime Minister, the Governor-General is formally responsible for appointing the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, other ministers of the government, the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, and members of the Public Service and Police Service Commissions.

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² According to 2013 data from the World Bank
³ International Monetary Fund (IMF) World Economic Outlook, 2014.
On the federal level, St. Kitts and Nevis operates with a unicameral parliament, known as the National Assembly. Since 1984, this body has been composed of 11 elected representatives and three appointed senators. All legislators serve five-year terms.

Federal electoral districts, known as constituencies, are drawn by the Constituency Boundaries Commission, set up by the Governor-General in consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. The Constitution mandates a minimum of eight constituencies on St. Kitts and three on Nevis. In the delimitation of boundaries, the Commission is required to consider factors other than population, such as geographical features, existing administrative boundaries and the need to adequately represent rural areas.

The St. Christopher and Nevis Constitution establishes that the island of St. Christopher and the Island of Nevis form a sovereign democratic federal state. As a part of the federation, the Island of Nevis is constitutionally endowed with its own Nevis Island Legislature and Nevis Island Administration, which is distinct from federal governmental authorities.

3. Political History

Political parties had begun to coalesce on both islands prior to full independence, with the St. Kitts and Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP) achieving early dominance on St. Kitts. On Nevis, political opposition to the SKNLP was expressed through the Nevis Reformation Party (NRP). Established in 1970, the NRP rose on a platform of secession from St. Kitts.

The 1980 elections represented a definitive political shift in the federation, marking the end of SKNLP dominance. Though the Labour Party won more votes than the opposition Political Action Movement (PAM) taking four seats to three on St. Kitts, the NRP captured both seats on Nevis. The PAM and NRP were thus able to form a coalition government in the House of Assembly, forcing the SKNLP into opposition for the first time. The advent of a Kittitian-Nevisian coalition reduced demands for secession as the only way to overcome the limited autonomy then afforded to Nevis. Instead, a deal was struck to make newly independent St. Kitts and Nevis a two-island federation in which Nevis would be granted considerable autonomy through a local assembly.

Following independence in 1983, the National Assembly was expanded to 11 seats. In the 1984 elections the PAM increased its majority with six seats, while the NRP won all three seats on Nevis. Although the 1989 elections saw no changes in the political make-up on St. Kitts, a new Nevisian party, the Concerned Citizens’ Movement (CCM), formed in 1987 and took one out of the three Nevisian seats. In the 1993 elections, the SKNLP and the PAM each won four seats on St. Kitts, with the CCM winning two seats on Nevis against a single seat for the NRP.

Kittitian parties have rarely campaigned on Nevis nor have they involved themselves in the local affairs of the island. On the other hand, the Nevisian vote can profoundly affect the complexion of the National Assembly. In the absence of a majority party, the Nevisian party that wins the most Federal seats has the chance to form a ruling coalition with either one of the leading Kittitian parties. In 1993, this situation led to a hung parliament in which the CCM held the balance of power (a coalition with either Kittitian party would have formed a majority) but chose to stay neutral.
Nevis has repeatedly explored the possibility of secession from the Federation. In 1996, Vance Amory, then CCM leader and Nevis Premier, initiated a constitutional process for secession. The motion was defeated in a 1998 referendum. Though 62% of Nevisians voted for secession from the federation, the Constitution (Section 113) stipulates that secession requires a two-thirds majority vote.

Under the leadership of former Prime Minister Denzil Douglas, the SKNLP returned to power in 1995 and achieved re-election in 2000. In 2004, the SKNLP won seven of the eight seats allotted to St. Kitts in the Parliament. On Nevis, CCM won two seats and the Nevis Reformation Party NRP won one. General elections were last held in St. Kitts and Nevis on January 25, 2010. The SKNLP returned to office for a fourth consecutive term with six seats on the island of St. Kitts, while the PAM took the remaining two seats. On Nevis, the CCM won two seats, while the NRP took one seat.

Disenchantment with actions of the St. Kitts and Nevis Labour Party in early 2013 led to two of its elected representatives – Dr. Timothy Harris and Mr. Sam Condor – aligning themselves with the parliamentary opposition and eventually forming their own party – the People’s Labour Party – in June 2013.

4. Motion of No Confidence

In December 2012, Leader of the Opposition, Mark Brantley, from the Concerned Citizens Movement (CCM) in Nevis, filed a motion of no confidence against the Prime Minister Denzil Douglas-led administration. Opposition Leader Shawn Richards of the People’s Action Movement (PAM) filed a second motion of no confidence in July 2013.

With neither matter having been scheduled for debate in the National Assembly, the Opposition parliamentarians resorted to the Courts to protest the violation of their constitutional rights. A ruling by the High Court in February 2014 disallowed the case against the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, but opted to proceed with the case against the Speaker who, it said, held responsibility for scheduling the no confidence motions for debate.

A third motion of no confidence was filed in September 2014 by Dr. Timothy Harris, a former Cabinet minister turned member of the Opposition by the time.

B. ELECTORAL LEGISLATION

Election procedures in St. Kitts and Nevis are governed by the Constitution and the National Assembly Elections Act (NAEA) and subsidiary Regulations. The NAEA details the constitutional powers of the National Assembly, defines the roles and responsibilities of all levels of election workers, explains and regulates the process of voter registration and sets forth the procedures to be followed on election day in the case of challenges to elections, among others.

1. Voting Eligibility

All Kittitian and Nevisian citizens over the age of eighteen, including non-residents, are entitled to
vote. Commonwealth citizens over the age of eighteen who have been ordinarily resident in St. Kitts and Nevis for a period of at least twelve months immediately before the date of their registration on the voters' list are also eligible. To be eligible to register as a voter in a particular constituency, a voter must establish residency in that constituency. By law, citizens residing abroad are entitled to be registered as voters in the constituency in which they have a domicile, or in which they had been ordinarily resident prior to leaving the country, or in which, under certain circumstances, a parent had been ordinarily resident (NAEA Art. 37).

2. Electoral Boundaries and Polling Divisions

Federal electoral districts, known as constituencies, are drawn by the Constituency Boundaries Commission, set up by the Governor-General in consultation with the Prime Minister (PM) and the Leader of the Opposition. This commission is made up of five members that are appointed by the Governor-General: two members on the advice of the Prime Minister, two members on the advice of the Opposition Leader and a Chairman on the advice of the PM, with the consultation of the Opposition.

Article 50 of the Constitution establishes that the Constituency Boundaries Commission (CBC) is in charge of "reviewing the number and boundaries of the constituencies into which Saint Christopher and Nevis is divided." Additionally, Schedule 2 of the Constitution establishes that:

“All constituencies should contain as nearly equal numbers of inhabitants as appears to the Constituency Boundaries Commission to be reasonably practicable but the Commission may depart from this rule to such extent as it considers expedient to take account of the following factors, that is to say: a) the requirements of rule 1 and the differences in the density of the populations in the respective islands of Saint Christopher and Nevis; b) the need to ensure adequate representation of sparsely populated rural areas; c) the means of communication; d) geographical features; and e) existing administrative boundaries.”

The Constitution mandates a minimum of eight constituencies on St. Kitts and three on Nevis. If the number of constituencies is increased beyond eleven, not less than one-third of their number must be on Nevis. In the delimitation of boundaries, the Commission is required to consider factors other than population, such as geographical features, existing administrative boundaries and the need to adequately represent rural areas. As per the constitution (Article 50), the Commission must submit a boundaries report “at intervals of not less than two nor more than five years.”

Each constituency shall be a polling division. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1), the Supervisor of Elections may divide any constituency into so many polling divisions and with such boundaries and descriptions as he or she may by notice published in the Gazette appoint. The Supervisor of Elections may in like manner from time to time vary the number, descriptions and boundaries of any polling division so appointed (NAEA Art. 32).

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5 Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Brunei, Cameroon, Canada, Cyprus, Dominica, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Kingdom, Vanuatu, Zambia.
3. Register of Voters

A person is entitled to vote at an election in a constituency if on polling day, he or she is qualified to be a voter for that constituency and if on polling day, is registered in the Register of Voters to be used in that constituency. A person shall remain registered unless and until his or her name is deleted from the Register because he or she died; an objection to his or her registration has been allowed or he or she has become disqualified for registration as a voter under this Act or any other enactment imposing disqualifications for registration as a voter (NAEA Art. 39). The Chief Registration Officer shall, in accordance with the regulations, cause a national identification card to be issued by a person who is registered as a voter for a constituency (NAEA Art. 37C).

Not later than the appointed day of every month in each year, the Chief Registration Officer shall cause to be prepared and shall publish as soon as possible thereafter a list of voters for each constituency which shall consist of all persons a) whose names appeared on the register for another constituency who have notified the Chief Registration Officer of a change of address...; b) whose names appeared in the register for the constituency who have effected a change address within the constituency...; c) who have reached the age of 18 years...; d) who have otherwise become qualified as a voter (NAEA Art. 44). When the name of newly register citizens or residents appears on the "Revised Monthly List", then they become eligible to vote.

The Chief Registration Officer shall cause to be prepared and shall publish not later than the thirty-first (31st) day of January in every year a register of voters for each constituency. The register of voters shall consist of all persons who were registered in the register of voters last published for
that constituency; and all persons whose names appear in the revised monthly list of voters prepared and published for the constituency since the date of publication of the registers (NAEA Art. 43).

C. ELECTORAL AUTHORITIES

The Constitution provides for two key bodies responsible for the conduct of elections in the Federation: the Electoral Commission and the Electoral Office. The Electoral Commission consists of a Chairman appointed by the Governor-General, one member appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister, and one member appointed on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition.

According to the Constitution (Art. 34), the Supervisor of Elections, who leads the Electoral Office, is appointed by the Governor-General and is responsible for enforcing the law regulating the registration of voters and the conduct of elections. The Supervisor of Elections, in turn, is supervised by the Electoral Commission. Although the Electoral Commission may direct the Supervisor of Elections in his or her efforts to enforce the electoral laws, the Supervisor is not otherwise subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority.

Members of the Electoral Commission:\(^6\):

- Mr. Hesketh Benjamin, Chairman
- Mr. William Dore, Member
- Ms. Myrna Walwyn, Member

Members of the Electoral Office:\(^7\):

- Mr. Wingrove George\(^8\), Supervisor of Elections
- Mr. Oliver Knight, Office Manager

The Supervisor of Elections is responsible for the employing and deployment of election officials. Each polling station is manned by a Presiding Officer and a Poll Clerk, who each report to the Returning Officer in a specific constituency. Returning Officers are in turn responsible to the Supervisor of Elections.

Presiding Officers at each polling station have the responsibility of receiving the votes. The Supervisor of Elections shall appoint a Presiding Officer to attend to each polling station; he or she shall not so appoint any person who has been employed by or on behalf of a candidate in or about the election (NAEA Art. 65).

Returning Officers shall publish in the Gazette and in one or more newspapers published in the State a notice of the day and place fixed for the nomination of candidates. On Election Day, the Returning Officers are responsible for the receiving and counting of all boxes within their constituencies. After all the ballot boxes have been received they shall be opened for the count of votes and in the presence of candidates or their agents. If the candidates or their agents are absent,

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\(^6\) General elections 2015.
\(^7\) General elections 2015.
\(^8\) Mr. George, a former Registration Officer was appointed by the Governor-General in February 2014.
then in the presence of such as are present, and of at least two voters if none of the candidates is represented, the Returning Officer shall record and count the number of votes given to each candidate and keep a record on the special form printed in the poll book of every objection made by any candidate or his or her counting agent or any voter present to any ballot paper found in a ballot box. Once counted, ballot boxes have to be returned by the Returning Officer to the office of the Supervisor of Elections in Basseterre, where they must remain under supervision.

The candidate who on the completion of the count is found to have the largest number of votes shall then be declared by the Returning Officer to be elected as the member for the constituency (NAEA Art. 88).
CHAPTER III. MISSION ACTIVITIES AND OBSERVATIONS

A. PRE-ELECTORAL PERIOD

1. Nomination of Candidates

The nomination of the candidates for the 2015 general elections took place on February 6, 2015, the same day as the start of the official campaign. On February 16, a total of 22 candidates sought to be elected in the 11 constituencies of St. Kitts and Nevis. Unlike the 2010 elections, no independent candidates ran for office.

During the candidate nomination process, Returning Officers provided nomination papers and received the nominations in an office of the main police station of each constituency. Every candidate had to be nominated by at least two registered voters of the constituency in which he or she sought election. At the same occasion, a candidate was required to deposit the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars.

2. Candidates and Political parties

The parliament was dissolved on January 16, 2015 in order to replace the elected members who had arrived at the end of their five-year term. On January 27, 2015, the Prime Minister announced February 16th as the election date, with nomination day taking place on February 6, 2015.

Five political parties contested the St. Kitts and Nevis general elections of 2015. On St. Kitts, three parties vied for the eight available seats: the St. Kitts and Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP) led by Dr. Denzil Douglas; the People’s Action Movement (PAM) led by Shawn Richards and the People’s Labour Party (PLP) led by Dr. Timothy Harris. On Nevis, two parties contested the three seats available: the Concerned Citizen’s Movement (CCM) led by Vance Amory and the Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) led by Joseph Parry.

Two political alliances were formed among the five parties for the elections. The People’s Action Movement (PAM), the People’s Labour Party (PLP) and the Concerned Citizen’s Movement (CCM) combined under the banner “Team Unity” to contest the elections across the Federation. The PAM fielded candidates on St. Kitts in Constituencies One, Two, Four, Five, Six and Eight, while the PLP ran in Constituencies Three and Seven. The CCM fielded candidates on Nevis in Constituencies Nine, Ten and Eleven.

The second political alliance united the St. Kitts and Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP) and the Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) under a “Contract for Progress”. SKNLP candidates ran in all eight constituencies on St. Kitts, while the NRP ran in the three constituencies on Nevis.
Table 1 - Political Parties and Candidates Competing in 2015 General Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Name</th>
<th>Party Leader</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Kitts and Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP)</td>
<td>Denzil DOUGLAS, PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Action Movement (PAM)</td>
<td>Shawn RICHARDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned Citizen’s Movement (CCM)</td>
<td>Vance AMORY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevis Reformation Party (NRP)</td>
<td>Joseph PARRY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Labour Party (PLP)</td>
<td>Timothy HARRIS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Source: OAS/EOM 2015

3. Constituency Boundary Realignment

Over the years, the different constituency delimitation processes in St. Kitts and Nevis have been challenged and subject to judicial review in national, regional and international courts. Both the OAS and the Commonwealth in previous elections have called for changes to be made to restore balance to the population distribution of the constituencies. The report of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission to the 2010 general elections recommended that “a cross-party consultative process” be undertaken to establish new election boundaries “well before the next general elections.”

The first attempt to revise electoral constituencies following independence in 1983 was made in 2009 by the Constituency Boundaries Commission (CBC), ahead of the 2010 general elections. In 2009, the opposition parties (led by PAM) successfully challenged the report with the result that the original constituencies delimited in the early 1980s were used in the 2010 general election. In December of 2012, a second Constituency Boundaries Commission was constituted to renew the electoral cartography, which produced a new report in 2013 that was also challenged by opposition parties in court.

Disputes among political parties related to the issue of boundaries became also a focal point for the 2015 general elections in St. Kitts and Nevis. While the re-alignment of boundaries was partly the culmination of the work of the Constituency Boundaries Commission that commenced its work in 2012, concerns were voiced –primarily by the opposition and members of civil society– regarding the manner in which the proposed changes were taken through Parliament without the consensus of all political parties.

On the evening of January 16, 2015, in an emergency session of the National Assembly, the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis passed a resolution approving changes to the constituency boundaries in St. Kitts and Nevis. Governor-General Sir Edmund Wickham Lawrence subsequently signed the proclamation to give effect to the revised boundaries, which was promptly gazetted. The National Assembly immediately dissolved the same night, to allow elections within the framework of the new constituencies.

The Parliamentary Opposition, in protest at the Government’s action, obtained an injunction from the High Court of St. Kitts and Nevis seeking to prevent the implementation of the proclamation ahead of the next general elections. On January 27, 2015, the High Court ruled in favor of the
Government and discharged the injunction. The opposition then filed an appeal with the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC), which was granted on January 29, thus reinstating the injunction and discharged by the Court of Appeals on February 5, pending further review by the Privy Council.

The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court then instructed the Supervisor of Elections to produce two separate sets of voter lists reflecting both the old and new boundary distributions, pending the final decision by the Privy Council. On February 12, three days before Election Day, the Privy Council ruled in favor of the opposition and determined and ordered that the list to be used in the general election 2015 was the one existing prior to the proclamation issued and published by the Governor-General.

The Observation Mission closely followed the appeal filed by opposition actors and took note of the ruling of the Privy Council on the boundary changes and the fact that this process was conducted in accordance with the Constitution. Nonetheless, the resolution of this matter earlier in the electoral period would have facilitated a smoother organization of the electoral process.

The OAS/EOM received various complaints from opposition groups regarding the manner in which proposed boundary changes were presented by the Constituency Boundaries Commission and approved by the National Assembly on the same day that the Assembly was dissolved. Furthermore, opposition members expressed to the Mission that they were never able to be part of the elaboration of the report and the decision making and complained about the lack of transparency in the process. The observers did not gain access to a copy of the Constituencies Boundaries Report despite various formal requests. The Observation Mission also took note of the political composition of the Constituency Boundaries Commission and heard concerns expressed by several actors regarding the need to give the Commission institutional autonomy.

4. Electoral Campaign and Political Climate

Given the uncertainties surrounding the timing of the election, the 2015 campaign was longer, and thus more expensive, than usual. While the date was announced by the Prime Minister on January 25, 2015, and the formal campaign period started three weeks before elections, for all intents and purposes the campaign began in 2013, shortly after the submission of the motion of no confidence against the Government in December 2012.

The political climate of the 2015 elections was tense. While elections in the Federation are normally fought in a robust fashion, tempers had already been running high over the past two years due to the long-running dispute between Government and the opposition over the non-hearing of the opposition’s no-confidence motion in the National Assembly. The amendment of the constituency boundaries by the Government in January 2015, one month before elections, and the recourse to the courts by the opposition, created increased levels of antagonism on both sides, as the parties and their supporters sought to defend their respective positions.

Delays in the completion of various stages of preparation for the February 16, 2015 poll, including the publication of the voter’s list, added further stresses to an already strained situation, leading
opposition parties to express concerns related to the conduct of elections and the final outcome.

Some of the language used on the political platforms served to reinforce the discord evident in the campaign, with metaphorical references to war and combat being used to describe the electoral competition between parties. In several instances, the conflict between the parties was expressed in more tangible ways, including through the damage to the private property of electoral candidates.

In light of the tensions surrounding the elections, several members of political parties and civil society expressed their concerns to the Observation Mission about the potential for additional conflict after the elections, if the losing side perceived that it had been disenfranchised.

The Evangelical Association of Churches, a member of an NGO coalition including the Christian Council and the Chamber of Commerce formed to observe the elections, had published a Code of Conduct for the elections in 2010, to which it had invited the political parties to adhere. For the 2015 elections, the parties were not asked to sign the Code of Conduct, but simply to adhere to what they had already agreed.

5. Access to Media

The media in St. Kitts and Nevis comprises one state-owned television station, one state-owned and several privately-owned radio stations as well as several print and online newspapers. The state-owned television and radio stations appeared to focus largely on the work and achievements of Government, while the perspectives of the private radio stations and newspapers ranged from partisan to objective.

For the 2015 electoral campaign, Government had access to the state-owned media, and acquired or purchased time and advertising space on selected private media. Opposition parties also acquired or purchased time on private media, but claimed to be unable to access the State media, even when willing to purchase advertising time. Members of the opposition and members of civil society also complained that the state-owned television station did not provide equitable coverage to the campaigns of opposition parties.

6. Voter Registration

To register on the voter’s list, citizens (or Commonwealth citizens who are allowed to vote) have to fill out an application and submit it, in person, to a Registration Officer. If no objection is filed (by another citizen) after the publication of the voter’s list, the person is registered.

During the days prior to the elections, the Mission observed an important number of citizens going to the registration office to replace or renew their national identification cards. The process seemed rather efficient, thus allowing citizens to vote, having in consideration that many of them do not necessarily have a driver’s license, a passport or other accepted picture ID. In each polling station, between 124 and 496 electors were registered to vote in the 2015 General Elections. The average number of registered voters per polling station was 345.

As observed in previous elections, some political parties brought to the attention of the Observation
Mission that the voters list included names of people who had either died or did not reside in the constituencies in which they were registered. A variety of actors raised questions about voters who came from abroad to vote on Election Day but who may have been improperly registered in a constituency in which their vote would have the most positive impact for a specific party.

Although a more in-depth analysis would need to be carried out on the matter, it remains relevant to note the differences in percentage increases of registered electors between constituencies. The number of registered electors increased from 32,796 to 42,185 between 2010 and 2015 (29% increase). Concerns regarding the accuracy of the voter’s list, coupled with the perceptions of an inflated list and the decrease in apparent turnout reflect the need for efforts to cleanse and update the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral Division</th>
<th>Number of Registered Electors in 2010</th>
<th>Number of Registered Electors in 2015</th>
<th>Percentage Increase</th>
<th>% Registered Electors 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 1</td>
<td>4,030</td>
<td>5,036</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>St. Kitts 31,081 (73.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 2</td>
<td>4,063</td>
<td>4,740</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 3</td>
<td>2,393</td>
<td>3,265</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 4</td>
<td>2,661</td>
<td>3,166</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 5</td>
<td>2,428</td>
<td>3,107</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 6</td>
<td>2,439</td>
<td>2,823</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 7</td>
<td>2,561</td>
<td>3,191</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Nevis 11,104 (26.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 8</td>
<td>4,680</td>
<td>5,753</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 9</td>
<td>4,295</td>
<td>6,127</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 10</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>1,393</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 11</td>
<td>2,146</td>
<td>3,584</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32,796</td>
<td>42,185</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


7. Voters list

According to the National Assembly Elections Act (2009), the voters’ registry to be used for the conduct of an election is the last monthly revised list available when a writ is issued. The last revised list for the February 16th general election was the one of November 30, 2014. Therefore, citizens who registered on the voters’ list between December 1st, 2014 and Election Day should have neither appeared on the registry nor been allowed to vote in the 2015 elections. Objections filed regarding changes made to the November voters’ lists should, according to the law, have been made during the month of December 2014.

In accordance with the provisions of the law, the Register of Voters, which includes the names of persons who appear on the last published list (for a given constituency), should have been posted at two conspicuous places in each constituency on January 31st. People who claim to be entitled to be registered, whose name or address is incorrect or any person who objects to the registration can
normally submit a claim to the registration office in the following days.

The Observation Mission received a number of claims regarding the timing in which the voters list was posted and provided to the political parties. The OAS/EOM observed that the final list was only made available to parties and citizens two days before polling day, leaving insufficient time for final objections, a situation that generated some confusion and frustration.

8. Distribution of the Electoral Material

Approximately 59,000 ballots were printed by the staff of the “Government Printery” for the General Election. The Mission observed that the printing of the material was executed on paper that does not contain visible security features. Furthermore, the numbering of the ballot was carried out manually (with a counting stamp), a time-consuming and error prone process. Some delays were observed by the Mission in the delivery of the election material to Presiding Officers on the day before elections, in which they had to wait for several hours for the arrival of the material.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Number of Ballots Printed</th>
<th>Number of Registered Electors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>5,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6,900</td>
<td>4,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>3,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4,600</td>
<td>3,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td>3,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4,300</td>
<td>2,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>3,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>5,753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>6,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>1,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>3,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>59,200</td>
<td>42,185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Primary source: Electoral Office

Graphic 2 - Ballot Specimen
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>James, John P.</td>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Robinson, Peter F.</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Smith, George R.</td>
<td>Mechanic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Primary source: Electoral Office*
9. Training of Poll Workers

The training of poll workers took place on February 15— the day before the general election. The training consisted of group (one by constituency) discussions and reading of the National Assembly Elections Act. All Presiding Officers (one per polling station) and Poll Clerks (two per station) participated in the training given by their respective Returning Officer. The latter acted as discussion leaders in 3 to 4 hour sessions. Election workers were given a 57-page document titled “Election Relevant Legislation” which contains articles of the National Assembly Elections Act. Between 20 and 40 people participated (3 per polling station) in those training sessions, all simultaneously held at the same time and in the same room. Informal exchanges between election workers were also held after the 3-4 hour long group discussions.

The training material as well as the format of training sessions allowed experienced poll workers who had previously served in past elections to review concepts and procedures. New poll clerks, however, seemed to have many questions and difficulty finding answers to their questions during the training sessions observed by the OAS/EOM. The timeframe (training election workers a few hours before the opening of the poll) may also add a layer of difficulty for new members of the electoral staff, who had very little time to review the training material.

10. Early voting

An amendment to the National Assembly Elections Act (October 2014) of St. Kitts and Nevis calls for the conduct of an early voting process for members of essential services and security forces. In order to vote on the early voting date, admissible electors have to register as voters. In this process, electors could either register in person at the office of the Chief Registration Officer or fill out a form sent to the latter by their employers. A total of 206 electors registered for first time in the advance polling which was held on February 14, two days before the general election. Electoral officials who oversaw the process on the early voting day were also present at the polling stations on the general election day.

The Observation Mission noted a lack of clarity about the process of early voting in general, particularly with regard to the location of polling places and voting hours, as well as the absence of any informative document that explained the process and procedures before, during and after the election. The OAS/EOM was aware of last minute changes given by the Electoral Office to Returning Officers in the hours prior to the election regarding the location of polling places. These last minute changes were the source of some confusion and distrust regarding the process. On the morning of the early voting, at the time when some polling stations ought to be opened, some of the necessary voting materials were still being distributed or waiting to be distributed in Basseterre.

The number of electors (less than 200) may probably have been greater if the Electoral Office had widely informed the members of the special services about the process. The Mission also noted that the Electoral Office did not publish or maintain a dedicated list of those who voted in the advance poll. Ballots cast in each constituency were counted by the Returning Officers on election night.
(February 16), alongside other ballots for the same constituency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral Division</th>
<th>Number of Registered Electors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 2</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 8</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>206</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Electors (Nationally)</td>
<td><strong>0.49%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Primary source: Electoral Office

11. Political Financing

Political party and campaign financing in St. Kitts and Nevis is wholly private; there is no government funding for campaigns, whether direct or indirect. Political parties and candidates are expected to raise their own campaign funds, which they do both locally and internationally from groups, individuals, and the private sector. Amounts spent on campaigning, especially for media, have risen significantly in the past twenty years. Large-scale campaign events typically resemble concerts where local artists are invited to perform. The current regime is characterized by an absence of regulations or restrictions on the amount that parties can raise or spend for electoral purposes. There are no prohibitions, for example, on anonymous or foreign donations, as is the case in much of the region.

Political parties are not required to adopt standardized accounting mechanisms or produce reports to the electoral authority. Neither the Electoral Commission nor the Supervisor of Elections has the mandate to audit campaign finances. Because political parties publish little information about the sources of their financing, citizens lack access to such information. The lack of transparency and the absence of rules or restrictions on campaign donations make it difficult to know the amounts, groups, or individuals involved in financing campaigns.

12. Participation of Women

The Mission observed that women played visible roles within political parties, operating primarily at the level of grass-roots organizers. Nonetheless, only one woman, Marcella Liburd, out of 22 candidates was nominated for the 2015 general elections.

Within their organizations, many political parties in St. Kitts and Nevis have established women’s arms that are sometimes linked in critical ways to the key decision-making bodies of the political
parties. However, in some cases it is perceived that these women groups are used by the political parties as mobilizing agencies for the parties and not as vehicles for women to gain more significant representation in the political spectrum.

The OAS/EOM was repeatedly told that concerted efforts have been made to recruit and train women for national leadership; nonetheless increasing the representation of women has proven extremely difficult. Some political actors expressed to the Mission that the reason for low female participation is the fear of failure and/or the burden of the duties of private life. However, these explanations do not hold for those women in St. Kitts and Nevis who have shown a proclivity or inclination towards greater national political participation. It was also highlighted by some political actors to the Mission that women have suffered from negative campaign tactics and a seemingly hostile environment which has produced an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. This hostility, when combined with resistance from family, has created an environment that is currently not conducive to the immersion of women in the highest level of electoral politics.

In the absence therefore of any meaningful advance of women in national elections and correspondingly, in Parliament, political parties have recently purportedly committed themselves to ensuring that women ‘play prominent roles otherwise’. These include appointments as party chairpersons, Speaker of the House of Representatives and as Senators.

B. ELECTION DAY

On Election Day, the team of OAS international observers was deployed to all 11 constituencies in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis. Throughout the day, observers visited numerous polling stations within their constituencies to observe the opening, the voting process, the closing of polls, the transfer of ballot boxes from polling stations to counting centers and the vote-counting process. In total, observers were present at 62 of 70 voting centers (88%) and 108 of 121 polling stations, covering 89% of the total throughout St. Kitts and Nevis.

In terms of the opening of the voting process, observers reported that the vast majority of polling stations opened on time at 7:00 a.m., were adequately staffed with all designated polling officials, and fully equipped with all of the materials required for the election. The Mission observed that the voting was conducted in a fluid, transparent and orderly manner demonstrating widespread voter understanding of the democratic process in St. Kitts and Nevis. Presiding Officers, Returning Officers and Poll Clerks deserve congratulations for their extraordinary commitment in the exercise of their duties. In general, officers were extremely professional and diligent at giving instructions to voters regarding the procedures to be followed.

It bears mentioning that Kittitian and Nevisian women played an active role in the administration of polling day, representing 88% of designated poll workers in the voting centers observed by the OAS Mission. Women also represented the vast majority (81%) of the party agents exercising their duties throughout Election Day. The Mission was pleased to note that party agents from the St. Kitts and Nevis Labour Party and the Team Unity coalition were present at all polling stations observed by the OAS/EOM on St. Kitts. The Nevis Reformation Party and Concerned Citizens Movement also
deployed agents at every observed polling center on Nevis. Police presence was extensive at all voting centers. Observers reported that voters invariably had adequate information about the location of their polling station and commended the fact that the voting process was standardized and uniform in all observed locations.

Citizens waited patiently, sometimes in long lines, to exercise their right to vote in an orderly and peaceful manner. Of the 42,185 citizens registered, a total of 30,455 cast ballots, constituting a voter turnout of 72.19%. Although the Mission commends such a high rate of participation, this represents a significant decrease from the 83.6% participation rate in the previous general elections of 2010. Polling stations closed on time at 6:00 p.m. in all observed polling stations, except for those in which there were still lines of voters waiting to exercise their franchise. There were no reports of voters left in line who were not allowed to vote. Party agents present at polling stations seemed to have good knowledge of the voting process. While the closing procedures carried out by presiding and Returning Officers within polling places was generally well-organized and conducted following legal procedures, the Mission observed that the counting and transmission of results was extremely slow, stemming from a series of procedural difficulties.

Shortly after the polls had closed; Returning Officers in St. Kitts were given instructions by the Electoral Office to collect the advance poll ballot box belonging to their constituency from a central location in Basseterre. Before proceeding to the counting of ballots, all Returning Officers of St. Kitts were to meet at the office of the Commissioner of Police. This last minute instruction required some Returning Officers to travel long distances across the island. Furthermore, because of the tardiness of the order, several Returning Officers had already begun the collection of boxes in their constituencies. These waited to complete their constituency before heading to Basseterre, thus causing further delays in the process. As all Returning Officers had to be present when the office of the Commissioner was to about be opened (custody measure), most of them waited more than an hour outside the police station. After receiving the ballot box used in advance polling in their constituency, Returning Officers went back to their respective constituency to begin the counting of the ballots.

In every constituency, the counting of the vote was under the responsibility of the Returning Officer. In some districts, the Returning Officers counted thousands of ballots with the assistance of tally clerks. Such a critical process took hours to complete.

C. POST-ELECTORAL PERIOD

Because of the delay in the start of the counting process, which in some areas did not begin until nearly four hours after the poll had closed, as well as challenges presented during the counting process, there were significant delays in the dissemination of results. More than 12 hours after the closing of the polls, there was no information on the outcome of the election.

The Supervisor of Elections began announcing preliminary results, transmitting the vote-count from individual polling stations, live on state television (ZIZ) and radio stations. First results were initially transmitted from counting centers by Returning Officers to the Supervisor of Elections via
landline telephone. Between approximately 11:00 p.m. on February 16 and 4:00 a.m. on February 17, the Supervisor of Elections announced poll results from Constituencies 2 and 10. Soon after, the Supervisor of Elections declared without providing justification that no more results would be announced until further notice which led to speculation and uncertainty. Meanwhile, Returning Officers continued to count ballots in almost all constituencies of the Federation. Unable to reach the Supervisor of Elections after counting, some Returning Officers returned home, while others went to Basseterre hoping to give custody of the electoral material and submit electoral results.

As a consequence of the procedural difficulties related to the counting and transmission of results, preliminary results were not announced by the Supervisor of Elections until almost 24 hours after polls had closed in each of the 11 constituencies of the Federation. At 4:40 p.m. on February 17, the Supervisor of Elections reappeared via state radio to provide results, and apologized for the delays and the silence of the Electoral Office, expressing that many of the results had been contested by party agents during the counting process.

Furthermore, final vote tallies were extremely delayed, and were not published until more than two weeks after Election Day. Final results gave seven seats to the opposition coalition, Team Unity, three seats to the St. Kitts and Nevis Labor Party, and one seat to the Nevis Reformation Party.

On February 18, Dr. Timothy Harris was sworn in as the new Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral District</th>
<th>Elected candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 1</td>
<td>Ian Liburd</td>
<td>PAM</td>
<td>1,731</td>
<td>50.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 2</td>
<td>Marcella Liburd</td>
<td>SKNLP</td>
<td>1,758</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 3</td>
<td>Konris Maynard</td>
<td>SKNLP</td>
<td>1,348</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 4</td>
<td>Lindsay Grant</td>
<td>PAM</td>
<td>1,252</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 5</td>
<td>Shawn R. Richards</td>
<td>PAM</td>
<td>1,245</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 6</td>
<td>Denzil Douglas</td>
<td>SKNLP</td>
<td>1,969</td>
<td>90.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 7</td>
<td><strong>Timothy Harris</strong></td>
<td>PLP</td>
<td>1,647</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 8</td>
<td>Eugene Hamilton</td>
<td>PAM</td>
<td>2,364</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 9</td>
<td>Mark Brantley</td>
<td>CCM</td>
<td>2,033</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 10</td>
<td>Vance Amory</td>
<td>CCM</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>71.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency 11</td>
<td>Patrice Nisbett</td>
<td>NRP</td>
<td>1,255</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSIONS

After the celebration of general elections held on February 16, 2015, the Team Unity coalition was announced the winner of the elections, this putting an end to 20 years of Saint Kitts and Nevis Labour Party government. Dr. Timothy Harris was sworn in on February 18, 2015 becoming the third Prime Minister since independence in 1983.

The electoral campaign was characterized by a tense political climate. Many concerns were raised about the administrative and logistical aspects of the organization of the electoral process by the electoral authority. The lack of communication by the Electoral Office in the lead-up to the elections was certainly crucial in the perception and confidence the different actors had in the electoral process. The scarce information available to the general public on the organization and preparations for the election was undoubtedly one of the main issues that overshadowed the process.

The realignment of Constituency Boundaries and the manner in which this process was carried out raised many questions among different actors. The Observation Mission recognized the political will among the parties with regard to the need to realign the boundaries in order to guarantee a more equal representation of the electorate, as required by the law. Nonetheless, further actions should be taken in consideration to guarantee a more inclusive debate that could facilitate cross-party consensus.

Problems were observed with regards to timeframes and deadlines of the electoral process, namely the publication of the voters list. Concerns were also raised regarding the registration process and the duration of the electoral campaign and the perception of unequal access to media and financial resources.

Among the lessons to be learned, one could highlight the importance of an efficient and transparent communication strategy on the part of the electoral authority. One of the main challenges of the Electoral Office in future processes will be to focus on ensuring that electors are well informed about the electoral process on matters as important as registration, the exact time and locations where the elections are to be held and the detailed results of the elections. The lack of publicly available information on these issues undermined the quality of the 2015 process.

The Mission congratulates the citizens of St. Kitts and Nevis for their active participation in this election, reflected in a high voter turnout, and the civil and peaceful exercise of their franchise on Election Day. On the whole, polling stations were well prepared and fit for their purpose. The secrecy of the ballot was maintained. The Mission observed that the voting was conducted in a fluid, transparent and orderly manner demonstrating widespread voter understanding of the democratic process in St. Kitts and Nevis. Presiding Officers, Returning Officers and Poll Clerks also deserve congratulations for their extraordinary commitment in the exercise of their duties.

In the context of future electoral processes; it would be crucial to conduct changes both at a
structural, technical and at organizational level in order to overcome the difficulties and challenges experienced during this past election and to guarantee more transparency and confidence in the electoral process, from all electoral actors and from the citizens in general.

CHAPTER V. RECOMMENDATIONS

In support of continuous efforts by St. Kitts and Nevis to strengthen its democracy and electoral system, and based on information gathered by direct observations of the OAS team, as well as in meetings with stakeholders, the Electoral Observation Mission would like to offer the following recommendations:

Constituency Boundary Realignment

The Observation Mission suggests that further actions be taken to guarantee a more inclusive debate that could facilitate cross-party consensus. Furthermore, the debate and subsequent decision-making process should take place long before the next general elections.

The OAS/EOM strongly recommends the implementation of additional measures to guarantee greater independence of the Commission ahead of subsequent realignments. In the view of the observer Mission, the Constituency Boundaries Commission should function as a permanent institution and be integrated by non-partisan members with the necessary technical expertise to manage such a legal and technically complex process. Furthermore, it is fundamental that, from the outset, the next Constituency Boundaries Commission establish clear procedures, guidelines and criteria for the constituency delimitation process, granting political parties, members of the National Assembly and other stakeholders full access to information regarding the boundary delimitation process.

Voters List and the Electoral Registry

The Observation Mission strongly recommends that for future elections the Electoral Office ensures that the voters list is provided to political parties according to the schedule and procedures established by law. Furthermore, the Electoral Office should carry out an audit of the voters list which includes a house-to-house verification to reduce inaccuracies.

Early Voting

For future electoral processes, the Observation Mission strongly recommends that the electoral authorities inform all actors about early voting procedures, including the handling and custody of the boxes on election night. In terms of transparency, it will also be important for the electoral office to be able to clearly identify before Election Day the list of the people who vote on early voting. On early voting day, Poll Clerks could systematically mark the same voters list that will be used on Election Day. Such record keeping would help Presiding Officers on Election Day identify those electors who had previously exercised their franchise and are thus ineligible to vote on Election Day.

Electoral Administration
The Electoral Office and the Supervisor of Elections should establish a thorough communication strategy to clearly explain their actions to all interested parties: citizens, party members, civil society, media and observer groups. Adopting more open lines of communication would also allow the authorities to inform citizens about the process. On the other hand, the development of a calendar of operations would facilitate the work of all members of the electoral office as well as coordination with stakeholders.

In addition, the OAS/EOM recommends that the Electoral Office be staffed by professionals without direct ties to political forces. Selection of electoral leadership should be conducted with the consensus and consultation of all political parties, in order to bolster public confidence in the electoral process. The de-politicization of the management and decision-making processes could better protect election officials from political pressure, promote the professionalization of the field of electoral management and potentially reinforce accountability. The Observation Mission also suggests the possibility of granting clear competencies to the Electoral Commission to control and supervise the Supervisor of Elections.

The Observation Mission considers it is also important to strengthen both the technical and human capacity of the Electoral Office in order to increase its efficiency in the organization and implementation of the electoral processes throughout the electoral cycle.

**Electoral Material**

It is recommended that the electoral authorities consider the possibility of adding security features to the ballots such as serial numbers or bar codes and pictures of the candidates to reduce the assistance to illiterate voters and reinforce the secrecy of the vote.

**Training of Poll Workers**

While the Mission acknowledges that polling workers were extremely professional and diligent at giving instructions to voters regarding the procedures to be followed on Election Day, further efforts could be implemented in order to strengthen the learning process of all election workers. Although informal training sessions are both friendly and conducive to exchanges between participants they could be held a few days before the election rather than in the hours preceding the opening of the polls. Preparing didactic manuals informing about the voting and counting process (with pictures and graphics) are an instructive tool to inform Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks about their duties, especially for those serving for the first time.

**Political Financing**

The Mission reiterates its recommendation following the 2010 general elections, that legislation should be considered to guarantee media access to all political parties. The Observation Mission also reiterates the 2010 OAS/EOM recommendation with regard to a cross-party accord on political financing that would promote transparency and accountability in St. Kitts and Nevis. Furthermore, consideration should be given to enacting legislation on the issue.

**Vote Counting and Transmission of Results**

Stronger mechanisms must be put in place to ensure that final results are tabulated and published faster after the close of poll. As recommended by the 2010 OAS/EOM, in order to expedite the count
and enhance security, discussions could also be held on whether the counting processes could be
carried out at each polling station by Presiding Officers, instead of the centralized counting that
creates delays in the process. The Observation Mission also recommends the creation of a protocol
for the announcement and publication of preliminary results by the Electoral Office.

Furthermore, the OAS/EOM recommends the use of an Internet platform to keep all actors
informed about the transmission of results and to avoid confusion. Official results have to be
promulgated in first instance by the electoral authority in a transparent manner, in the presence of
the media. In this regard, the Mission emphasizes the importance of having a communication plan
set in place in order to inform all actors in advance about the process.

Participation of Women

Greater efforts should be made by political parties to actively recruit and nominate women as
candidates and to establish codes of conduct within their organizations that will prevent and
penalize any type of intimidation towards women. Public education programs should be put in
place to raise awareness on the importance of the participation of women in politics and build
support for legislated quotas to ensure women equal access and participation.
APPENDICES
A. Invitation Letter
Note No. NV-003/2015

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis presents its compliments and has the honour to reiterate its commendation for the involvement of your organisation in our efforts to promote democracy and adherence to democratic principles.

In this connection, the Ministry advises of the upcoming General Elections to be held in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, following the dissolution of the National Assembly on 16th January 2015. The date of the election will be communicated further in a subsequent communiqué.

Further, the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis requests expert assistance of your organisation in dispatching a team of observers to witness the electoral process with a view to ensuring that the elections are free, democratic and fair and conducted according to international standard.

The content of the correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary, Mr. Joseph L Edmeade CBE, JP attached is in support of this note.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis avails itself of this opportunity to renew assurances of its highest consideration.

Basseterre, St. Kitts
January 23rd, 2015
January 22, 2015

The Honourable Joseph L. Edmeade
Cabinet Secretary
Government Headquarters
Church Street, Basseterre
St. Kitts, West Indies

Honourable Cabinet Secretary,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated January 22nd, 2015 in which the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis requests the Organization of American States (OAS) to observe the upcoming General Elections.

Through its observation and technical assistance efforts, the OAS remains committed to strengthening electoral processes in the Americas. I am therefore pleased to respond positively to this request and honored to deploy an OAS Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) to St. Kitts and Nevis.

I have instructed the Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation (DECO) of the OAS Secretariat for Political Affairs to prepare a proposal and budget for the EOM. As is customary, the size and scope of this mission will ultimately depend on the voluntary contributions received from the OAS Member and Observer States.

Please accept, Honourable Cabinet Secretary, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

José Miguel Insulza
Secretary General
C. Agreements

AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION OF ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

AND

THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

REGARDING
THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES
OF THE OAS ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION FOR
THE 2015 GENERAL ELECTION PROCESS IN ST. KITTS AND NEVIS
AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION OF ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

AND

THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

REGARDING

THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES
OF THE OAS ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION FOR
THE 2015 GENERAL ELECTION PROCESS IN ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

The Parties to this Agreement, the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (hereinafter referred to as the "GS/OAS") and the Government of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis (hereinafter referred to as the "Government"),

WHEREAS:

On January 21, 2015, the Government of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis invited the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (hereinafter referred to as the "OAS" or the "Organization") to observe the General Elections to be held in 2015 in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis;

The Secretary General of the OAS, informed the Government that he accepted the invitation to establish an Electoral Observer Mission (hereinafter referred to as the "OAS Observer Mission") for these elections, subject to obtaining the necessary resources to finance the establishment of the OAS Observer Mission in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis;

The Parties sign this Agreement in anticipation of the announcement date for General Elections by the Government. In this regard, this Agreement applies to the General Elections to be held in 2015, on a date that will be announced by the Government at a later time;

The OAS Observer Mission will be comprised of GS/OAS officials and contractors, as well as other international observers specifically under contract to the GS/OAS for the OAS Electoral Observation Mission;
Article 133 of the OAS Charter provides that: "The Organization of American States shall enjoy in the territory of each Member such legal capacity, privileges and immunities as are necessary for the exercise of its functions and the accomplishment of its purposes"; and

The basic privileges and immunities enjoyed by the OAS, the GSOAS, and its staff in St. Kitts and Nevis are set out in the Charter of the Organization of American States, which was signed and deposited by the Government on March 12, 1984, and the Agreement Between the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and the Government of the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis on the Functioning of the Office of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and Recognition of Its Privileges and Immunities, which entered into force upon its signature by the Parties on November 8, 1985. NOW, THEREFORE THE PARTIES HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

CHAPTER I:
PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF THE OAS OBSERVER MISSION

ARTICLE I

The privileges and immunities of the OAS Observer Mission shall be those accorded to the OAS, to the GSOAS, to their organs, and to their staff.

ARTICLE II

2.1. The property and effects of the OAS Observer Mission, located in any part of the territory of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis and in possession of any person, shall enjoy immunity against any type of judicial proceeding; save in those specific cases for which said immunity is expressly waived in writing by the Secretary General of the OAS.

2.2. However, it is understood that said waiver of immunity by the Secretary General of the OAS shall not have the effect of subjecting any such property and effects to any type of measure of execution.

ARTICLE III
3.1 The premises occupied by the OAS Observer Mission shall be inviolable.

3.2 Moreover, the property and effects of the OAS Observer Mission, in any part of the territory of St. Kitts and Nevis and in possession of any person or entity, shall enjoy immunity against search and seizure, confiscation, expropriation and against any form of intervention, be it executive, administrative, judicial or legislative.

ARTICLE IV

The files of the OAS Observer Mission and all of the documents pertaining thereto or in the possession of any person or entity shall be inviolable wherever they are located.

ARTICLE V

5.1 The OAS Observer Mission shall be:

a) Exempt from any internal taxation, it being understood, however, that they may not claim any type of tax exemption that is in fact remuneration for public services;

b) Exempt from any type of customs duty, prohibition and restriction in respect of articles and publications that they may import or export for their official use. It is understood, however, that the articles they import duty-free may be sold within St. Kitts and Nevis only in accordance with conditions expressly agreed upon by the GS/OAS with the Government; and

c) Exempt from ordinances, regulations or moratoria of any kind. Moreover, they may have currency of any type, carry their accounts in any foreign currency and transfer their funds in foreign currency.
MEMBERS OF THE OAS OBSERVER MISSION

ARTICLE VI

The members of the OAS Observer Mission shall be those persons who have been designated by the GS/OAS and accredited with the authorities of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.

ARTICLE VII

7.1 For the period during which the members of the OAS Observer Mission exercise their functions and during their trips to and from the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, they shall enjoy the following privileges and immunities:

a) Immunity from personal detention or arrest as well as immunity from any type of legal proceeding in respect of their actions and statements be they oral or written, done in the performance of their functions;

b) The inviolability of all papers and documents;

c) The right to communicate with the GS/OAS via radio, telephone, telegraph, email, satellite or other means, and to receive documents and correspondence through messengers or in sealed pouches, enjoying for that purpose the same privileges and immunities accorded to diplomatic mail, messages, and pouches;

d) The right to utilize for their movements throughout the national territory, any means of transportation, be it by air, by water or over land;

e) Exemption in respect of their persons and that of their spouses and children, from any type of immigration restriction and registration of aliens and any type of national service in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis;

f) The same privileges accorded to the representatives of foreign governments on official mission in respect to foreign-currency restrictions;
g) The same immunities and privileges in respect of their personal baggage as are accorded to diplomatic envoys; and
privileges and immunities. Similarly, the relevant authorities shall do whatever is possible to provide the cooperation requested of them by the OAS Observer Mission.

ARTICLE XI

Without prejudice to the immunities and privileges accorded, the members of the OAS Observer Mission shall respect the laws and regulations existing in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.

ARTICLE XII

12.1 The Parties shall take any measures necessary to procure an amicable arrangement in the proper settlement of:
   
a) Any disputes that may arise in contracts or other questions of private law;
   
b) Any disputes to which the OAS Observer Mission and/or any of its members may be parties with respect to matters in which they enjoy immunity.

CHAPTER IV
NATURE OF PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

ARTICLE XIII

13.1 The privileges and immunities are granted to the members of the OAS Observer Mission in order to safeguard their independence in the exercise of their functions of observing the General Election Process of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, and not for personal gain or to perform activities of a political nature within the territory of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.
13.2 The Secretary General of the OAS may waive the privileges and immunities of any of the members of the OAS Observer Mission in the event that he determines, in his sole discretion, that the exercise of those privileges and immunities may obstruct the course of justice, and so long as the Secretary General determines that such waiver does not prejudice the interests of the OAS or of the GS/OAS.

CHAPTER V

GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE XIV

14.1 The Government recognizes the “Official Travel Document” issued by the GS/OAS as a valid and sufficient document for purposes of travel by the members of the OAS Observer Mission who possess this document.

14.2 The Government shall issue to each member of the OAS Observer Mission a visa to enter the country and to remain therein until the end of the OAS Observer Mission.

ARTICLE XV

The Government agrees to extend the privileges and immunities of the present Agreement to members of the OAS Observer Mission designated by the GS/OAS, who have been accredited by the authorities of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.

ARTICLE XVI

This Agreement may be amended by mutual consent in writing by the duly authorized representatives of the Government and of the GS/OAS.
ARTICLE XVII

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature and shall cease to have effect once the members of the OAS Observer Mission have completed their mission, in accordance with the terms of the request made by the Government.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, duly authorized, do hereby sign this Agreement, in duplicate, on the date and locations indicated below.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

[Signature]

H.E. Jacinth Lorna Henry-Martin
Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of St. Kitts and Nevis
To the Organization of American States

Place: Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
Date: ...........................................

FOR THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

[Signature]

José Miguel Insulza
Secretary General
General Secretariat of the Organization of American States

Place: Washington, D.C., U.S.A
Date: ...........................................
AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
AND
THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF THE FEDERATION OF ST. KITTS AND
NEVIS
REGARDING THE ELECTORAL OBSERVATION PROCESS OF THE
2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS
The electoral observation missions shall be carried out at the request of the member state concerned. To that end the government of that state
the Mission of the voting system and of the communications utilized to transmit electoral results. At the same time, the Electoral Commission shall guarantee the Mission complete access to the complaints process and quality controls that occur before and after the electoral process that are of interest to the Mission.

c) The Electoral Commission further guarantees the Mission access to all polling stations and other bodies throughout the national territory of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis. Upon request of the Mission, the Electoral Commission guarantees to make available by the end of the voting process and, before the closing of the polling stations, copies of all documents printed electronically.

**Second: Information**

a) The Electoral Commission will furnish the Mission with all information referring to the organization, direction and supervision of the electoral process. The Mission may request of the Electoral Commission such additional information as is necessary for the exercise of the Mission’s functions, and the Electoral Commission shall promptly furnish all such information.

b) The Mission may inform the Electoral Commission about any irregularities and/or interference, which the Mission might observe or of which the Mission might learn. Similarly, the Mission may request that the Electoral Commission provide any information regarding the measures which the Electoral Commission will take in relation to such irregularities, and the Electoral Commission shall promptly furnish all such information.

c) The Electoral Commission shall provide the Mission with information related to the electoral list and other electoral data referring to the same. Similarly, the Electoral Commission shall provide all other information relative to the computer systems used on Election Day, and shall offer demonstrations of the systems’ operation to the Mission.

**Third: General Provisions**
a) The Secretary General will designate a Chief of Mission, to represent the Mission and its members before the Electoral Commission and before the Government.

b) The GS/OAS will communicate to the Chair of the Electoral Commission the names of the persons who will comprise the Mission, who will be duly identified.

c) The Mission will act impartially, objectively and independently in the fulfillment of its mandate.

d) The General Secretariat will send to the Chair of the Electoral Commission a copy of the final report of the Electoral Observation Mission following the General Elections in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.

e) The Electoral Commission will make known and disseminate the contents of this Agreement among all electoral bodies and among all personnel involved in the electoral process.

Fourth: Privileges and Immunities

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as an express or implied waiver of the privileges and immunities of the General Secretariat, the OAS, its Organs, its personnel and its assets under the Charter of the Organization, whose instrument of ratification was deposited by the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis on March 12, 1984; the Agreement Between the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and the Government of the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis on the Functioning of the Office of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States and Recognition of Its Privileges and Immunities, signed by the Parties on November 8, 1985; and, the Agreement Between the Government of the Federation of St. Kitts And Nevis and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States Regarding the Privileges and Immunities of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission for the 2015 General Election Process in St. Kitts And Nevis, signed by the Parties on the 6 day of February, 2015.

Fifth: Resolution of controversies

- 5 -
The Parties shall attempt to resolve through direct negotiations any disputes arising in relation to the interpretation and/or implementation of this Agreement. If the negotiations do not result in the resolution of the dispute, the matter shall be submitted to a dispute resolution procedure mutually agreed to by the duly authorized representatives of the Parties.

Sixth: Amendments

Amendments to this Agreement shall be made in writing and signed by the duly authorized representatives of the Parties and attached hereto.

Seventh: Entry into Force and Termination

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date and upon the signature of the duly authorized representatives of the Parties. This Agreement shall remain in force until the Mission has concluded its observation mission.

This Agreement may be terminated by either Party with or without cause. Termination must be effected by means of no less than five days' written notice to the other Party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized, have signed this Agreement in duplicate on the date and locations indicated below.
FOR THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF
AMERICAN STATES:

Frank Almaguer
Chief of Mission
OAS General Secretariat
Place: Basseterre, St. Kitts and Nevis
Date: February 25, 2015

FOR THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF
ST. KITTS AND NEVIS:

Hesketh Benjamin
Chairman
Electoral Commission
Place: Basseterre, St. Kitts and Nevis
Date: February 25, 2015
## Observers List

**Electoral Observation Mission**  
St. Kitts and Nevis  
General Elections - February 16, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Frank Almaguer</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Chief of Mission</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Marcela Garzon</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Deputy Chief of Mission</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Paul Spencer</td>
<td>Antigua &amp; Barbuda</td>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Tyler Finn</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>General Coordinator</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Charles Goulet</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Electoral Org and Tech Specialist</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Alejandro Trelles</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Constituency Boundaries Specialist</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Cynthia Barrow-Giles</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>Gender &amp; Political Financing Specialist</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mauricio Concha</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Financial Officer</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Melene Glynn</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>Political Analyst</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Clara Gonzalez</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Press Officer</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Augusta Featherston</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Observer</td>
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E. Press Releases
Press Release

Bassterre, February 6, 2015

OAS and Saint Kitts and Nevis Sign Agreement to Send Election Observation Mission to the February 16 General Elections

February 6, 2015

The Organization of American States (OAS) will send an Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the general elections in Saint Kitts and Nevis to be held on February 16, according to the agreement signed today between the Pan-American institution and the government of the Caribbean country at the Organization’s headquarters in Washington, DC.

The OAS Secretary General, José Miguel Insulza, recalled that it is the third time the organization will send an EOM to the Caribbean nation, and announced the appointment of Ambassador Frank Almaguer as Chief of Mission. The OAS leader recalled that during his tenure, the Organization has sent more than one hundred EOMs to countries throughout the hemisphere, and reaffirmed the commitment of the Organization to undertake a comprehensive and professional mission in Saint Kitts and Nevis.

"Electoral observations for us are very important and I can assure you, Madame Ambassador that we will have a mission up to the requirements of your country and of your democracy," he said, addressing the Permanent Representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis to the Organization, Jacinth Lorna Henry-Martin.

Ambassador Henry-Martin, meanwhile, said it constituted an "honor and privilege" to sign the agreement for the OAS to send an EOM to her country to observe the general elections. "I believe that this will constitute another rung on the ladder of successes we’ve had in the execution of elections that prove that we want to remain among the ranks of those that honor and respect what democracy represents, not only for our nation, but for our peoples," she added.

The agreement signing ceremony was attended by Ambassador Frank Almaguer, who was US ambassador to Honduras from 1999 to 2002 and OAS Secretary of Administration and Finance between 2005 and 2010; the OAS Director of the Department for Electoral Cooperation and Observation, Gerardo de Icaza Hernández; and representatives of the missions of member countries to the OAS.
Press Release

OAS Deploys Electoral Observation Mission to Saint Kitts and Nevis

The Electoral Observation Mission of the Organization of American States (EOM/OAS) to the general elections of February 16 in Saint Kitts and Nevis, led by Ambassador Frank Almaguer, has deployed in Basseterre, today, comprised of 11 experts and observers from Antigua and Barbuda, Canada, Colombia, Spain, the United States, Mexico, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The OAS/EOM will observe different aspects of the process, including electoral organization, campaign financing, constituency boundaries, and the equal participation of men and women. On Election Day, observers will visit polling stations across all 11 constituencies in the Caribbean nation from the opening of the polls to the counting of votes and the publication of results. The findings and recommendations on this electoral process will be presented in a report to the Permanent Council of the Organization in Washington, D.C. The Mission will meet with electoral authorities, government officials, political party representatives and members of civil society organizations to discuss perspectives on the electoral process.

Ambassador Almaguer, designated Chief of Mission by OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza, served as United States Ambassador to Honduras and worked for international organizations such as the OAS and the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF). He was also Chief of Mission in EOMs of the OAS in Belize and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

This will be the third election the OAS has observed in Saint Kitts and Nevis, after having deployed missions during the 2010 General Elections and the 2011 Nevis Island Assembly Elections. The OAS/EOM is possible thanks to the financial support of Argentina, Bolivia, France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

For more information, please visit the OAS Website at www.oas.org.
Basseterre, February 17, 2015

OAS and Commonwealth Observation Missions in St. Kitts and Nevis Call for Calm

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Commonwealth observer missions emphasize the civic engagement of the citizens of St. Kitts and Nevis who have expressed their democratic convictions by participating actively in the General Elections held yesterday, February 16. The Missions call on leaders of the various political parties and the citizenry to patiently await the official results that, as confirmed by the Supervisor of Elections, will be published during the course of today.

Both Missions have been following the electoral process, including the opening of polling stations and the counting process, and they will continue to observe the process. The OAS will present its observations and recommendations on issues related to the electoral process once the results have been proclaimed.

For more information, please visit the OAS Website at www.oas.org.
observations and recommendations.

The OAS/EOM wishes to thank the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis for the invitation to observe this process. In addition, the Mission would like to thank the governments of Argentina, Bolivia, France, the United Kingdom and the United States for their contributions that made this mission possible.

For more information, please visit the OAS Website at www.oas.org.