



ELECTORAL PROFILE: ALGERIA / Presidential Elections 2004

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Background of the elections: Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who turned out to be elected President in 1999, presented himself for re-election for a new term of office of 5 years. Polls were preceded by a great expectation as some army officers withdrew their support to Bouteflika and toughened the critics to the outgoing candidate in the independent press. The second candidate of the National Liberation Front (FLN) and former Prime Minister, Ali Benflis, emerged as the main contender of Bouteflika and a second electoral row of unexpected results seemed likely.

Quantitative democracy indices:

Algeria has been classified in the following ranking of democratic fulfilment.

| Measurement | Indicator | Institution | Year | Index and/or Ranking |
|--|---|--|-----------|--|
| Political rights and freedom | <u>Freedom House Report</u> | Freedom House | 2005 | PR: 6 CL: 5 Scale 1-7 Status: Not free |
| Democratic degree of the elections | <u>Polyarchy 2.0</u> | Peace Research Institute of Oslo and Tatu Vanhanen | 1999-2000 | Synthesis: 15.64; Part. 46.25; Comp. 33.82 (Democracy minimum: 5, 10, 30) Classification: it reaches the minimum democracy level |
| Consolidation of the democratic and authoritarian institutions | <u>Polity IV</u> | Center for International Development and Conflict Management | 2003 | -3 (Scale +20/-20) Classification: authoritarian |
| Corruption perception | <u>Transparency International Corruption Perception Index</u> | Transparency International | 2006 | 2.8/10 Country rank: 97/158 |
| Management of political and economic change | <u>Bertelsmann Transformation Index</u> | Bertelsmann Foundation | 2005 | 3.63/10, 91/118 th Classification: management with little success |
| Democracy, including freedom and corruption | <u>World Democracy Audit</u> | World Audit | 2005 | 106/150 th |



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|---|--|--|
| Measurement of democracy of last elections according to Polyarchy index 2.0 | Synthesis: 8.7 Participation: 58 Competition: 15 | Joint Democracy minimum ¹ : Synthesis: 5 Participation: 10 Competition: 30 Non democratic |
|---|--|--|

Definition of the political system: hyper-presidential system with interference of another non political statement: the military.

Definition of the Electoral System and Parties:

There is a two round system/majority (TSM) for the presidential, and the Hare system of Proportional Representation (LPR) for the legislative and local. There is a false or apparent multiple party system with two prevailing official parties, FLN and Democratic National Rally (RND).

Impact of the electoral procedure and size of circumscriptions on elections:

At the presidential elections according to TSM, these factors are less than in the legislative ones. First of all, although the counting of votes is made by *wilayas* or provinces (electoral districts), the circumscription is unique, as what matters is the whole number of votes at national level rather than the *wilayas* won. In second place, the TSM formula affects the political analysis of the candidates. In the given case, while waiting for a second row, none of the candidates resigned in favour of any of the two main ones, excepting MSP which abstained from presenting any candidate.

Election results:

| Name of candidate | Party | Percentage of votes |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Abdelaziz Bouteflika | Coalition: FLN, RND and MSP | 85% |
| Ali Benflis | National Liberation Front (FLN) | 6.4% |
| Abdallah Jaballah | Al Islah | 5.0% |
| Said Sadi | Rally for Culture and Democracy | 1.9% |
| Louisa Hanoun | Worker's party | 1.0% |
| Fawzi Rebaine | Ahd 54 | 0.6% |

Source: Rafael Bustos for Arab Reform Database (Carnegie Endowment for Peace and FRIDE) with corrections

*Explanation: In fact, the candidate Bouteflika presented himself under the umbrella of the FLN, divided in two parts by then, and got support for the first and definitive round of the presidential alliance formed by FLN,

¹ Joint means that the minimum punctuation is required in the three indices.



RND and MSP, of Islamist orientation. The main syndicate UGTA (General Union of Algerian Workers) and few sectors of the FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) (Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) and Rabah Kebir) appealed for votes for Bouteflika.

Evaluation analysis of the elections:²

Participatory: Participation, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs, reached 58%. However, it must be considered that real participation might be lower than the official claims. In the Kabylia region, as is becoming habitual, assistance to polling stations was especially low, being about 17% in the Little Kabylia. Voting of Algerians abroad reached 33%.

Competitive: the electoral filter (75,000 population signatures or 600 from elected officials) was an important tool for keeping away certain candidates with high probabilities like Taleb Ibrahim or Sid Ahmed Ghozali. Non winning candidates obtained 15% of the votes.

Cleanness: elections were considered technically clean, as claims of electoral fraud from the opposition could not be proved. There were cleanness mechanisms such as the handing over of the acts to the supervisors of the political parties. Nonetheless, there were incidents at some polling stations during the elections. The OSCE, among other organisms, considered the cleanness of these elections "acceptable".

Representation and Debate: the FLN was divided and blocked by the regime which was trying to weaken the sector led by Benflis. There is not yet enough succession of posts in the rest of the parties, especially, their board of directors. As habitual, the debate took place outside the parties.

Openness: although electoral rules were apparently respected, irregularities occurred mainly before the campaign (pre-electoral tour of the President, freezing of bank accounts of FLN, harassment of Benflis' supporters, waste of public funds for financing meetings of the outstanding candidate, etc.). These misdeeds were set for the final results of the elections.

Relevance: these polling results leave no room for political change and it almost gives a blank cheque for the President.

International political reactions and implications:

The US and France legitimated the results by quickly congratulating Abdelaziz Bouteflika for them. President Chirac travelled to Algiers to personally laud Bouteflika even hours before the results were made public.

² In this sector the six criteria defined by TEIM are being used. These are: Participation, Competition, Cleanness, Representation and Debate, Openness and Relevance. See main page for an explanation of each one of them.



Most of foreign authorities considered the results of the polls valid, glaring and dubious practices occurring throughout the campaign and the scarce number of field observers, hardly 130.

Conclusions:

Elections were surprising both for international observers and for the Algerian media, as it was not expected to go so overwhelmingly at first round. The use of public funds and other pre-electoral tricks made results conditional, thus eliminating all expectations at second round. Afterwards, it was easy to conclude that the Army had probably played the role of keeping up appearances of a democratic opportunity, carrying on the play until the end, when it had already changed its mind by supporting the candidate with more international approval, Bouteflika.

Other analysis references of these elections (internet based):

1. Volpi, Frederic, Algeria 2004: Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose, on Algerian Presidential Election, available at: <http://www.fride.org/File/ViewLinkFile.aspx?FileId=272>
2. Martinez, Luis. Un chercheur français commente la victoire de Bouteflika: "Le résultat convient à l'armée" Jeune Indépendant (Mohamed Khellaf), 14-avril-2005, available at: http://www.algeriawatch.org/fr/article/pol/presidentielles/martinez_elections.htm