



SharkMUN | June 12th – June 13th, 2026

Election Monitoring in Post-Conflict Areas

Welcome delegates to the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (GA3) of SharkMUN 2026.

In this committee, delegates will examine the role of election monitoring in post-conflict areas and its importance in promoting democratic governance, human rights, and sustainable peace. Elections held after armed conflicts often represent critical turning points in a country's transition from violence to stability. However, these elections frequently occur in fragile environments characterized by political polarization, weakened institutions, displacement of populations, and ongoing security concerns.

Delegates must consider how election monitoring can contribute to credible electoral processes while respecting national sovereignty and promoting long-term democratic development. The committee will also discuss the challenges faced by international observers, local monitoring organizations, and governments attempting to rebuild trust in democratic institutions.

GA3 provides a platform for addressing humanitarian, social, and human rights issues. Delegates are encouraged to develop practical and cooperative solutions that strengthen democratic participation while protecting human rights in post-conflict societies.

Introduction

Free and fair elections are widely regarded as a cornerstone of democratic governance. In countries emerging from armed conflict, elections often symbolize a transition from violence to political participation and provide an opportunity for citizens to shape their future through peaceful means.

However, organizing elections in post-conflict settings presents unique challenges. Political institutions may be weakened or dysfunctional, public trust in government may be low, and security conditions may



remain unstable. Additionally, displaced populations, damaged infrastructure, and unresolved ethnic or political tensions can complicate electoral processes.

Election monitoring refers to the observation and assessment of electoral procedures by domestic or international actors. Election observers help evaluate whether elections comply with national laws and international democratic standards. Their presence can increase transparency, deter fraud, and strengthen public confidence in electoral outcomes.

International organizations have frequently deployed election monitoring missions in post-conflict countries such as Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, and South Sudan. While many missions have contributed positively to democratic transitions, others have faced criticism regarding effectiveness, neutrality, and respect for national sovereignty.

The rise of misinformation, cyber threats, political violence, and foreign interference has further complicated election monitoring efforts. These challenges raise important questions regarding how the international community can support democratic development without undermining national ownership of political processes.

As conflicts continue to affect many regions of the world, the international community must examine how election monitoring can promote peace, legitimacy, and human rights while adapting to modern electoral challenges.

Timeline of Key Events

Year	Event
1948	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes the right to free and fair elections (Article 21)
1990	First UN Electoral Assistance Division established



Year	Event
1994	UN monitors the first post-apartheid elections in South Africa.
1996	OSCE deploys mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina after Dayton Accords
2005	UN Electoral Assistance Division supports Iraq's first post-invasion elections.
2010	AU-EU joint monitoring mission in Côte d'Ivoire following post-election crisis
2018	Afghanistan's parliamentary elections face widespread violence and technical failures.
2020	COVID-19 pandemic creates new challenges for in-person election observation
2021	Myanmar military coup disrupts democratically elected government.
2023	Multiple post-conflict elections were affected by disinformation campaigns.
2024	UN reports increased electoral violence in fragile states globally.
2025	First UN-led mission specifically addressing AI-generated electoral disinformation.

Key Terms

Election Monitoring

The observation and evaluation of electoral processes by domestic or international actors to ensure compliance with democratic principles and legal standards.



Post-Conflict Area

A region emerging from armed conflict where efforts are underway to establish peace, rebuild institutions, and restore governance.

Electoral Integrity

The adherence of electoral processes to democratic principles, transparency, fairness, and the rule of law.

Democratic Transition

The process through which a society moves from conflict, authoritarianism, or instability toward democratic governance.

Political Violence

The use of force, intimidation, threats, or coercion to influence political processes or electoral outcomes.



Current Situation

Election monitoring has become an important component of peacebuilding and democratic development in post-conflict societies. International organizations, regional bodies, and civil society groups regularly deploy observers to assess electoral processes and support democratic transitions.

Election observers often evaluate voter registration, campaign conditions, media access, voting procedures, ballot counting, and dispute resolution mechanisms. Their findings can influence domestic legitimacy and international recognition of election results.

Despite these benefits, post-conflict elections remain vulnerable to numerous challenges. Political violence continues to threaten candidates, voters, and election officials in many regions. Armed groups may seek to disrupt elections or intimidate communities. Additionally, weak institutions often struggle to guarantee security and transparency.

Large numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees create additional complications. Citizens who have been forced to flee their homes may face barriers to voter registration and participation, potentially excluding significant portions of the population from the democratic process.

The growth of digital technology has introduced new challenges. Misinformation campaigns, cyberattacks, and foreign interference can undermine public trust and manipulate electoral outcomes. Election monitoring organizations increasingly require technological expertise to address these emerging threats.

Critics also argue that international monitoring missions may sometimes prioritize short-term stability over genuine democratic reform. Questions remain regarding the long-term effectiveness of election monitoring in promoting sustainable democratic institutions.



Main Countries and Regions Involved

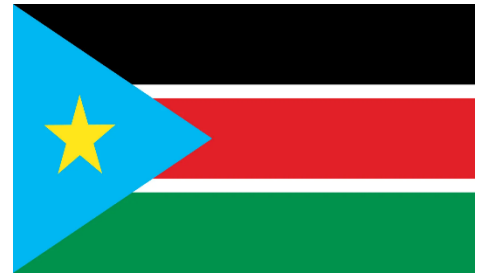
Afghanistan

Afghanistan has hosted multiple internationally monitored elections following decades of conflict, facing challenges related to security, voter participation, and institutional capacity.



South Sudan

As the world's newest state, South Sudan continues to face significant challenges regarding political stability, peace implementation, and preparations for future democratic elections.



Bosnia and Herzegovina

Following the conflicts of the 1990s, Bosnia and Herzegovina became a major example of international involvement in post-conflict elections and democratic institution-building.



Democratic Republic of the Congo

The DRC has experienced repeated electoral challenges involving violence, logistical difficulties, and concerns regarding electoral transparency.





Libya

Political fragmentation and ongoing instability continue to complicate efforts to organize credible elections and democratic transitions.



Additional Stakeholder Positions

Entity	Position on Election Monitoring
European Union	Deploy long-term observation missions; strong emphasis on democratic standards; fund civil society monitoring.
African Union	Supports peer-reviewed monitoring through the African Peer Review Mechanism; emphasizes African-led solutions.
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)	Most experienced regional observer; the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) sets global standards
Organization of American States (OAS)	Active in post-conflict monitoring; electoral observation missions in Haiti, Colombia
Commonwealth	Supports elections in member states; emphasizes consensus and consent of the host government
National Democratic Institute (NDI)	Non-partisan NGO; provides technical assistance and pre-election assessments.
Carter Center	Long history of post-conflict monitoring; emphasizes conflict prevention and peacebuilding.



Entity	Position on Election Monitoring
International IDEA	Provides comparative data and best practices; supports institutional development.
Local Civil Society (e.g., ZESN in Zimbabwe, KPT in Afghanistan)	Provide continuous oversight; often underfunded and face government restrictions.

Previous Attempts to Address the Problem

The United Nations has supported electoral assistance missions worldwide through the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division. These missions provide technical support, election observation, and capacity-building for national electoral institutions.

Regional organizations such as the European Union, African Union, and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe have deployed election observation missions to monitor electoral integrity and encourage democratic standards.

Peacekeeping missions have also supported electoral processes by providing security, logistical assistance, and institutional support in post-conflict settings.

While these efforts have contributed to successful democratic transitions in some countries, challenges remain regarding implementation, neutrality, funding, and long-term institutional development.



Possible Solutions

Strengthening Electoral Institutions

Supporting the development of independent electoral commissions capable of organizing credible elections and resolving disputes fairly.

Enhancing Security During Elections

Improving protection for voters, candidates, election officials, and observers through cooperation between governments, peacekeeping missions, and local authorities.

Expanding Participation of Displaced Populations

Developing mechanisms that allow refugees and internally displaced people to participate in elections safely and effectively.

Combating Misinformation and Cyber Threats

Increasing investment in cybersecurity measures, digital literacy programs, and fact-checking initiatives to protect electoral integrity.

Supporting Domestic Election Monitoring

Strengthening local civil society organizations that can provide long-term oversight and accountability beyond international missions.

Promoting Inclusive Political Processes



Encouraging the participation of women, youth, minority groups, and marginalized communities in electoral processes and political decision-making.

Improving International Cooperation

Enhancing coordination between the United Nations, regional organizations, governments, and civil society to improve the effectiveness of election monitoring missions.

Questions a Resolution Should Answer

1. How can election monitoring improve democratic legitimacy in post-conflict societies?
2. How should the international community balance election monitoring with national sovereignty?
3. What measures can protect elections from political violence and intimidation?
4. How can displaced populations participate in post-conflict elections?
5. How should election monitoring adapt to cyber threats and misinformation?
6. What role should local civil society organizations play in election observation?
7. How can election monitoring contribute to long-term peacebuilding and democratic development?



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