

**REPORT ON THE CONDUCT OF THE
2020 PRESIDENTIAL AND NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS**



JANUARY 2021

Contents

Contents	1
1. THE MANDATE OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION	4
2. INTRODUCTION	5
3. PURPOSE OF REPORT	5
4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK	6
4.1 Electoral Reform	6
4.2 Regulations	6
4.3 Election dates	7
5. CALENDAR OF EVENTS	7
6. REGISTER OF VOTERS	7
6.1 Special Registration Exercise	9
7. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA	10
8. ELECTORAL AREAS	10
9. NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES	11
9.1 For the Presidential Nomination	11
9.2 The National Assembly Nomination	13
10. MEETING WITH POLITICAL PARTIES	13
11. Meeting with Other Stakeholders	14
12. THE CAMPAIGN	15
13. CAMPAIGN FINANCING	17
14. STAFFING	18
15. TRAINING	19
16. SECURITY	20
17. VOTERS EDUCATION PROGRAMME	20
18. THE MEDIA	21
18.1 First Presidential Debates and Special programs	22
19. PARTY AGENTS and CANDIDATES	23
20. OBSERVERS	23
21. COMPLAINTS	24
22. THE POLL	25
23. THE COUNT and THE RESULTS	27
23.1 The Presidential Election Result	28

23.2	National Assembly Election Result.....	28
24	COST OF THE ELECTIONS.....	29
25	OBSERVATIONS, PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	29
26	LEGISLATIVE REFORM	32
26.1	POLITICAL PARTIES (REGISTRATION AND REGULATION) ACT.....	32
27	ELECTION PETITION	32
28	CONDUCTING ELECTION DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC.....	32
29	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	33
30	ANNEX.....	35

1. THE MANDATE OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The Electoral Commission came into being after the enactment of the 6th Amendment of the Constitution of Seychelles in July 2011. The Electoral Commission is constituted under Article 115 of the Constitution. The independence of the Commission is guaranteed under Article 115 (2) which states that the Electoral Commission shall not, in the performance of its functions, be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority.

The Commission consists of a Chairperson and six members who are appointed, for a term of seven years, by the President selected from candidates of proven integrity and high repute, proposed by the Constitutional Appointments Authority.

In accordance with Section 92 of the Elections Act, a Chief Electoral Officer was appointed on the 16th September 2019, as the Executive Head of the Electoral Commission. This is in line with recommendations over the separation of powers between the Commission and the Secretariat. The functions of the Electoral Commission include:-

- the responsibility for the conduct and supervision of the registration of voters and of elections and referenda
- review of the number and boundaries of electoral areas of Mahe and Praslin
- review of the practices of such matters as finance, broadcasting and advertising, of political campaigns in respect of elections and referenda
- review of existing legislation governing electoral matters and making recommendations to the Government.

2. INTRODUCTION

The 2020 Presidential and National Assembly Elections was the eleventh multi-party elections held under the 1993 Constitution. The elections were conducted concurrently upon the announcement made by President Danny Faure on 30th July 2020.

The elections saw the participation of established political parties. Four parties contested the Presidential elections:

1. United Seychelles (US)
2. Linyon Demokratik Seselwa (LDS)
3. Lalyans Seselwa (LS)
4. One Seychelles (OS)

For the National Assembly, in addition to the four political parties there were two independent candidates, Mr. Keith André and Mr. Holbert Jean for the Beau Vallon and St. Louis districts respectively.

As part of its mandate, following the recent amendments to the Elections Act and the Political Parties Act, in 2020 the Electoral Commission undertook the reforms involving all stakeholders and reviewed the electoral legislations which included the Elections Act, Political Parties (Registration and Regulations) Act.

3 PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is submitted within 90 days, in accordance with Article 116(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles to the President of the republic and the National Assembly. The report is to brief on: -

- a) the political campaign leading up to the elections or referendum; and

- (b) the election or referendum, together with recommendations as the Commission may consider necessary for the purposes of ensuring true, fair and effective elections and referenda.

4 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Electoral Reform

The Elections (Amendment) Act, 2020, putting into effect the 2017 recommendations for reform to the Elections Act, received Presidential assent on 17th August 2020 and came into force on 31st August 2020. Importantly, the reform gave legal footing for certifying the registers of voters per sections thus allowing “alphabetical voting.”

4.2 Regulations

- 4.2.1 Due to the above-mentioned, the Election (Procedures) Regulations, 2016 was amended to match the new reality whereby election at a polling station would not be in a single room only. Thus necessitating more manpower and an adaptation in procedures hence, the Elections (Procedures) (Amendment) Regulations, 2020.
- 4.2.2 Following the 2017 recommendations to give legal force to the existing Code(s) of Conduct, the following Regulations were published by the Electoral Commission:
- i. Elections (Conduct of Registered Political Parties and Candidates during Election) Regulations, 2020
 - ii. Elections (Code of Conduct of Election Observers) Regulations, 2020
 - iii. Elections (Code of Conduct of Polling and Counting Agents) Regulations, 2020

4.3 Election dates

Whereas the term of the then incumbent President would expire on 19th December 2020 and the Presidential election was thus to be held between 19th August and 19th November 2020 pursuant to paragraph 4 of schedule 3 of the Constitution.

The National Assembly was dissolved by the President by proclamation published in the Gazette on 6th August 2020 pursuant to Article 110 of the Constitution and the next National Assembly election was to be held between 7th August and 7th November 2020 pursuant to 12(1)(c) of the Elections Act.

In exercise of its powers under section 13(1) of the Elections Act, the Electoral Commission, by notice published in the Gazette on 11th August 2020, appointed the dates for the election to be held.

5 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

5.1 By notice published in the Gazette on 24th August 2020, the Electoral Commission appointed 16th September 2020 as Nomination Day for the Presidential election and 18th September 2020 as Nomination day for the National Assembly election.

5.2 By notice published in the Gazette on 11th August 2020, the Electoral Commission appointed the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th October 2020 as the election dates for both the Presidential and National Assembly election, 2020.

5.3 The Campaign period was from 11th August – 21st October 2020.

6 REGISTER OF VOTERS

The amendment in the Elections Amendment Act 2014 provided continuous registration of voters which stops on 31st December and upon the announcement of a Presidential election, National Assembly election, or by-election to allow for review and certification of the register. Based on that, the register

was closed for inspection on 31st December 2019 and certified on 31st March 2020 as per the proviso of section 9(1) and it was closed once more upon the announcement of the election dates on 11th August 2020 as per section 13(1) of the Act and was certified as soon as practicable as per the same proviso. The register has been open anew for inspections since 5th November 2020 following the publication of the results of the election in the gazette.

Inspection of the register comprises an inspection of the last certified register following which a claim that a person is entitled to be registered as a voter in a said electoral area can be made by a qualified person in the form of what is commonly known as an ‘Application for Registration’. Other possible claims are for transfer to another electoral area, correction in personal details as they appear on the register, and objection to a persons’ registered in the same electoral area as the person placing such. All of these are to be done at Registration centres as published in the gazette and the claims are received by appointed Registration Officers.

The veracity of all claims of registration and transfer requires verification prior to the Registration Officer accepting or rejecting it. All applications of which the veracity are confirmed, put together with claims for objections and change in personal details, are published in the first week of the following month for objection by any member of the public. Following that, the Registration Officer decides whether to accept or reject the said application and informs the applicant of the decision in writing.

The repeal of section 7(5)(b) of the Elections Act led to the move of registering newly qualified persons subject to an application for registration only hence, what is commonly referred to as the abolishment of “automatic registration”. This saw a low turnout with only 127 applications for new registration in 2018 and 567 in 2019. The election year saw a significant increase of 3,585.

All the political parties received a hard and digital copy of the certified register of voters. Voters were encouraged to check their registration details on their mobile phones by SMS or over the internet in view of the new exigencies of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Commissions’ digital platforms, the website and SMS service, allowed for voters to check their status. Statistics from both until the month of October 2020, from Register certification date, the 16th September 2020, are as presented respectively, 8,983 and 19,049 transactions.

The revised registers of voters were certified by the Chief Registration Officer on the 15th September 2020 and consisted of 74,634 eligible voters. These registers of voters were used to conduct the Presidential and National Assembly Elections 2020.

6.1 Special Registration Exercise

The ECS implemented a series of special voter registration drives in its efforts to allow as many qualified voters as possible to submit their applications to appear on the register. Between Monday 25th November to Sunday 1st December 2019, two stations were set up at Ile Perseverance to allow qualified voters to inspect the voter register for the Ile Perseverance electoral area and to do their voter registration transactions. This was compounded by a special registration exercise which was conducted at different sites in Victoria on Saturday 30th November 2019. Mobile registration centres were set up at 3 different sites around Victoria – central Post Office, STC Hypermarket and Orion Mall. The aim was to bring the registration process closer to qualified voters by giving them the opportunity to engage with the Registration officers and submit their applications outside the normal voter registration setting. These exercises were significantly advertised allowing for maximum reach of the targeted audience.

Following the nationwide lockdown instituted by the Public Health Authority in April 2020 in view of the Covid-19 pandemic, the ECS introduced a series of special registration initiatives. To begin with, the ECS extended the operating hours of its registration centres to 6 pm for a one-month period in June 2020. Thereafter, the ECS embarked on various special exercises as shows in Annex C.

As part of its preparations for the upcoming 2020 elections, the ECS had set up the election's headquarters in Victoria at close proximity to the main bus station. On 22nd July 2020, a new registration centre was set up at the new elections headquarters with the expectation of an increase in registrations due to the closeness of the upcoming elections and foot traffic at this strategic location. The ECS extended the operating hours of the new registration centre in Victoria to 5pm to allow as many qualified voters to do their transactions.

7 USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

With an almost 90% penetration with the majority being on Facebook, social media was of particular importance during the electoral period. After the set-up of the Facebook page of the Electoral Commission in November 2019, this media became a primary platform to pass on information to the young first-time voters.

At the time of report the page has over 1,700 followers. The media was used to help drive special registration exercises, educate voters on importance of registering to vote during the period leading up to the elections and from there as a platform to further propagate voting education videos on the importance of democracy and the voting process during the elections period complementing and further propagating from traditional media being the national TV and radio, SBC.

The platform was also used for major event announcements such as nomination day and on voting days was used to keep members of the public up to date with electoral developments. After the results had been announced the results were also posted on the platform with a reach of over 4000. It was noted that queries were being made through the platform with a majority from young voters who are the primary followers.

8 ELECTORAL AREAS

The elections were contested in all the 26 electoral areas of Seychelles as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles (Electoral Areas – Mahe and Praslin) Order, 1996 and that of the Inner Islands (including La Digue).

There was a total of 54 polling rooms for the 26 electoral areas. In addition to the aforementioned there was also 22 Special polling stations; that is 6 on Mahe, 1 on Praslin and 15 on the outer Islands.

9 NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES

The Nominations were held at the Election Headquarters (Sacos Tower) during the month of September 2020.

9.1 For the Presidential Nomination

The nomination of presidential candidates was held on 16th September 2020. The time was 9am to 1pm as per section 14(4) of the Elections Act.

Following the drawing of lots, they would be in the following order as follows on the ballot papers:

- Linyon Demokratik Seselwa
- United Seychelles
- One Seychelles

In accordance with Sections 14 and 15 of the Elections Act, the nominations of the candidates were submitted on a prescribed form which had to be supported by: -

- a deposit of R15,000
- the endorsement of 500 registered voters
- copy of National Identity Cards of the above-mentioned voters

Nominations were received by the Chief Electoral Officer for Presidential election and by the Electoral Officer of the respective electoral areas for National Assembly election.

For the Presidential election, a total of four nominations were received being from Mr. Danny Faure from the United Seychelles party, Mr. Wavel Ramkalawan from the Linyon Demokratik Seselwa party, Mr. Alain St. Ange from the One Seychelles party, and Mr. Patrick Pillay from the Lalyans Seselwa party. There were no independent candidates.

For Mr. Faure, his nomination met all legal requirements upon submission, no objection was placed against it by the other candidates pursuant to section 15(8), and his nomination was accepted on the basis that it met all legal requirements of the Elections Act.

For Mr. Ramkalawan, his nomination lacked the requirements of section 15(4)(c) but such was submitted before 1pm. There was no objection placed against his nomination by the other candidates pursuant to section 15(8) and his nomination was accepted on the basis that it met all legal requirements of the Elections Act.

For Mr. St. Ange, his nomination lacked the requirements of section 15(4)(c) but such was submitted before 1pm. There was no objection placed against his nomination by the other candidates pursuant to section 15(8) and his nomination was accepted on the basis that it met all legal requirements of the Elections Act.

For Mr. Pillay, his nomination lacked the endorsement of 500 registered voters hence, did not meet the requirements of the section 15(3)(a) of the Act. His nomination has been endorsed by 491 signatories of which 34 were not registered voters. At 3:45pm, his proposed Vice-President Mr. Weston Wirtz brought a further list of 13 signatories to the office of the Electoral Commission but such was not accepted as section 14(4) stipulates that the cut off time for accepting submissions is at 1pm. His nomination was also the only one against which an objection was placed by another candidate pursuant to section 15(8). The basis of which was the lack of endorsement of 500 registered voters.

This being the case, pursuant to section 15(9A), Mr. Pillay was called in by the Chief Electoral Officer and given the opportunity to be heard before his nomination was determined. Mr. Pillay then stated that he had submitted a total of 504 signatures as endorsement of his nomination. The list of signatories was checked and cross-checked and only 491 signatures were present of which 34 were not registered voters thus signifying that he has been endorsed by only 457 persons entitled to vote at the election he wished to contest hence, his nomination was rejected as it had not meet all the legal requirements particularly of section 15(3)(a).

9.2 The National Assembly Nomination

The nomination of National Assembly candidates was held on 18th September 2020. The time was 9am to 1pm per as per section 14 (4) of the Elections Act.

- Following the drawing of lots, they would be in the following order as follows on the ballot papers: Linyon Demokratik Seselwa
- One Seychelles
- Independent Candidate
- Lalyans Seselwa United Seychelles

In accordance with Sections 14 and 15 of the Elections Act, the nominations of the candidates were submitted on a prescribed form which had to be supported by: -

- a deposit of R1500
- the endorsement of 50 registered voters
- copy of National Identity Cards of the above-mentioned voters

For the National Assembly election, United Seychelles and Linyon Demokratik Seselwa each fielded a candidate for each of the 26 electoral areas whereas One Seychelles and Lalyans Seselwa fielded candidates for only 18 and 3 electoral areas respectively excluding rejected nominations. In terms of rejected nominations, two candidates from One Seychelles and one from Lalyans Seselwa were rejected. There were only two independent candidates and each contested in a different electoral area (Beau Vallon and St. Louis).

10 MEETING WITH POLITICAL PARTIES

The Electoral Commission held regular meetings with all representatives of the political parties. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the amendments to the law, the logistics and other administrative matters for the elections in order to ensure the co-operation and agreement of all parties concerned regarding the smooth running of the election, and to ensure that all contesting parties were given equal and equitable opportunities to contest the election.

The main items covered were as follows:-

- a) Amendments to the Elections and Political Parties Act
- b) Ballot Paper- Printing and security
- c) International representation of political parties and independent candidates for the printing of ballots
- d) Roles of Election Officials, Party Agents, Political Parties.
- e) Election procedures
- f) Selection of Election Officials
- g) Voting Stations
- h) Special Stations in lieu of Covid19: Beau Vallon Bay Quarantine Facility and Baie Lazare Centre
- i) Role of media
- j) Security arrangements
- k) Handling of complaint

The Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation in consultation with the Commission also held meetings with representatives of the different political parties on the Party Political Broadcasts- procedures and arrangements.

11 Meeting with Other Stakeholders

The Commission worked closely with all relevant stakeholders to ensure a safe and smooth election process.

The expertise and assistance of the department of Health was sought at all stages in order to ensure the protection of all staff and the public.

A Gold Committee was set up to assist and guide the Commission in the creation of its Covid19 Standard Operating Procedures.

Other equally important stakeholders that collaborated with the Commission in the running of this election are as follows:

- The Police Force
- Public and Private Media Houses (Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation, Telesesel, NISA, SNA, Today in Seychelles, Pure 907, K radio)
- The Seychelles Media Commission
- Ministry of Education
- The Public Utilities Corporation
- Red Cross Society of Seychelles
- Department of Risk and Disaster Management
- The Fire Services
- Land Transport Division

The Commission also created a platform where all stakeholders had the opportunity to brief all electoral officers and the public on their respective roles for the elections.

12 THE CAMPAIGN

Pursuant to the provisions of the Elections Act, the campaign period of the election was between 16th September to 21st October at 0700hrs

Due to the Public Health Act, as result of the Covid 19 pandemic there were no rallies held. However permission for motorcade was granted by the Police.

On the whole campaigning (such as billboards, posters, flyers, rallies, door to door, etc) was conducted in a calm manner.

Social media again played an important role in campaigning and sharing of information, however the information put across on social media was not always correct and consequently led to a misuse of this medium at certain times.

The contesting candidates and political parties supporting them had equal access and equal time for political broadcasts over the National Television and Radio as per Section 97 of the Elections Act. The order of broadcasts was based on the results of a televised drawing of lots.

All Candidates were allocated free and equal airtime, on national television and radio, at the beginning and end of the campaign period. In addition to the broadcasts, each candidate was allowed an equal number of free spots on national television to promote their party and/or candidates. The parties were also allowed paid advertising.

It is to be noted however that the two independent candidates expressed disappointment in the manner the allocation of airtime is stipulated in the law for independent candidates. The latter were quite vocal about the dissatisfaction and the way that it puts them at a disadvantage.

Under the code of conduct, as far as practicable, the Electoral Commission provided equal opportunities to the contesting parties as well as the implementation of certain restrictions to achieve a level playing field.

Such measures included:-

- a) Ban on use of Government and Defence Forces vehicles for campaign and/or polling purposes. This ban is covered under Regulations SI 20 and 24 of 2006, article 2 (1) and (2).
- b) Ban on the setting up of check points/camps and distribution of refreshments on polling day.
- c) Provision of equal opportunity for publicity including allocation of specific areas for placement of posters and Billboards.
- d) Ban on use of loud hailers in pickup trucks and mobile phones in polling stations.

13 CAMPAIGN FINANCING

Following the 2020 amendment of the Elections Act, for the first time there was a ceiling on the amount a candidate can spend for campaigning and the amount his political party can spend on him for the same purpose if he is not an independent candidate. Such was provided for by the newly inserted section 94A of the Elections Act.

For Presidential election, a political party who has nominated a candidate could spend a maximum of SR250, 000 multiplied by the number of electoral areas being contested thus amounting to SR6,000,000. An independent candidate, if there has been any, would have been subject to the same limit. The candidate from the political party himself could not spend an additional amount over and above that. There is thus no disparity between an independent candidate and one from a political party in terms of such an election.

For National Assembly election was a different scenario whereby a political party who has nominated a candidate could spend a maximum of SR250, 000 multiplied by the number of electoral areas it has nominated candidates for and in addition to that, the nominated candidate could himself spend a further SR250, 000 for the same purpose. On the other hand, an independent candidate could only spend SR250, 000. Candidates from political parties could thus spend twice as much as an independent candidate on campaigning. This shows a clear disparity between the two.

In addition to that, still in terms of the National Assembly election, section 29(3) of the Political Parties (Registration and Regulations) Act, 1992 provides that political parties who nominates candidates for such an election and who were not already receiving funds from the Political Parties Support Fund established under section 27 of the Act, are entitled to receive such amount to be calculated prorata to the lowest sum already being paid from the fund, from the date of nomination to the end of the quarter in which the National Assembly election is being held.

The aim of this is to promote democracy by financially helping political parties who wish to participate in the said election but are not already receiving financial support from public funds. Based on that, One Seychelles and Lalyans Seselwa each received around SR18, 000. The Act makes no provision for such support for independent candidates.

Section 93 of the Act further regulates campaign financing by regulating contributions and donations whereby it clearly states who cannot contribute to campaign financing of a candidate that being any foreign government, any foreign political party or faith based organisation, any public institution, or any organisation controlled or owned by the government, any private company performing a public function pursuant to an act, a person who is not tax compliant, any foreign individual or foreign entity and any trade union. It also provides a cap on the amount that may be received as donation or contribution for such and how to deal with any contributions or donations whom its source may not be identified.

Section 94(2) which provides for submission of financial statements to the Electoral Commission showing campaign expenses was also amended by in 2020. The amendment did away with monthly reporting by political parties and candidates during campaign period and kept the submission of a financial statement after 60 days of announcement of results only. It however also broadened what is to be included in such by providing for disclosure of details of the number of persons who have made donations or contributions and the sum and the identity of persons on whom expenditure has been incurred. In light of transparency, the disclosure of such information by the Electoral Commission was decriminalized and it rather became mandatory for the Commission to disclose the details where a donation or contribution is SR50, 000 or more and may from time to time, issue public reports as to the total funds received by each candidate or political party for campaigning.

14 STAFFING

The Secretariat staff consists of:

- (a) 1 Chief Electoral Officer
- (b) 1 Chief Registration Officer
- (c) 1 Senior Human Resources and Administration Officer
- (d) 1 Senior Legal Officer
- (e) 1 Finance Manager
- (f) 1 IT Manager
- (g) 1 Logistic Officer

In addition to the staff of the secretariat the following were recruited for the Presidential and National Assembly elections, as follows.

- (a) 27 Electoral Officers
- (b) 60 Deputy Electoral Officers
- (c) 723 Assistant Electoral Officers
- (d) 146 Drivers, Helpers and Technical Staff

15 TRAINING

The Commission outsourced training for Electoral Officers and deputies, conducted by the Guy Morel Institute, with emphasis on the recent legal amendments. The latter resulted into changes in procedures, therefore the training addressed this area.

The training done in six (6) days for each of the three (3) groups of Electoral Officers and deputies, consisted of the modules below:

- The constitutional political and legal framework and instruments governing elections in Seychelles.
- The A-Z election practices and procedures for Election Officials.
- Management Planning, Organisational, Monitoring and evaluation requirements for successful coordination and operational outcome.
- Leadership roles, Ethics and professionalism.
- Managing operational and interpersonal communication.
- Health, safety and security information forum.

Considering the fact that the election was being run during a pandemic, all relevant stakeholders; as per below, also provided briefings on their respective roles.

- (a) Department of Health
- (b) Police Force

- (c) Red Cross Society of Seychelles
- (d) Fire Services
- (e) Department for Risks and Management

Following the recommendation from the Department of Health Seychelles. The Public Health Authority advised for the creation of a Standard Operation Procedures for Covid-19.

Training to all Electoral Officers and their deputies through primarily a mock session was also conducted at the Seychelles Institute Teachers Education (SITE) at Mont Fleuri on Saturday 19th September 2020.

Secondly on 03rd October 2020 another half day workshop was organised at the Independent school as a final preparation before the election with emphasis on voting procedures for alphabetical voting, queuing system, tallying and the sorting out and counting procedures.

16 SECURITY

Various meetings were held with the Police Election Secretariat to ensure the security of all the processes of the elections. Security at the ECS HQ, in/at Polling Station and during transportation of ballot materials was provided by the Police. In most cases the Police were present, discreet but not intimidating to the public.

The Police Election Secretariat provided a liaison officer through which queries and concerns were made. Names and phone numbers of various Regional Police Commanders were given for ease of contact should a necessity arise. These details were also given to the Presiding Officers of every electoral area.

All electoral staff was covered under a special insurance policy.

17 VOTERS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The office of the Electoral Commission produced and ran a total of 44 voter education videos and equal amount of radio spots for the electoral period and covered all areas pertaining to the electoral process including qualifications and requirements for candidates and voters, role of the National Assembly in the

ruling of the country, instructional videos about how and where to vote as well as introducing the candidates to the electorate. Over and above that, print spots were also produced and ran in the national newspaper Seychelles Nation covering the same main areas. The area in which emphasis was particularly missing was a focus on alphabetical voting.

The main challenge was to disseminate the voter education. Although part of Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation's mandate is to provide adequate coverage for civic programs in this case voter education, it was a seemingly impossible task to get Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation to air the voter education programs at peak times even when these were being invoiced to the Electoral Commission which severely impacted the reach of the voter education. Nonetheless the voter education videos were disseminated by social media through the Facebook page of the Electoral Commission and in official media on the website of the Commission.

The media both national and private ran independently. Although the work of the media with regards to knowing the candidates and to some extent knowing their programs through interviews and the debate is well appreciated, it is to be noted that for these elections the Commission produced voter education programs that ran more into civic education. This element is believed as pointed out in the reports from the local observers ARID and CDWS should be more in the respect of NGOs and the Government itself whereby a concrete and actionable civic calendar can assist in ensuring that the electorate is more aware on why elections are held and what to expect from leaders who are to be elected in office.

18 THE MEDIA

The 2020 Elections were broadcast according to Section 97 of the elections act in which only the public broadcaster SBC (Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation) is given the mandate for air time and obligation to report on elections, a section of the act dating back to 1995. Considering the changed media landscape since that time with the introduction of private media, the Commission found it essential to work with all media houses equally. This meant that the elections were well covered from multiple angles.

All parties and candidates were given equal access and equal time to express their views and promote themselves in accordance with Section 97 of the Elections Act. SBC retained editorial control on the party political broadcast and waived the necessity for an indemnity. Private media house Telesel, also

aired the Political Party Broadcasts by directly liaising with the political parties for same. Other print media houses ran candidate profiles aiding the voter in the electoral process.

The media were kept well informed of election progress with periodic press conferences and briefings held at all major events before and during the elections. Major press conferences were around political party meetings, preparation for nomination day and progress reports on the arrangements and organisation of the elections. Extensive access were given to relevant staff to explain the registration progress (along with monthly reports to media) as well as changes in the Elections act which would run the 2020 elections. Nomination days were carried live both on public media (SBC) and private media (Telesesel), the coverage was an extensive one with inclusion of the days presentations of nominations live by all candidates and outcomes of nominees as well as draws for the Political Party Broadcasts.

The Electoral Commission introduced a Code of Conduct for media which was drafted in consultation with the Seychelles Media Commission and reviewed by several political observers. This code was a non-binding one, with the intention to create a general set of guidelines to election reporting. The Commission also introduced accreditation guidelines for media houses and reporters with the same intention. Both introductions had mixed reviews with some media houses seeing their importance but others finding it as an intrusion into their domain. This was especially evident with the Association of Media Practitioners who in writing challenged the need of both documents.

Despite the guidelines put in place, reporting on the public media – SBC –, during campaign period included a considerable amount of coverage presented as news, of the incumbent party's and candidate's activities, compared to other parties and differing views were not sought from the opposing candidates. This was often construed by other contestants as an abuse of state media.

18.1 First Presidential Debates and Special programs

The Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) aired its first Presidential Debates which saw the participation of all Presidential candidates, this was also complemented by candidate profiles.

Telesesel, a private broadcaster, also ran programmes allowing the public to know more about their candidates.

It is to be noted, that although programmes were extensive, the majority of them that were running outside of the Political Parties Broadcasts, were focused on the candidates as an individual rather than being oriented on the campaign for voter education.

All media were given space in the results centre for their use, although media were not given access early during the day on Election Day due to confidentiality of the vote sorting exercise. All media provided extensive coverage of elections proceedings and were given access to polling stations at the discretion of the Electoral Officer at the station as per Section 22(1) of the Elections act.

The pre announcement of results had been agreed with all media houses and they were provided with provisional results as they became available. Both SBC and Telesesel ran the official results ceremony live and all media were given access to available election statistics on the same day as results were presented through the ECS website.

19 PARTY AGENTS and CANDIDATES

There was no limit on the number of polling and counting agent a candidate could appoint. Given that election would not take place in one room only at a polling station as per before, section 20(6) was amended to provide that only one agent should be posted at a voting facility (meaning a room) at a time rather than only one at the station.

Hence, due to the number of agents appointed, there were at all times one agent in a room where polling or counting was taking place. They also got to observe the sorting of ballot papers from special stations.

20 OBSERVERS

In addition to the two domestic observer groups, Citizens Democracy Watch Seychelles (CDWS) and Association for Rights, Information and Democracy (ARID), there was only EASF (Eastern African Standby Force) and local diplomatic missions who were accredited as observers for the 2020 elections.

Southern African Development Community (SADC) ran regular calls with the different relevant stakeholders locally in order to have a passive observation of the elections. The lack of observers came as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic and quarantine regulations coming into Seychelles. The Observers were bound by a Code of Conduct issued by the Electoral Commission. They all held independent discussions with the political parties, stakeholders, various related organizations and personalities.

The Electoral Commission provided every possible assistance and co-operation in the fulfilment of the Observers' mandate.

It is to be noted that not all of the observer team had delivered their full report to the Electoral Commission.

21 COMPLAINTS

The Electoral Commission in order to attend to all complaints established a Complaints mechanism. An email account and a fixed Complaints line were created for the contesting parties, candidates and the public to make their complaints.

The ECS also worked in collaboration with the Police. Feedbacks of complaints submitted to the latter was received by both the ECS and the complainants.

During the course of the campaign period and on election days, a number of complaints/allegations were received from the contesting parties and candidates. A senior police officer was based full time at the headquarters and was linked directly to the Police Command Centre. Similar to the Presidential elections 2016, there were some allegations of vote buying and inducement during the cooling off period and election days. There were cases of illegal erection of billboards on private premises. The social media was being used for campaigning during the cooling off and election period by supporters of the candidates.

22 THE POLL

Polling took place on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th October 2020.

On the 22nd October, 2020, in accordance with the Act, Voting facilities were made available for:-

- the incapacitated and elderly residing in the North East Point Home for the Elderly and Hospital;
- voters temporarily residing on the Island of Praslin, and Inner Islands for employment reasons, (who are registered in electoral areas on Mahe);
- persons on remand at the remand centre
- voters who are registered in any electoral areas and employed in the essential services and on the date of election are on duty away from their electoral area;
- voters travelling overseas on the main voting day.

In light of the circumstances around the Covid-19 pandemic with regards to quarantine and work arrangements, 2 special stations were set up on the 22nd October only relevant to the 2020 elections.

There were:

- Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay for voters who were in the quarantine facility
- Baie Lazare Community Centre being for voters who were working under quarantine regulations in specific hotel establishments on Mahe.

On 22nd and 23rd October voting facilities were set up on the islands of Silhouette, Farquar, Alphonse, Des roches, Coetivy, Platte, Poivre, Darros, Remire, Astove, Assumption, Ile aux Vaches and Denis Island.

The Electoral Officers were accompanied by party agents, police and observers. With the valued assistance of I.D.C, Air Seychelles and the managers of these Islands, polling were carried out efficiently and as planned.

Polling for voters on Mahe, Praslin, La Digue and voters temporarily on Mahe who are registered in any electoral areas other than those situated on Mahe, who on the date of the election were away from their electoral areas; were held on the 24th October 2020.

The Polling stations opened at the appointed time of 7 a.m. From the opening of the poll and throughout the day, with the introduction of alphabetical voting queues, in most electoral areas, were often short and moving quickly with the average time being taken between queuing and casting of ballots being 15 mins.

Although this was not the case for the special stations whereby the waiting time was quite significant due to the high number of voters.

A copy of all the names of persons who had voted on the 22nd and 23rd October 2020 were made available to all the Electoral Officers, who distributed it to all polling agents. Electoral Officers were under instructions to call out, before the commencement of polling, the particulars of the voters who had already voted and the registers of voters in use for the polls were marked to eliminate the possibility of double voting.

Votes polled at all special stations for the past two days were given to each electoral officer respectively on the morning of the main Election Day, as per the recent amendment made.

Voting by using alphabetical groupings in some stations was slow in the early morning as voters were not too familiar with the system and some officers had not grasped the change in procedures. However, this improved as the day progressed and as the electoral officials also adjusted the process. Special arrangements were made for the incapacitated and the elderly.

There was an incident during the day where due to the speed of voting and the number of voters who had cast their ballots at special stations there were insufficient ballot papers in the majority of polling stations. This was due to the fact that as per the recommendations and therefore amendments the ballot papers were produced in booklets of 100 and 50. The aforementioned assigned to respective electoral areas had to be reassigned to cater for the increase of voters in special stations. This resulted in a shortage of ballots for the districts, which was mitigated and allowed for all voters to cast their votes.

The delay in sorting of votes from special stations was due to the large turnout resulting in delay in redeployment of unused ballots from first two days of voting.

Despite this, most of the polling stations closed at the prescribed time of 7.00pm. Voters who were still in the queue after 7 pm, were allowed to vote. The last station to close the poll was La Digue and this was around 11 p.m.

Despite the changes in polling procedures, having voters voting according to alphabetical grouping, this did not affect the turnout as the total number of voters who voted were 66,017 which was 88.5% of the 74,634 voters registered. This compares favourably to the turnout for first round of the last presidential election which saw 62,004 voters casting their vote and this represented 87.5%.

The mechanism for reporting anomalies in the polling station is through the Occurrence Book and overall, very few complaints were received regarding polling. The electoral officials performed their duties in a fair and efficient manner. Generally, the polling agents and voters were disciplined, peaceful and orderly.

23 THE COUNT and THE RESULTS

Soon after the close of poll, the sorting, examination and counting of Ballot papers started in the presence of party officials, candidates and Observers. The results were communicated by facsimile to the Elections Headquarters. The result was first received by 9 p.m. and continued until past the following day.

The results were verified and aggregated by the Electoral Commission. All results were proclaimed at 10.30 a.m. on the morning of 25th October 2020. The results were then published in the Official Gazette.

Below is a summary of the results, details of which are given in appendix C to the report.

23.1 The Presidential Election Result

No of eligible voters	74,634
Total votes cast	66,017
Total rejected votes cast	1,256
Total valid votes cast	64,761

Voters' turnout 88.5% of voters registered.

Table 1 Results of the Presidential Election

Candidate Name	Political Party	Number of valid votes	Percentage of valid votes
Wavel John Charles Ramkalawan	Linyon Demokratik Seselwa	35,562	54.9%
Danny, Antoine, Rollen Faure	United Seychelles	28,178	43.5%
Marie, Alain, Basil, Raoul St Ange	One Seychelles	1,021	1.6%

23.2 National Assembly Election Result

No of eligible voters	74,634
Total votes cast:	65,978
Total rejected votes cast:	1,784
Total valid votes cast:	64,194

The Voters turnout was 87.5% of total voters registered

Table 2 Results of the National Assembly Election

Political party Candidate	No. of Valid Votes	No. of elected Members	No. of nominated seats	Total seats allocated
Linyon Demokratik Seselwa	35,202	20	5	25
One Seychelles	1420	0	0	0
Lalyans Seselwa	70	0	0	0
Independent candidates	317	0	0	0
United Seychelles	27,165	6	4	10

24 COST OF THE ELECTIONS

The elections to-date cost SR 19, 265,878.98. The accounts for the elections are maintained by the secretariat, the Finance Manager.

25 OBSERVATIONS, PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on observations made on the comments of the International and Domestic Observers; and suggestions received from stakeholders, the following need to be addressed in order to improve on the

effectiveness of the electoral process to ensure the delivery of true, fair and effective elections in future, as stipulated in article 51 (6) (c) of the Constitution: -

1. Electoral Staff

Ensure the availability of a pool and experienced electoral staff and in addition continue to attract new volunteers to work as electoral staff. There is a need to ensure continuous engagement with electoral staff and designed consistent and continuous training to ensure a more standardized process.

2. Voting Facilities

The location and size of some polling stations have to be re-considered, taking into account the fact of voting population increase and current available facilities.

3. EC needs to: -

- (i) review its election structure to ensure adequate manpower.
- (ii) ensure the representation of an electoral officer for each region at the HQ
- (iii) review the allocation system for ballots
- (iv) review Form 7, Form 22/1 and Form 22/2 (reporting on election results)
- (v) review the locations of polling stations
- (vi) ensure adequate space in the polling station to promote the secrecy of the vote
- (vii) review the special voting regulations and facilities
- (viii) ensure the creation of appropriate Standard Operating procedures.
- (ix) clearly defined roles and functions of the EC and its members.
- (x) improve its current public image.
- (xi) be more accessible to all political parties and other stakeholders
- (xii) review the accreditation process to ensure early accreditation of all stakeholders.
- (xiii) have clear roles during election, especially in addressing issues with observers and other stakeholders seeking information on the state of preparedness of the Electoral Commission.
- (xiv) establish a mechanism for meeting and making quick decision during election period and properly documenting such process

- (xv) ensure continuous interaction with electoral officers and deputies throughout the year
- (xvi) printing of ballots done on the number for voters for the electoral area and all ballots allocated to the station
- (xvii) Make use of new technology for communication during polling
- (xviii) introduction of an election digital management system

4. Voter Census

Undertake a voter's census in collaboration with the appropriate stakeholder and put in place the legal requirements to use data from the census to improve the voter register

5. Delimitation of Boundaries

Undertake the above exercise in collaboration with the appropriate stakeholder for the purpose of a more proportionate representation of the voters.

6. Dispute mechanism

Use the Complaint mechanism as a baseline for the formalization of a dispute resolution mechanism and set up specialised tribunal and mediation bodies.

7. Code of conduct

Formalise / legalise codes of conduct for various stakeholders through regulations.

8. Voter education

Improve voter and civic education working in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to ensure a wholesome long-term plan

9. Party Liaison

Encourage inter-party dialogue to resolve differences and contentious issues.

10. Office space

It is essential to provide the Electoral Commission with adequate and permanent office accommodation conducive to performing its duties.

26 LEGISLATIVE REFORM

The Elections Act should be reviewed and updated taking into account the new reality of the political landscape.

26.1 POLITICAL PARTIES (REGISTRATION AND REGULATION) ACT

This was amended by the Political Parties (Registration and Regulation) (Amendment) Act, 2020 which gave effect to the 2017 recommendations for amendment of the said Act. The amendment was assented to on 17th August 2020 and came into force on 31st August 2020.

27 ELECTION PETITION

No election petitions or any other form of litigation were brought following the results of the election.

28 CONDUCTING ELECTION DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC

The 2020 election took place during an ongoing pandemic. To mitigate possible risks clear public health measures and adequate health protection were provided at the Electoral Headquarters and all registration centres, prior to the election and at the polling stations.

A high number of staff compared to previous elections was recruited and the collaboration of the various stakeholders engaged, in order to ensure not only a credible, free and fair election but equally a safe election.

Great emphasis, through education, was placed on the appropriate signage at the stations. The personnel reinforced the importance of sanitising and the wearing of masks at the polling stations.

The significant increase in the number of staff and equipment required for conducting an election in the midst of a pandemic greatly impacted the election budget.

29 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Electoral Commission would like to record its appreciation to everyone who, in one way or another, contributed towards the successful execution of the elections. Special mention is made of:

The People of Seychelles,

The Political Parties and Candidates,

The Seychelles Police

The Ministry of Education

The Department of Health

Department of Risk and Disaster Management

Seychelles Fire and Rescue Services Agency

Red Cross Society of Seychelles

Public Utilities Corporation

Air Seychelles

Inter-Island Ferry Seychelles

Islands Development Company Ltd

Zil Air

Cable & Wireless (Seychelles) Ltd

The Media:

Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation

The Seychelles Media Commission

Telesesel

Pure 907

K radio

Today in Seychelles

NISA

Seychelles News Agency

Local Observers:

Association for Rights, Information and Democracy (ARID) and Citizens Democracy Watch Seychelles (CDWS)

International Observers:

Eastern African Standby Force (EASF)

Local Diplomatic Missions: Ambassade de France aux Seychelles, Anglican Diocese of Seychelles, British High Commission, Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium, Embassy of the order of Malta, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, High Commission of India, Russian Embassy, Embassy of Japan, US Consular Agency.

The Guy Morel Institute

The Ministry of Local Government, Youth & Sports.

Seychelles Land Transport Division

Last but not least a special mention to all Electoral Officers, Deputies and Assistant Electoral Officers for their valuable contribution.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

30 ANNEX

A. Accreditation Guidelines for Observers

B. Code of Conduct for Media in Elections

C. Special Registration Initiatives

D. Results of Presidential Election

E. Results of National Assembly Election

F. Number of eligible voters by Electoral Area and gender, 2020



Accreditation of International, Regional, and local election Observers and procedures

Introduction: Policy Statements: Election Observation

- 1) The Electoral Commission (ECS) of Seychelles is committed to:
 - a) transparency and high standards in its electoral processes and procedures.
 - b) Compliance with legislations that regulate the ECS' practices hence crucial to its credibility,
- 2) Being a member of AU and SADC, and cognizant of its responsibilities to commit to compliance with best practices that will hold up to scrutiny, the EC confirms its adherence with SADC's documented principles and procedures on election observations and commits to these in the forthcoming Presidential and legislative elections of October 2020
- 3) The ECS welcomes International, Regional and Local Observers and respects their valued contribution in fostering transparency, integrity and institutionalizing democratic processes in the country
- 4) These Policy Statements and related procedures will be disseminated to all stakeholders and contestants within a reasonable timeframe from the election dates being confirmed

Responsibilities of Government:

Mindful of the SADC Parliamentary Forum's recommendation for government and political parties to recognise the importance of elections in fostering transparency, integrity and institutionalising democratic processes, the ECS commits to Election Observations by Local Regional and International Election Observers

Election observation

Elections are concerned with fundamental civil, political and human rights. On the other hand, Democratic elections are the free expressions of a nation's choice over who will lead the country and therefore, head a legitimate government.

Election observation is the interpretation, in a nonpartisan manner, but anchored on the principles of neutrality and impartiality, the extent to which:

- a) Elections proceeded in a fair and democratic manner,
- b) *whether the election and the electoral process were in compliance with national and other universal principles for democratic elections.*
- c) how election officials discharged the electoral responsibilities entrusted onto them



- d) the role and behaviour of the police and security forces and politicians, respected human dignity
- e) hopefully enhance the country's democratic institutions, building public confidence in electoral processes, helping to deter fraud, intimidation and violence.¹

Who can be Election Observers

Individuals who have been trained and are accredited member of an organisation with part of its mandate

Compliance with SADC's Election Principles

In pursuit of the above, the EC shall demonstrate compliance with SADC's Principles of Election Observation, Appendix 1 ²

- 1) Full participation of citizens in the political process;
- 2) Freedom of association;
- 3) Political tolerance;
- 4) Equal opportunity for all political parties to access the state media;
- 5) Equal opportunity to exercise the right to vote and be voted for;
- 6) Voter education;
- 7) Acceptance and respect of the election results by political parties proclaimed to have been free and fair by the competent national electoral authorities in accordance with the law of the land; and
- 8) ³The ability to challenge the election results as provided for in the law of the land

¹ Based on the SADC principles of Election Observation in the SADC Region. Note all, and not only 1-8 are applicable available at

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/RuleOfLaw/CompilationDemocracy/Pages/SADCPrinciples.aspx>



Composition of Observer groups and election observation responsibilities

	Local Observer groups	Regional (e.g. SADC) and International	International e.g. Embassies based locally
	<i>As per its observation guidelines endorsed by the EC</i>	<i>As per its Observation guidelines , endorsed by the EC</i>	<i>As per its election observation guidelines endorsed by the EC</i>
	<i>Up to 26 members to cover the range of polling stations</i>	<i>Up to 12 members to cover the range of polling stations</i>	<i>Up to 12 members to cover the range of polling stations</i>
	Responsibilities		
	<i>Impartiality and Neutrality (perceived and actual)</i>	<i>Impartiality and Neutrality (perceived and actual)</i>	<i>Impartiality and Neutrality (perceived and actual)</i>
	<i>Compliance with SADC' Principles</i>		

Shared code of conduct

Accreditation Processes and Procedures for Election Observation in Seychelles

Election Accreditation is the officially recognized and accepted authority or status of a group of people by the Electoral Commission of Seychelles, to observe election locally

This officially recognized and accepted status is obtained subject to the fulfilment of the following processes and procedures by the applicable Bodies and approval granted by the EC

Application

All Bodies wanting to observe Elections in Seychelles should apply in writing to the Electoral Commission within a two week window period from the announcement of Election Dates providing the following details for each person identified by the submitting body to act/be Election Observers on their behalf

- a) List of Names, NIN of identified staff /individual (for local observers), Passport Copies (for international observers)
- b) Digital Photographs as per attached guidelines (international observers or local observers with possibility) / Photographs to be taken at accreditation collection (local observers only)
- c) Proof of election observation training

EC's Response to applications to observe local elections

The Electoral Commission shall confirm receipt of each request and approve / confirm or reject the application within a period of 5 days.



Internal approval Procedures

Validation meeting

- The EC sets up a team to consider the application and recommendation to approve /not approve each institution accordingly⁴
- The team recommends approval to the CEO
- Approval is finalized by the CEO

Communication of outcome to Parties

- The EC communicates the final outcome to the parties in writing and signed by the CEO
- All Approved Institutions will receive their Accreditation Badges along with the ECS Election Pack⁵
- Included in the communication : A copy of **Rights and Responsibilities of Election Observers in Seychelles (below)**

Rights and Responsibilities of Election Observers in Seychelles ⁶

- 1) Unhindered access to and communicate freely with the media;
- 2) Free access to all legislations and regulations governing the electoral process and environment;
- 3) Free access to electoral registers or voters' roll;
- 4) Unimpeded and unrestricted access to all polling stations and counting centers; Communicate freely with all competing political parties, candidates, other political associations and organizations, and civil society organizations;
- 5) Communicate freely with voters without prejudice to the electoral law proscribing such communication in order to protect the secrecy of the vote;
- 6) Communicate with and have unimpeded and unrestricted access to the National Election Commission or appropriate electoral authority and all other election administrators;
- 7) Issue a statement on the conduct and outcome of the elections immediately after the announcement of the result; and
- 8) Prepare a Final Report within 30 (thirty) days after the announcement of the results

⁴ Non approval could be if the suggested person or persons are known activists

⁵ List to be inserted as attachment

⁶ Based on the SADC principles of Election Observation in the SADC Region. Note not only 1 -8 are applicable available at <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/RuleOfLaw/CompilationDemocracy/Pages/SADCPrinciples.aspx>



Media Code of Conduct For Elections



Effective self-regulation by the media itself is internationally promoted. To guide the regulation however, the Electoral Commission Seychelles is issuing the 2020 Code of Conduct for Media for Elections.

This code outlines the different roles of journalists, media owners, government, and the Electoral Commission Seychelles. The section relevant to journalists and media owners is drawn from the Code of Ethics that journalists have subscribed to – including the Code adopted by the International Federation of Journalists and the SADC recommended protocols and policies in media and elections. This guide further highlights the role of media in elections, converged media, reporting results and reporting on election observers and election monitors.

Contents

The role of media in elections.....	4
Responsibilities of Journalists	4
Responsibilities of Media Owners	5
All media:	5
Publicly owned or funded media:	5
Responsibilities of Political parties	6
Responsibilities of Electoral Commission Seychelles.....	6
Converged media	6
Reporting on election observers and election monitors	7
Who are Election Observers?.....	7
Who are Election Monitors?	7
Reporting Election results.....	7
References	8

The role of media in elections

The role of the media in the entire electoral process is to ensure that voters make informed choices. The coverage of candidates, parties and electoral processes is in pursuit of this central purpose.

Principal roles of the media in elections are defined as follows:

- The media are required to provide relevant information, analyse it and additionally offer substantive opinions to the public, while also serving as a platform for debate and discussion.
- The media shall fulfil their watchdog role by promoting transparency and thus preventing electoral fraud
- The media have a duty to provide election coverage that gives the voter comprehensive, accurate and reliable information on all aspects of the electoral process. This information ensures that voters know and understand their democratic rights and exercise them free from fear, intimidation, or coercion.
- As the fourth pillar in the democracy, the media is expected to ensure that journalists are familiar with the national legislative framework governing the electoral process, including the electoral institutions

Stakeholders play an essential role in ensuring that the election coverage is deemed as transparent as possible. These stakeholders also need to adhere to certain codes to ensure that they play their role in the fairness of the electoral process. These roles are highlighted as per stakeholder below.

Responsibilities of Journalists

This section outlines standard professional ethical codes of truth, honesty and accuracy that apply generally to the profession (not only during election times).

- Journalists need to protect sources when information is obtained in confidence
- Should a candidate make an allegation against another, the journalist should seek comment from both sides wherever possible
- A journalist shall only report in accordance with facts about the electoral process and elections
- As far as possible, a journalist shall reflect the views of candidates and political parties directly and in their own words, rather than as they are described by others.
- Journalists shall not accept any inducement from politicians.
- Journalists shall only use fair methods to obtain news, photographs, and documents
- Confidentiality of source must be protected by journalists when the journalist knows the source, whenever possible, journalists should refrain from using 'anonymous sources'. The principle of multiple sources to verify information and facts applies
- Journalists should also not make any promises to political parties, candidates or other stakeholders about the content of a report
- A journalist must rectify any published information which is found to be harmfully inaccurate
- Journalists should ensure that analyses made provide insights based on research and diversity of expert opinions which enable voters to get a deeper understanding of processes, issues and candidates.

- In ensuring their responsibility to the voters and exercising their right to freedom of expression, journalists shall respect the rights, integrity and reputation of others.

Responsibilities of Media Owners

Publicly owned media should not reflect opinions in favour of any candidate or party, though it infers that private media may do so. Where private media do support a political party or candidate, there must be a clear separation that is obvious to the reader/audience between fact and opinion/comment.

All media:

- All private media houses which choose to endorse a candidate or party must ensure distinction between editorial opinion and news or factual content.
- All media houses should adopt their own transparent in-house policy or code on campaign advertisement and sponsorship. Such a policy should ensure that all candidates and parties are treated equitably.
- Political adverts and advertorials should be clearly distinguished from editorial content. Before and after each party election broadcast there should be a clear statement identifying it as such.

Publicly owned or funded media:

- Must ensure that the public are informed about relevant election matters such as political parties, candidates, campaign issued and voting processes” and
- Must be balanced and impartial in their election reporting and should not discriminate against any political party or candidate. This duty requires that news, current affairs, interview, and information programmes must not be biased in favour of, or against, any party or candidate
- Must be particularly scrupulous in complying with their obligations of balance. Such media are encouraged not to broadcast editorial opinions at all.
- Should grant all political parties equal airtime for direct access programmes on a fair and non-discriminatory basis.
- Must ensure that the content of the programmes relating to election policies remains the responsibility of the political party.
- Remains responsible for the broadcast or publication and should require that political parties are briefed and obey laws, which may not impinge freedom of expression but instead observe standards that pertain to accuracy and fairness.

Responsibilities of Political parties

As regards to responsibilities of political parties, the candidates:

- Shall not harass or intimidate journalists or media owners.
- Must uphold freedom of expression; and
- Must not offer bribes or inducements to gain support from any media.
- Must not abuse their position to gain unfair advantage in accessing the media
- The media is, without prejudice to applicable laws, exempt from legal liability without prejudice to applicable laws, for unlawful statements made by candidates or party representatives and broadcast during the course of election campaigns, unless the media concerned has either taken specific steps to adopt the statements or where the statement constitute clear and direct incitement of violence, hatred, religious hostilities and xenophobia and the media outlet has adequate opportunity to prevent their dissemination. It is further to be noted that political parties and/or politicians should not be relieved of their liability and could still be charged under the laws of the Republic of Seychelles.
- Any candidate or party which has been defamed or otherwise suffered illegal injury should be entitled to a correction or, where this would be an insufficient remedy, be granted the opportunity to reply. The correction or reply should be broadcast as soon as possible.

Responsibilities of Electoral Commission Seychelles

The Electoral Commission Seychelles and its representatives must:

- Respect freedom of the media and their editorial independence and right to express political preferences
- Conduct elections in an open and transparent manner
- Endeavour to make sure their activities and policies are open to scrutiny by the media to the fullest extent possible; and
- Impose only restrictions on reporting that are strictly necessary to ensure the integrity of the electoral process

Converged media

With rapidly evolving ICTs, traditional media is expanding into the online and social media sphere and media outlets have the responsibility to extend the application of journalistic principles to these platforms.

Specifically, the use of social media in election coverage of conventional media considering the following:

- Journalistic standards and ethics still apply
- Journalists using social media platforms in their personal as well as professional capacity should try to separate the two as their audience might not be able to differentiate.

- Journalists should not be seduced by the informality of social media and compromise their integrity and professionalism

Reporting on election observers and election monitors

Journalists need to ensure accurate reporting as per same should ensure that they distinguish between the role of an election observer and an election monitor. Media houses must also scrutinize the work and reports of election observers and election monitors, including their identity i.e. the organisation and institution they are from, their expertise and experience in election observation or election monitoring. They must report on the methodologies used by election observers and election monitors and how they arrive at their conclusions.

Who are Election Observers?

Election observers gather facts, find facts and report on the credibility, legitimacy, and transparency of the electoral process. This is often carried out by external personnel, who are not permitted to intervene in the voting and counting operations

Who are Election Monitors?

Election Monitors gather information find facts and report on the credibility, legitimacy, and transparency of the electoral process. This is usually carried out by local agencies or personnel, who are able to draw attention to observed deficiencies during voting and counting operations

Reporting Election results

Media covering the elections are obliged to inform the electorate of the election results in a comprehensive way as they become available, whether provisional or final, as released by the Electoral Commission Seychelles. Journalists should take special care when predicting final results based on partial results available.

References

- Guidelines on media coverage of elections in the SADC region
- Media and Elections in the SADC region: Protocols and policies

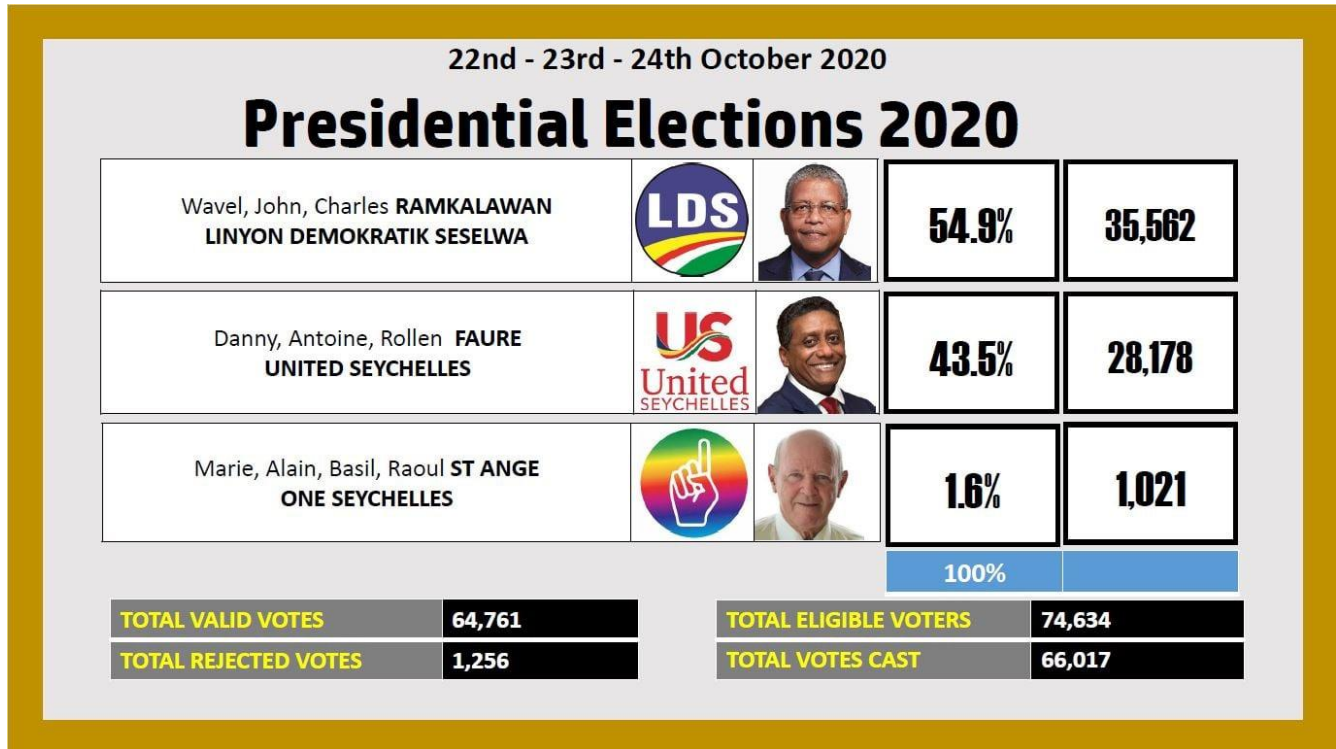
ANNEX C

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday 15 th July 2020	9am - 2pm	Police HQ Victoria
Friday 17 th July 2020	9am - 2pm	NIHSS
Thursday 23 rd July 2020	9am - 2pm	SIT, Providence
Saturday 18th July 2020	9am – 1pm	Takamaka Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Anse Royale Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Au Cap Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Baie Lazare Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Grand Anse Mahe Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Grand Anse Praslin Primary School
Saturday 25th July 2020	9am – 1pm	Grand Anse Praslin Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Belombre Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Beau Vallon Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Glacis Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Anse Etoile Primary School
	9am – 1pm	La Retraite Primary School
Saturday 1st August 2020	9am – 1pm	Cascade Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Pointe Larue Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Plaisance Primary School
	9am – 1pm	Les Mamelles Creche
	9am – 1pm	English River Secondary School
	9am – 3pm	ECS HQ, ex-Sacos Tower, Victoria

Saturday 8th August 2020		
	9am – 3pm	Room 201, Aarti Chambers, Mont Fleuri

ANNEX D

Results of the Presidential Election



Annex E

Results of the National Assembly Election

Total Eligible Voters	74,634
Total Votes Cast	65,978
Total Rejected Votes	1,784
Total Valid Votes	64,194
Voter Turnout	87.5%

Districts	Names	Political parties	Total Votes	Percentage
Anse Aux Pins	ANDRE, Clifford, Marcellino, Jason	LDS	1,496	52.8%
	ST. ANGE, Joella, Cherylle, Veronique	One Seychelles	84	3.0%
	RAFORME, Veronica, Dothy	United Seychelles	1,254	44.2%
Anse Boileau	ARISSOL, Philip, Michael	LDS	1,564	53.1%
	VIDOT, Lucia, Dorina, Merose	One Seychelles	41	1.4%
	ALPHONSE, Roger France	United Seychelles	1,340	45.5%
Anse Etoile	ROMAIN, Georges, Yvon	LDS	2,161	62.0%
	ERNESTA, Ralph, Joseph	One Seychelles	50	1.4%
	CREA, Terence, Daniel	United Seychelles	1,273	36.5%
Anse Royale	LARUE, Flory, Alice	LDS	1,343	46.4%
	ALPHONSE, Randy, Keneth	One Seychelles	66	2.3%
	LEMIEL, Sylvanne, Lydie	United Seychelles	1,484	51.3%
Au Cap	SAMYNADIN, Huguette, Kelly	LDS	1,845	61.7%
	ANTHONY, Andre, Hervey	One Seychelles	41	1.4%
	KILINDO, Neville, Archange	Lalyans Seselwa	23	1.0%
	CHARLES, Michel	United Seychelles	1,081	36.2%

Baie Lazare	ADELAIDE, Francois, Benjamin	LDS	1,324	55.0%
	FREMINO, Johnny, Wilfred	United Seychelles	1,083	45.0%
Baie Ste Anne Praslin	PORICE, Barbara, Doyace, Dill	LDS	1,289	43.5%
	PADAYACHI, Kumarakannan, B-Thabani	One Seychelles	292	9.9%
	GILL, Churchill, Patrick	United Seychelles	1,383	46.7%
Beau Vallon	HOAREAU, John, Michel	LDS	1,727	60.0%
	ANDRE, Keith, Hubert, Garvin	Independent	239	8.0%
	ROSE, James, Steven	United Seychelles	913	31.7%
Bel Air	LOIZEAU, Norbert, Francis	LDS	1,025	51.7%
	DENIS, Steve, Michel	One Seychelles	87	4.4%
	VOLCERE, Ronny, Davis Kenneth	United Seychelles	870	43.9%
Bel Ombre	ARISSOL, Sandy, John	LDS	1,726	63.2%
	LOUISE, Sheril, Bradline, Maria	United Seychelles	1,005	36.8%
Cascade	MONTHY, Philip, Constantin	LDS	1,317	54.2%
	MELLY, Theophane, Pascal	One Seychelles	27	1.1%
	FELIX, Michael, Ron, Nicol	United Seychelles	1,084	44.6%
English River	LABONTE, Andy, Michel	LDS	1,429	57.5%
	FINESSE, Delroy, Elvin	One Seychelles	50	2.0%
	WIRTZ, Weston	Lalyans Seselwa	25	1.0%
	HERMINIE, Wilbert, Ernest	United Seychelles	960	39.5%
Glacis	ESPARON, Regina, Lucia	LDS	1,713	62.2%
	DUGASSE, Dieter, Erroll	One Seychelles	55	2.0%
	MOREL, Marie-Andree, Jeannine	United Seychelles	985	35.8%
Grand Anse Mahe	WILLIAM, Winslow, Waven	LDS	1,428	67.6%
	BONTE, France, Gonsalves	United Seychelles	685	32.4%
Grand Anse Praslin	WOODCOCK, Wavel, Joseph	LDS	1,296	51.8%
	ESTHER, Jean-Baptiste, Yvon	One Seychelles	105	4.2%
	GRANDCOURT, Louis, Alvin, Mohamed	United Seychelles	1,103	44.0%
Ile Perseverance	BASTIENNE, Desheila, Andrine	LDS	1,438	53.2%
	ST. ANGE, Jules, Bernard	One Seychelles	167	6.2%
	CETOUPE, Flavie, Judith	United Seychelles	1,098	40.6%

Inner Islands	MICOCK, Loncney, Louis	LDS	665	37.0%
	ETIENNE, Elna, Marie-Noel	One Seychelles	22	1.2%
	URANIE, Rocky Joseph	United Seychelles	1,105	61.7%
Les Mamelles	GEORGES, Victor, Derek, Errol, Bernard	LDS	1,177	58.1%
	CADEAU, William, Jean-Baptiste	Lalyans Seselwa	22	1.0%
	EMILE, Julie Jill	United Seychelles	827	40.8%
Mont Buxton	HENRIE, Gervais	LDS	1,449	58.5%
	ALLY, Jean-Yves, Gionvanni, Nicolas	One Seychelles	35	1.4%
	DAVID, Robert, Roy Francois	United Seychelles	993	40.1%
Mont Fleuri	ROUCOU, Michel, Michael	LDS	1,317	58.9%
	CESAR, Lindy, Maria	United Seychelles	919	41.1%
Plaisance	LABROSSE, Richard, Marc	LDS	1,452	53.2%
	CHADSTONE, Mike, Morris	One Seychelles	55	2.0%
	EDMOND, Therese, Mary, Ivy	United Seychelles	1,221	44.8%
Pointe Larue	BISTOQUET, Rosie, Anne	LDS	996	46.2%
	MARIE, Maryline, Zita	One Seychelles	28	1.3%
	GABRIEL, Yven, Conrad	United Seychelles	1,096	52.4%
Port Glaud	HERMITTE, Godfra, Henry	LDS	870	48.4%
	AGLAE, Clifford, Egbert	United Seychelles	929	51.6%
Roche Caiman	LETOURDI, Therese, Jany	LDS	776	44.4%
	VOLCERE, Ralph, Maxime, Gerald	One Seychelles	192	11.0%
	VIDOT, Audrey, Maryona	United Seychelles	781	44.7%
St Louis	NAIDU, Sudharsan, Sathyanarayanan	LDS	1,281	59.9%
	JEAN, Holbert, John	Independent	78	4.0%
	JOSEPH, Rachel Joyceline	United Seychelles	781	36.5%
Takamaka	MONDON, Michel, Terence, Hugues	LDS	1,128	54.7%
	MARIA, Mike, Alex	One Seychelles	23	1.1%
	ERNESTA, Paul, Volbert	United Seychelles	912	44.2%

Political Party	Voted Seats	Nominated Seats	Total Seats
Linyon Demokratik Seselwa	20	5	25
One Seychelles	0	0	0
Lalyans Seselwa	0	0	0
United Seychelles	6	4	10
Independent Candidates	0	0	0

ANNEX F**Number of Eligible Voters by Electoral Area and Gender, 2020**

Electoral Area	Female	Male	Total
ANSE AUX PINS	1685	1619	3304
ANSE BOILEAU	1740	1658	3398
ANSE ETOILE	2085	1979	4064
ANSE ROYALE	1723	1652	3375
AUX CAP	1799	1710	3509
BAIE LAZARE	1393	1363	2756
BAIE STE. ANNE	1686	1758	3444
BEAU VALLON	1687	1734	3421
BEL AIR	1160	1155	2315
BEL OMBRE	1661	1600	3261
CASCADE	1402	1383	2785
ENGLISH RIVER	1508	1400	2908
GLACIS	1647	1623	3270
GRAND ANSE (M)	1305	1173	2478
GRAND ANSE (P)	1403	1407	2810
ILE PERSEVERANCE	1760	1323	3083
INNER ISLAND	1050	996	2046
LES MAMELLES	1182	1144	2326
MONT BUXTON	1443	1439	2882

MONT FLEURI	1307	1336	2643
PLAISANCE	1676	1581	3257
POINTE LARUE	1213	1187	2400
PORT GLAUD	1008	1000	2008
ROCHE CAIMAN	1091	899	1990
ST. LOUIS	1300	1272	2572
TAKAMAKA	1188	1141	2329
Total	38102	36532	74634

Source: Certified revised voters register for Presidential and National Assembly Election, 2020

Source: Office of the Electoral Commission