

Final Report:

1998 National Assembly
Election in Cambodia

Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia
(Comfrel)

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Appendix I: Master Plan for the 1998 Election

Appendix II: Polling and Vote Counting Observation Results by Province

1. Executive Summary

Comfrel was established in 1995 with the objective of having a permanent election monitoring organisation in Cambodia. Initially, it envisaged providing monitoring for the commune elections scheduled for 1997; however, these elections were abruptly postponed as a result of the factional fighting in Phnom Penh on 5-6 July 1997.

In the wake of the fighting, prospects for stable democracy in Cambodia appeared very dim. In late 1997, Comfrel began lobbying the National Assembly for amendments to the draft election law with some results, in particular ensuring that the envisaged National Election Committee (NEC) would be accountable to the National Assembly. At the same time, Comfrel issued a public statement on minimum conditions for free and fair elections.

Despite numerous problems, 1998 saw considerable improvement in the atmosphere for democracy and especially good turnout in voter registration, a relatively violence-free campaign period and a positive atmosphere on polling day.

Comfrel's plans for the 1998 National Assembly Elections initially called for the fielding of 6,000 domestic observers covering about 50% of the nation's polling stations. As preparations advanced and more funding became available, a decision was reached in conjunction with donors to extend the targeted monitoring coverage to 100%. On polling day, the achieved coverage was above 94%.

Network training began early in 1998. March and April saw the launching of voter education programs that continued until July. From March, the provincial network sent in regular situation and incident reports, keeping the Comfrel national office informed of developments in the field. In May, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) sponsored a Comfrel delegation to the Philippines. Additionally, from January to September, Comfrel released 21 statements to the media.

Comfrel provided monitoring coverage of voter registration in almost all areas. This was followed by campaign monitoring and observation of the polls on 26 July 1998 and the subsequent vote counting. In addition, Comfrel carried out a Parallel Vote Tabulation.

In the aftermath of the polls, Comfrel kept up the monitoring of post-election developments and analysed its observer reports. Despite loud complaints by the opposition parties alleging electoral fraud, the observer reports did not reveal a systematic pattern of violations.

The underlying problems, though, quickly re-emerged to frustrate the post-election process with a fresh round of intimidation within days of vote counting and the staunch rejection of the results by the opposition, which marked the onset of a prolonged political deadlock. The NEC, having earlier failed to establish its credibility as a neutral body because of its composition, then performed dismally in resolving the complaints launched by the opposition parties. Confrontation escalated in Phnom Penh, fuelled by allegations of electoral fraud, reaching a pitch in the first half of September with street clashes that claimed lives of student protestors and some monks.

Intervention by King Norodom Sihanouk opened the way for the swearing in of the new National Assembly at Angkor Wat on 24 September 1998. Hopes for an end to the political deadlock, however, were quickly dashed. Talks by working groups failed to achieve meaningful concessions needed for agreement on essential issues. It was not until 12 November that the two main political parties met in Phnom Penh and cleared some major obstacles to agreement. The National Assembly finally met to inaugurate the new coalition government on 30 November 1998.

The overall election process in 1998 was marked by numerous weaknesses and some significant gains in the democratic process. For various reasons, the election could not be declared free and fair. On the other hand, it was not a complete failure, nor was the process so flawed as to warrant the minimum rating of 'acceptable.' To summarise its assessment of the election, Comfrel has therefore selected the wording of 'reasonably credible' to express a condition above mere acceptability but also unable to meet a standard of full credibility.

Comfrel plans to keep monitoring the post-election situation and carry out a range of other activities for strengthening of democracy. Among others, it intends to track the record of the winning party in honouring its campaign promises in the areas of democracy and rule of law, lobby for greater neutrality of the National Election Committee (NEC) and Provincial Election Commissions (PECs), carry out more training of its network activists and prepare for the commune elections envisaged for 1999.

2. The Comfrel Organisation

COMFREL's origins are found in the "Task Force" which came together through an initiative by three Cambodian organisations to provide an independent domestic monitoring team at the May 1993 UNTAC elections. This coalition managed to provide civic and voter education to over one million voters and worked in close collaboration with the relevant international organisations throughout Cambodia to monitor the electoral process before, during and after polling day.

In December 1995, the Presidents of the same three Cambodian organisation again joined forces in order to create the Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia - COMFREL. Subsequently more organisations decided to support this initiative. COMFREL now has 12 active member NGOs.

COMFREL's Board is responsible for the overall direction of the organisation and it appoints a five-person Executive Committee to oversee its day-to-day activities. It has its own permanent office in Phnom Penh with a Program Coordinator, a Finance Officer, an Administrator and a Secretary. On 22 December 1997, the Ministry of the Interior approved COMFREL's registration as a Non-Government Organisation.

COMFREL is supported by an extensive network covering almost all of the country's provinces, with about 2,000 volunteers at the commune level and a total of approximately 12,000 election observers.

COMFREL's role in Cambodia is strictly neutral and non-partisan. The organisation is dedicated to building a sound basis for a free and fair election process, informing voters of their rights and monitoring the voter registration, party campaigns, polls and vote counting. These activities aim as much as possible to ensure that voters are able to vote according to their conscience and to minimise the possibility of irregularities and violations in the election process.

3. Co-operation with Donors and Other Organisations

3.1. *Donors*

Comfrel gratefully acknowledges the valuable financial support extended by The Asia Foundation (TAF) on behalf of USAID, the Canada Fund, the Netherlands-based NOVIB development agency, Forum Syd, Oxfam America and the Embassy of New Zealand. From the beginning of 1998 to the conclusion of the polls, this support reached a collective total of more than \$1 million.

Non-financial support also came from the European Union, which provided posters and other voter education materials. TAF provided video cassettes, an office computer and made available a 4-wheel drive vehicle and several motorcycles on a loan basis.

3.2. *Cambodian Organisations*

At various stages during the election process, Comfrel and the other two election monitoring organisations, the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (Coffel) and the Neutral and Impartial Committee for Free Elections (Niefec), maintained contact with each other, though following essentially separate paths in the implementation of their programs.

In January 1998, Comfrel and Coffel issued two joint statements and Comfrel, Coffel and Niefec distributed a survey form among donors, international agencies and diplomatic missions. On 29 July 1998, Comfrel, Coffel and Niefec issued a joint statement calling for proper investigation into the complaints of election irregularities. In September, Comfrel and Coffel again issued a joint statement, this time calling for an end to violence.

As the post-election situation continued to spiral downwards, more co-operation ensued with the production of another joint statement on 15 September 1998, this time by Coffel and Comfrel, calling for an end to the street violence that had been taking place for two weeks and for support for the King's initiative.

It is Comfrel's view, however, that the three Cambodian election monitoring organisations could have maintained closer contact with each other during 1998, and for future elections, more steps need to be taken to build better cohesiveness among these organisations.

Several other Cambodian organisations contributed materials in support of Comfrel's voter education programme. These were: ADHOC, a key member organisation of Comfrel; the Centre for Social Development (CSD); Women's Media Centre (WMC); and the Cambodian Institute for Human Rights (CIHR).

3.3. *International Organisations*

From an early stage and throughout the election process, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) of the United States maintained contact through regular visits and consultations, offering much moral and technical support. Comfrel also worked closely with the Bangkok-based Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL).

In May 1998, NDI and ANFREL sponsored a seven-member delegation from Comfrel to the Philippines. This offered an opportunity to compare Cambodian conditions with those in the Philippines, which offered a particularly stark contrast in freedom of expression in the media.

The Comfrel delegation participated in a 3-day training session that described the organisational structures of NAMFREL and collaboration between the various member organisations, explained the Code of Conduct for Observers and informed observers on how to watch for various methods of vote cheating. During the visit, the Comfrel delegation spent a day at COMELEC, the electoral commission of the Philippines, and learned about how polling arrangements were set up in that country. Finally, the Comfrel delegation was able to gain valuable knowledge on the workings of Parallel Vote Tabulation, which Comfrel later performed for the National Assembly Election in Cambodia.

ANFREL then sent a team of observers to help monitor the voter registration process for the National Assembly Election in Cambodia. In preparation for this, Comfrel arranged for the training of a 60-member interpreter team for the ANFREL delegation.

Later, close to the 26 July 1998 polling date, a larger ANFREL delegation arrived to participate in the monitoring of the polling and vote counting in various areas of Cambodia. Though Comfrel and ANFREL made their own assessments of the polls and issued separate statements, they cooperated with each other in holding press conferences and sharing information.

In another important area of co-operation, the United Nations Centre for Human Rights (UNCHR) provided 25,000 leaflets to support Comfrel's voter education activities.

4. Press Statements and Briefings

In late 1997, Comfrel issued a statement on the necessity of free electoral competition as a minimum condition for free and fair elections. In other statements in December 1997, Comfrel called for changes to the draft Election Law, among others concerning the composition of the proposed National Election Committee (NEC) and that this body should be accountable to the National Assembly rather than the Government.

Before and after the polls in 1998, Comfrel issued 21 statements summarised as follows:

5 January 1998: Comfrel protested the appointment of the NGO representative to the NEC. Comfrel and its sister organisation Coffel in a joint statement criticised the process for election of the representative of local Associations-NGOs to the NEC, conducted on 29 December 1997.

8 January 1998: Comfrel stated its concerns that the NEC would not be neutral, independent or qualified. The statement laid down a list of criteria for NEC membership and called for the inclusion of women members.

14 January 1998: Comfrel issued a condemnation of the shooting of the editor-in-chief of the *Nokor Khmer* newspaper while also citing serious concerns over killings of journalists and other actions, such as fines and silencing by the Ministry of Information.

29 January 1998: Comfrel and Coffel issued a joint statement expressing serious concern about the composition of the NEC and the failure of the NEC to take into account the many opinions expressed about its formation.

25 March 1998: called for the termination of the Cambodian government's contract with the Israeli-Argentinian consortium, Ciccone-Caligraphica. Comfrel cited the concerns over lack of transparency in this secret deal and the risk of even further jeopardy to the credibility of the July polls.

27 March 1998: Comfrel provided a copy of its letter to NEC Chairman Chheng Phon in which Comfrel distanced itself from opposition calls for his resignation. Comfrel believed that such a move would serve no useful purpose for the democratic process in Cambodia.

11 April 1998: Comfrel outlined a minimum condition for neutrality of the Provincial Election Committees (PECs). This statement was released in response to reports of a dominance of PEC chairpersons and members with links to the ruling party and the authorities.

3 June 1998: Comfrel reported on the first two weeks of the voter registration period, complaining of flagrant interference in Comfrel's work by the Governor of Preah Vihear while noting the relatively quick response by the NEC in sorting out difficulties with observer accreditation. The statement also mentioned reports from almost all areas of interference in the registration process by local officials, including village and commune chiefs.

18 June 1998: Comfrel reported that several positive developments had taken place during the voter registration period, but that many concerns remained. Voter registration had seen a high turnout with prevailing absence of violence, though marred by serious and widespread violations of the Election Law and NEC regulations. Most prominent among these problems were interference by commune and village chiefs and other officials in the registration stations, the collection of voter cards, some registration of minors and immigrants ineligible to vote and incomplete registration in a few areas.

9 July 1998: Following reports received from some of its member human rights organisations, Comfrel issued a statement condemning the continued violence, threats and intimidation toward political party activists and other incidents during June 1998, including shootings and the tearing down of political party signboards. The statement also warned that continued violence would place the credibility of the 26 July 1998 polls in jeopardy.

20 July 1998: Comfrel issued its statement for the first three weeks of the election campaign, noting that in most areas there were relatively levels or even absence of violence. Nevertheless, concerns still remained, in particular related to intimidation, lack of neutrality on the part of the police and other authorities and violations in campaign rules such as tearing of posters and use of contemptuous language.

25 July 1998: On the eve of the polls, Comfrel held a press conference attended by representatives of the print and electronic media in which it presented its pre-election assessment. Despite numerous problems and violations, significant improvements in some areas allowed for the possibility of reasonably credible polls, provided that a high standard of integrity was upheld during the polling and vote counting.

27 July 1998: In a morning press briefing after polling day, Comfrel announced its initial polling day observations. According to reports received, the polling had taken place smoothly and with few incidents. Despite some irregularities and incidents of a serious nature, these had not taken place on a wide scale.

28 July 1998: In another briefing, Comfrel reported that the count had been held in an atmosphere generally free from deliberate violations of the counting process. Problems and irregularities had been generally isolated, not representing a prevailing trend. Comfrel and other observers and political party agents had also experienced no significant access problems.

29 July 1998: In an initial reaction to calls for investigation into alleged irregularities, Comfrel, Coffel and Nicfec issued a statement affirming their willingness to participate in such investigation in strict impartiality. The statement laid down some specific criteria: complaints must be documented and submitted to the NEC with a copy to one or more of the observer organisations and the alleged incidents must represent serious violations with potentially significant impact on the outcome of the polls.

1 August 1998: Having received consolidated reports from its observers in 15 provinces, Comfrel reported initial observation findings in greater detail. Overall, in these provinces observers at more than 90% of polling stations reported that polling took place smoothly and without incident. In response to complaints received from opposition parties, Comfrel reiterated its willingness to participate in investigation of irregularities, provided that these irregularities were properly documented and had significant bearing on the election process. In the same statement, Comfrel also decried the resurgence of violence intimidation in the wake of the polls.

22 August 1998: Comfrel condemned a grenade attack close to midnight on 20 August 1998 at the Ministry of Interior compound that claimed the life of a driver for Kyodo news agency, calling for a complete investigation and compensation for the family of the victim.

27 August 1998: Comfrel called for simultaneous recounts of ballots for about 100 communes as a step toward resolving the public controversy over the results of the polls. In the same statement, Comfrel outlined its position in the dispute over the Balinsky/Young seat allocation formula originally set out in the earlier documents of the NEC and the Jefferson formula published in the final version of the NEC regulations, while calling for a settlement of the controversy over the seat allocation formula through a ruling by the Constitutional Council.

7 September 1998: Comfrel issued a statement condemning another grenade attack, this time at the Phnom Penh residence of Second Prime Minister Hun Sen. A serious concern expressed in the statement was the potentially serious impact on the already difficult process of resolving the disputes stemming from the election.

10 September 1998: Comfrel called for an immediate halt in all violent actions towards demonstrators. Additionally, Comfrel appealed for an end to inflammatory political rhetoric and for all parties to devote their efforts to serious negotiations.

15 September 1998: Comfrel and Coffel reiterated demands to law enforcement authorities to end the street violence in Phnom Penh. This time, however, the two organisations also appealed to protestors to halt their demonstrations and called on all parties to respect and support the negotiating initiative sponsored by King Norodom Sihanouk.

uring Pre-election Phase

Comfrel expressed its concern that the lack of proper mechanisms since 30 March 1997 and the extra-judicial killings have seriously impaired the climate needed for free and fair elections. No measures have been instituted to bring the perpetrators to justice.

In 1997, Comfrel began lobbying for changes in the electoral process. Some recommended changes were incorporated into the new constitution. Nevertheless, the situation for free and fair elections remains precarious by the prospect of lack of free electoral process and the continued presence of King Norodom Ranariddh living in exile.

Work began on the mechanisms for holding polls. The process of organizing elections appeared to be very tight. Added to this was the lack of confidence in the government for the election as the government did not

provide a clear timeline for the election until a Japanese-brokered plan succeeded in convincing King Norodom Ranariddh to return to Phnom Penh on 30 March 1998. Concrete measures to assure the full security of the election were taken. Security forces were able to greet him at the airport. Ranariddh's return was marred by clashes between his supporters and the opposition protesters at a hotel and in the vicinity of Wat Phnom with

posters were widely posted in Phnom Penh and other parts of the country. Offices of this party's offices for nine months in the

country continued to draw attention as the UN Human Rights Commission received information on more than 50 cases of human rights violations preceding April.

Some of the issues and others had yet to be resolved, including the need for King Norodom Ranariddh to accept an invitation by the Cambodian National Election Committee for international observers for the July election.

Two major areas of concern were intimidation and inequitable media access. From March to June 1998, the ruling party carried out a large-scale thumbprinting campaign, officially a membership recruiting drive but also seeking to secure pledges to vote for that party. Other forms of intimidation involved violence and the use of threats. However, the end of the voter registration period saw a pronounced reduction of these violations.

Well in advance of the election campaign period, the ruling party availed itself of state and quasi-state media to advance its platform. However, the opposition parties were effectively denied equivalent facilities. During the campaign period, all 39 political parties were allowed an equal five minutes daily on state TV, fulfilling the letter of the law of equal access but in effect placing the opposition parties at a continued disadvantage.

Despite these problems, voter registration saw a high turnout and took place largely without violence. The official campaign period from 25 June to 24 July 1998, passed with enthusiastic participation and remarkably few violations.

On the eve of the polls, fresh controversy broke out over the accreditation of tens of thousands of observers of doubtful credibility, which some feared would result in crowding out of observers from Comfrel and the two other Cambodian election monitoring organisations that enjoyed international credibility. Under pressure from many quarters, the NEC finally took last-minute action to ensure access for observers from the three organisations.

5.2. Legal Framework for the Election

The initial draft of the election law envisaged representatives from all recognised political parties on the NEC. Following recommendations made by Comfrel, the number of seats on the NEC was eventually reduced to eleven with only four allocated for political parties and the rest for persons of independent standing.

In addition to the membership of the NEC, crucial changes were made in the election law concerning the independence of the NEC from the Government. The NEC became accountable to the National Assembly, whose approval is also required for any amendments to the election law.

Nevertheless, controversy remained about the location of vote counting. The law originally passed by the National Assembly stipulated that counting would take place at each polling station despite reservations from many quarters that this could permit post-election intimidation.

This issue remained unresolved until as late as April, along with the formation of the Constitutional Council. In early May, however, a deadlock was broken enabling the National Assembly to pass the amendment on vote counting and also nominated its representatives for the Constitutional Council, despite some concerns expressed over the political affiliations of these representatives.

5.3. *The NEC*

In its early statements in November 1997, Comfrel warned that the neutrality of the NEC would be crucial to the credibility of free and fair elections. The inclusion of government members and persons with known political links would undermine this credibility. However, most of the members later appointed to the NEC proved to be linked to or aligned with the ruling party.

Comfrel and its sister organisation Coffel in a joint statement issued in early January 1998 criticised the process for election of the representative of local Associations-NGOs to the NEC, conducted on 29 December 1997. The two organisations emphasised that the selection of this representative was not based on selection criteria capable of ensuring that candidates for the position are neutral and not corrupt. Instead, the appointment was unfair, unjust and not free. However, this representative was not removed from his position.

In a later statement in January 1998, Comfrel criticised the composition of the NEC and called for the inclusion of women in its membership. This appeal met with no response.

Close to the end of January 1998, Comfrel and Coffel jointly regretted the failure of the Government to take into account the many opinions calling for a re-examination of the composition of the NEC, in particular to ensure its legality independence, competence and integrity.

Therefore, the composition of the NEC failed to satisfy Comfrel's concerns and Comfrel was unable to place confidence in the neutrality of the NEC on the basis of its composition alone.

During April 1998, some opposition members called for the resignation of Mr Cheng Phon, Chairman of the NEC. COMFREL, however, issued a statement expressing its view that no useful purpose would be served by attempting to replace the incumbent NEC Chairman.

Members of the NEC have contributed as speakers at Comfrel training programmes and the NEC and Comfrel have worked together on hosting provincial level roundtables for conflict resolution, involving local officials, the PEC, military and political parties. The NEC and Comfrel have cooperated in the production of TV interviews with the 39 political parties during the campaign period.

Comfrel's provincial activists have enjoyed varying degrees of co-operation with the Provincial Election Commissions (PECs) and considerable lobbying has taken place at this level.

In the cases of illegal collection of voter cards, the NEC intervened at the insistence of Comfrel, resulting in a general easing of this practice toward the end of the voter registration period.

It must also be mentioned that the NEC, despite lack of previous experience, managed to accomplish an enormous task under a very tight deadline before the polls. Despite the pressure from lack of time, also partly caused by late arrival of registration kits, most polling stations were properly equipped and well run on polling day.

Regrettably the NEC demonstrated several important weaknesses:

While the NEC has been responsive in rectifying many issues, it sadly lacked the desired capability and motivation for following up on cases of serious violations. In particular, the NEC failed to exercise the requisite resoluteness in urging the government to investigate and prosecute cases of political killings.

In repeated instances, the NEC failed to demonstrate adequate proof of its independence. The following are some examples:

- *Secret deal*

In March, Comfrel issued a statement calling on the NEC to cancel its contract with Ciccone Caligraphica, a private Israeli-Argentinian contractor engaged for the elections. Among others, this arrangement lacked transparency, having been concluded in secrecy and under government pressure, and was only announced to the public some time afterwards. It was also perceived as a possible attempt to avoid working with international donors, which Comfrel believed would seriously undermine the credibility of the election.

- *Nomination of the PECs and CECs*

In April 1998 Comfrel issued a statement expressing its concern over the appointments of persons to the PECs because of domination by members linked to the ruling party. Some of these committee members were still involved with their former positions.

Comfrel recommended that the provincial chairpersons and deputy chairpersons in these six provinces be replaced with persons in line with the same criteria for the selection of the NEC chairman. This, however, was not done.

The Commune Election Commissions (CECs), which were selected by the PECs, have also suffered from the same lack of independence.

- *Issuance of observer accreditation*

Failure to establish criteria has undermined the credibility of observer accreditation, leading to serious abuse by some local organisations. With just ten days remaining before polling day, observer cards were issued to tens of thousands of untrained persons from these organisations, one of which is suspected of having police and military links.

Fears arose that the accreditation of these questionable observers would lead to crowding out or possible exclusion of international observers and legitimate trained local observers from polling stations. Some of the accredited NGOs were so closely linked to the ruling party that a rubber-stamp statement could have been expected.

Comfrel experienced repeated difficulties with the NEC over the loss of observer lists and other accreditation documents. Nevertheless, in the latest instance within one week of polling day, the NEC did respond under last-minute pressure from the entire international community to facilitate the needed accreditation for Comfrel's polling day observers.

Added to the lack of independence are the repeated instances in which the NEC delayed urgent action to make improvements, correct its own mistakes or solve problems until it came under pressure from the international community.

NEC efforts to ensure equal media access for political parties have been half-hearted at the best. This resulted in restricted access that constituted a literal, formal implementation of equality during the campaign period following months of the ruling party taking advantage of state and quasi-state media resources at its disposal.

Despite a sterling effort to meet very difficult deadlines and success in holding reasonably credible polls, the NEC put on a dismal performance in the wake of the elections. Poor resolution of complaints and in particular the inadequate recounts fueled the opposition's dissatisfaction with the outcome of the polls and contributed to the ensuing confrontation and political deadlock. Thus at a time when it had a crucial role to play in resolution of post-election disputes, the NEC appeared to have been more preoccupied with compliance with certain procedures and legalities, in so doing contributing to the ensuing political deadlock that was to dog the nation for months to come.

5.4. *Media Issues*

In a statement in November 1997, Comfrel insisted that fair media access was crucial to allowing genuine electoral competition. Comfrel said that without clear evidence of genuine electoral competition, it would not be able to regard the election as valid.

In the months preceding the campaign, the ruling party took advantage of state and quasi-state media resources at its disposal without any sign of intervention by the NEC. On the other hand, opposition parties were not permitted to open their own TV stations.

This situation lasted until the beginning of the campaign period, when the NEC arranged a constricted equality media access for the 39 contesting parties in a literal, formal and stifled sense. Under this arrangement, each party was allowed a five minute slot of interview time on state TV daily commencing 21 June 1998 to explain their platform and programs

In these daily shows, Comfrel cooperated with the NEC and assisted in facilitating coverage on national radio. Comfrel provided some technical assistance and contributed to the list of questions put to candidates by the NEC.

Although the NEC is vested with authority by law, in practice it was unable to fully exercise this authority with the state media. Broadcasting of the roundtables on state TV was preceded by drawn out lobbying and negotiations, and even then the TV would only run the broadcasts with some reimbursement for technical support.

Press reporting on election related issues and the campaign has been generally unfettered and in many cases has exceeded the bounds of proper journalistic ethics. In a statement on 20 July, Comfrel expressed its concern over abusive and inflammatory language used in some Khmer opposition-aligned press in its reports on political issues.

5.5. *Voter/Civic Education*

Network training for voter and civic education commenced in January with meetings in Phnom Penh for Comfrel's provincial staff. In March, training sessions were expanded to the provincial capitals and towns with district activists and some commune level volunteers attending.

Full-scale training for 1,572 commune volunteers began in May and continued in June and July with a total of 2,044 commune volunteers. During the 519 training sessions held during this period, the commune volunteers received instruction for voter education and were provided with materials. In June, further training was given to 7,114 village level observers and in July to 8,946 observers. During those two months, the observers attended a total of 3,168 training sessions.

During May, June and July, Comfrel commune volunteers and village observers exceeded the earlier target of 11,000 voter education sessions by holding a total of 12,434 village level workshops to explain the electoral process and inform voters of their rights. These workshops were attended by approximately 870,000 persons, divided almost equally into 436,000 men and 434,000 women (information from activist reports).

Additionally, Comfrel volunteers put up a large number of posters in addition to distributing considerable volumes of leaflets, booklets and other materials, some produced by Comfrel itself, but also many contributed by other organizations. The posters put up by Comfrel's activists reached an estimated 4 million people.

In various parts of Cambodia, Comfrel volunteers broadcast TV spots on local TV, using video cassettes supplied by the Women's Media Centre. Some videos were played to local villagers in video parlours.

During June, Comfrel activities in June resulted in the publication of 23 articles in the *Rasmei Kampuchea* and *Moneaseika* newspapers. These articles discussed the Comfrel organisation, Comfrel's workshops on intimidation and other election issues, vote buying, thumbprinting, voter education, voter rights, observer training, the election law, democratic principles, eligibility to register, the campaign and the procedures for voting and vote counting. The combined circulation of the two newspapers was about 27,000.

The articles in *Rasmei Kampuchea* also featured questions to readers with a small gift offered to encourage responses. These questions sought to find out how well readers understood the articles and the extent of their interest in the polls. Responses came from about 100 readers.

Comfrel's voter education activities focused more on the actual education of the public than the monitoring of voter education. Despite this, some spot sampling of opinions in advance of the polls indicated that voters at the village level understood their right to voter secrecy and that they were prepared to vote according to their conscience even in spite of intimidation.

These voter education activities were supplemented by a series of broadcasts through the electronic media. Comfrel arranged for Cambodian National Radio to broadcast a series of three programmes for two days each from 4-9 May 1998. Then, the radio carried two spots—What is Comfrel and Why Do We Go to Vote—for two days each and 11 other programmes for one day each from 10-24 May 1998.

State-owned TV3 broadcast three programmes for Comfrel on general election awareness and the coming polling day for two days each from 11-16 May 1998, followed by three programmes for two days each on how to vote and voter registration requirements from 17-22 May 1998.

From 9 to 23 June 1998, National Radio carried nine different broadcast for one or two days each on various election-related issues, including voter secrecy, importance of the election, civic rights and an overview of the electoral system.

5.6. *Registration of Political Parties*

The Political Parties Law required that political parties be registered first with the Ministry of Interior and then with the NEC. Registration with the Ministry of Interior was hampered with disputes over the names of political parties, with the result that some parties had to change their names. The most notable example was the Khmer Neutral Party, which eventually became reincarnated as the Sam Rainsy Party.

Out of 44 parties that sought to complete the required registration process, 39 were registered with the NEC within the prescribed deadline. Five parties were denied registration because of late application or incomplete documentation. One of these parties appealed to the Constitutional Council, which then ruled to uphold the original decision of the NEC.

5.7. *Violence and Intimidation*

In spite of efforts by the ruling party to reduce violence, expressed through messages on TV calling on Cambodians to refrain from the use of violence in the election process, politically-related killings claimed about 40 lives since the beginning of this year to the date of the polls. The Government and the ruling party, despite their obligation to provide a safe and secure environment for the polls, failed to undertake serious investigation of these killings. It is Comfrel's opinion that not all local officials were aware of these TV announcements and therefore continue to behave with lack of restraint or respect for the law.

Comfrel regards any level of political killings as unacceptable. Nevertheless, the pre-election situation in 1998 may be considered as an improvement compared to the more than 380 killings in advance of the 1993 election. Comfrel believes that increased human rights awareness built up over the previous five years combined with the vital role of the international community helped prevent higher numbers of fatalities.

Intimidation was widespread, affecting most of the country's provinces. In addition to the killings noted above, Comfrel received numerous reports of threatenings, beatings, verbal intimidation and thumbprinting. One example of an intimidatory statement was made at the national congress of the ruling party in March 1998: "If our party loses, you lose everything." This statement was also echoed by local officials in some areas.

In its thumbprinting programme, the ruling party through village chiefs and local political party agents coerced citizens into affixing thumbprints on printed applications for party membership that also contain a pledge to vote for that party. In many instances, villagers were coerced into taking oaths to pledge their support for the ruling party.

Throughout voter registration until the middle of June 1998, intimidation persisted in many areas with complaints of thumbprinting and verbal threats made in connection with the collection of voter cards. Comfrel continued to receive reports of intimidation of opposition political party members, mainly from Svay Rieng, Takeo, Kampot, Kandal and Kampong Cham.

Reports received in June 1998 from the Comfrel provincial network and member organisations, in particular ADHOC, Human Rights Vigilance and the Khmer Kampuchea Krom Human Rights Association, indicated an increase in election-related violence, threats and intimidation, including the tearing down of political party signboards. These incidents took place in most of the nation's provinces.

Comfrel subsequently expressed its dissatisfaction with the failure of the NEC and government agencies to come forth with answers or take measures to solve election-related killings, threats and intimidation. In particular, violations have not generally been investigated and perpetrators have not been brought to justice.

Despite these problems, levels of intimidation fell off dramatically during the campaign period and polling on election day as well as subsequent vote counting.

5.8. *Registration*

Registration of voters commenced on 18 May 1998 and by the end of the month, more than half of the estimated number of Cambodia's eligible voters had been registered.

Voter registration began with some technical and procedural difficulties. Overall turnout during the registration period was strong at 93% and the registration process was relatively free of violence. Another positive development was that the NEC demonstrated increasing responsiveness to Comfrel's requests, for example, for solutions to problems over accreditation of observers and the presence of unauthorised persons in voter registration stations.

The most blatant example of interference during the voter registration period took place in Preah Vihear, where the ruling party-aligned provincial governor ignored the neutrality of the PEC, ordering the PEC to withdraw the observer cards issued earlier by the PEC to Comfrel's observers. The PEC was apparently unable to refuse this order and as a result, Comfrel observers were denied access to voter registration stations for two weeks. For one month, Comfrel felt unable to open its office in Preah Vihear because of threats and harassment, although this pressure failed to bring a halt to Comfrel's monitoring activities. During this time, Comfrel personnel were tailed by security personnel in intimidatory moves aimed at discouraging them from operating.

In the rest of the country, the voter registration process was marred to varying degrees by intimidation. The ruling party continued its thumbprinting drives and in a significant proportion of voter registration stations, local officials and village chiefs kept a watch on voter registration proceedings and interfered in the work of voter registration officials.

According to reports from many areas, village chiefs and other officials intervened in voter registration to allow the registration of varying numbers of minors and immigrants unable to speak Khmer, who would not otherwise be allowed to register under law. Many people registered under the weak provision of the law allowing persons without valid ID to be supported by two witnesses. Improper registration of immigrant Vietnamese in many areas became an issue, but according to Comfrel's findings, these registrations did not take place on the scale reported by some opposition parties.

During the first two weeks of the registration process, cards of registered voters were collected by village chiefs, local officials or political party agents in some areas in order to note their serial numbers. In many of these cases, voters were warned that a computer analysis would reveal how they voted on polling day. However, collection of voter cards eased toward the end of the voter registration period following Comfrel's insistent complaints to the NEC.

In addition, the voter registration process showed up some organisational and logistic weaknesses within the NEC. For example, lack of supplies forced the premature closure of registration in one commune in Kampong Speu province. Registration closed one week before the official closing date in Stung Treng with over 90% of estimated eligible voters registered. The registration teams were reportedly moved to Battambang where teams had run out of supplies with only 65% of estimated eligible voters registered by the end of the third week.

Voter registration in Battambang, Koh Kong, Kampong Speu and Stung Treng was incomplete, which can be explained in part by organisational and logistic difficulties, leaving some eligible voters in remote areas deprived of the opportunity to register and therefore to vote.

5.9. *Campaign Period*

One indication of the prevailing climate in April 1998, well in advance of the official campaign period, was the absence of signboards of opposition political parties in some provinces. However, in most larger provinces, signboards from FUNCINPEC and other opposition parties were present to a lesser or greater degree.

The official campaign period began on 25 June 1998. Monitoring reports during this period indicated widespread activity by several political parties and in most areas an absence or low level of campaign violations, coupled with a noticeable absence of intimidation in comparison to preceding months. Notable exceptions to this were Siem Reap and Kandal provinces.

Supporters from a wide range of political parties participated enthusiastically in the campaign. In this, the political parties on the most part demonstrated restraint and refrained from interference in each other's campaign activities.

In 16 provinces and towns, Comfrel cooperated with the PECs and some Commune Election Commissions (CECs) in holding roundtables that brought together political party candidates, party agents and local authorities to discuss ways of avoiding violence during the campaign period.

Major violations in Kandal and Siem Reap included attempted vote buying, obstruction of political party campaigning activities, use of government facilities for party campaign purposes and lack of neutrality of government officials, police and military. Other violations included tearing of posters and campaigning in advance of the official campaign period. One too frequent campaign abuse was the use of contemptuous language by the two largest opposition parties, in many instances targeting the ethnic Vietnamese minority in Cambodia.

The official campaign period came to an end on 24 July 1998.

5.10. Assessment on the Eve of the Polls

On the morning of 25 July 1998, Comfrel released its Pre-Election Assessment, in which it reported that the general environment had not been satisfactory with continued killings, intimidation and other serious violations. Preparations for the polls had been marred by interference from ruling party-aligned government officials in many areas.

The NEC, under the constraints of limited funding and no previous experience, had completed enormous tasks within a very tight time frame. It had been responsive in varying degrees to Comfrel's complaints, but unfortunately some of its members lacked independence it had shown disappointing performance in dealing with complaints, enforcing sanctions and taking concrete actions to see that criminal perpetrators are brought to justice.

Nevertheless, the country had seen a high turnout during voter registration. Political parties had participated enthusiastically in the campaign with increased political expression. Campaign activities had been generally free of hindrance or disruption. Cambodia also urgently needed a legitimate democratically elected government both for internal stability and to regain its standing in the international community.

In its pre-election assessment, Comfrel emphasised that any possibility for an assessment of the entire election process as reasonably credible would be contingent upon a very high level of integrity in the polling and vote counting process.

6. Election Day

6.1. *Observation Methodology*

In advance of polling day, Comfrel observers were given training and assigned checklists with detailed information summarised into 14 major criteria for polling procedure. The criteria on which polling day was assessed are as follows:

1. Were there any essential polling station materials missing?
2. Were the polling station staff competent for their duties and did they apply the correct procedure?
3. Were the polling station staff neutral?
4. Were voters not registered on the list allowed to vote? (Inclusion)
5. Were voters registered on the list not allowed to vote? (Exclusion)
6. Was there sufficient guarantee of voter secrecy?
7. Were unauthorised persons allowed into the polling station?
8. Did unauthorised persons interfere with the polling procedure?
9. Was there any intimidation of voters?
10. Was there any intimidation of polling station staff?
11. Did anyone attempt to bribe voters?
12. Were there any problems outside the polling station?
13. Were there any problems at closing?
14. Were there any problems during the transport of the ballot boxes to the commune counting centre?

The data recorded on polling day observer forms was consolidated at the provinces or Phnom Penh, first by adding up the number of irregularities at polling stations in each commune and then the totals for each category in each district and province. In addition, provincial offices sent in information on specific incidents during the polling and vote counting processes. On the evening of polling day, information on polling day observations had begun arriving at the Comfrel National Office in Phnom Penh.

6.2. *Initial Assessment of the Polling Process*

In a press conference after polling day, Comfrel announced that according to reports received, the polling had taken place smoothly and with few incidents. Although there had been some irregularities and incidents of a serious nature, these had not taken place on a wide scale. Problems had been isolated, mostly confined to one village here and another there, and did not represent a widespread, prevailing trend.

6.3. *Overview of Polling Day Observation Results*

Comfrel's polling day observation reports cover 11,033 or 94.3% of the 11,695 polling stations in Cambodia. According to these reports, 8,444 polling stations or 76.5% of those covered by Comfrel observers were free of irregularities and other problems. However, the largest single problem with polling stations concerned the early morning crowds anxious to vote, resulting in difficulties with crowd control.

Concerning the polling process itself, observations inside polling stations revealed that 10,268 polling stations or 93.1% of those observed by Comfrel were free of irregularities.

Only one province—Mondulhiri—reported no violations in either polling or the vote counting process. One other province, Koh Kong, reported only some problems with the crowds outside the polling stations observed, but no irregularities inside polling stations.

In ten constituencies—Banteay Meanchay, Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Kandal, Pailin, Phnom Penh, Prey Veng, Siem Reap and Svay Rieng—Comfrel observers reported relatively few irregularities in the polling procedure. In these areas, more than 90% of the polling stations were reported free of problems, other than outside with crowd control.

Therefore, Comfrel observers in twelve of Cambodia's 23 constituencies reported no or relatively few problems in the polling process with the exception of difficulties with crowd control.

However, in the other eleven provinces and towns, observers reported more serious levels of irregularities.

Polling stations in Kampong Chhnang experienced various problems but most notably the absence of some essential polling station materials and interference by unauthorised persons. Inclusion of ineligible voters was reported at 8 out of 30 polling stations in Kep.

Problems of one kind and another were also reported for all polling stations in Preah Vihear and for 77 out of 89 polling stations in Stung Treng. About one quarter of polling stations in Rattanakiri experienced problems at closing. Reports from Takeo indicated significantly higher percentages of polling stations, problems with polling station staff and interference by unauthorised persons.

7. Vote Counting

7.1. *Observation Methodology*

Comfrel observers were assigned checklists with detailed information summarised an overall assessment of vote counting. The criteria on which vote counting was assessed are as follows:

1. Overall rating of the vote counting procedure according to a., b., c. or d. as follows:
 - a. No irregularities
 - b. A few irregularities
 - c. Some serious irregularities
 - d. Many serious irregularities, result possibly affected.
2. Did the polling station staff understand the counting procedure correctly?
3. Did the Commune Election Commission (CEC) staff understand the counting procedure correctly?
4. Did the CEC fill out the results correctly on the appropriate forms?

Vote counting observation data was subsequently consolidated at the provincial offices or in Phnom Penh. In addition, provincial offices sent in information on specific incidents during the vote counting process.

7.2. *Initial Assessment of Vote Counting*

On the day immediately after vote counting, Comfrel held a press conference and announced its initial assessment of the counting process.

Comfrel reported that the count was held in an atmosphere generally free from deliberate violations of the counting process. The counting took place smoothly and with few incidents. Problems and irregularities were mainly isolated and did not represent a prevailing trend.

The incidents reported thus far did not appear to be part of a widespread campaign to undermine the counting process, instead having resulted more from technical problems due to the complexity of the count reporting process.

Comfrel and other observers and political party agents experienced no significant access problems. In the vast majority of counting centres, Comfrel observers were not hindered from entering and observing the counting process.

At that stage Comfrel was able to give the opinion that the counting process had been fair and credible, notwithstanding the isolated incidents of restricting the access of party agents and observers.

7.3. *Overview of Vote Counting Observation Results*

Comfrel observers were on hand at almost all of the country's 1,617 commune counting centres to note the ballot count for parallel vote tabulation. Detailed reports on the vote counting process were received from 1,218 commune counting centres or 75.3% of the total.

During the vote counting, Comfrel observers reported no irregularities at 840 counting centres or 74.6% of those where a detailed watch was kept on the counting process. At 313 counting centres, or 26.0% of those observed in detail, observers reported a few irregularities. Some serious violations were reported at 93 counting centres, or 7.7% of those reported. At 13 counting centres, or 1.08% of those monitored for the counting process, observers reported a high number of serious violations.

Two provinces—Mondulkiri and Koh Kong—reported no violations in the vote counting process. In ten constituencies—Banteay Meanchay, Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Thom, Kandal, Pailin, Phnom Penh, Prey Veng, Siem Reap, Svay Rieng and Takeo—more than 90% of commune counting centres were reported free of any serious irregularities.

Possibly serious irregularities were reported for more than 10% of the commune counting centres observed in eight provinces—Kampong Speu, Kampot, Kep, Kratie, Preah Vihear, Pursat, Sihanoukville and Stung Treng.

8. Parallel Vote Tabulation

Alongside monitoring the vote count, Comfrel observers also noted the ballot count for each of the contesting political parties at the counting centres. The count for each commune counting centre was then entered into a computer database and totalled to produce a Parallel Vote Tabulation.

Soon after the completion of the counting, Comfrel regularly announced its preliminary tabulation results. It was not long, however, before a discrepancy was discovered in the seat allocation formula used on Comfrel's computers and the allocation used at the NEC, which produced different numbers of seats won for the three major political parties. This discrepancy, which originated in an obscure change in the seat allocation formula in the NEC documents published on 29 May 1998, marked the beginning of a long controversy over the allocation of seats in the National Assembly.

Other than for the discrepancy discovered in seat allocation and later corrected on Comfrel's computers, the results obtained through Comfrel's Parallel Vote Tabulation were very close to the results announced by the NEC.

9. Role of Political Party Agents

During the voter registration period, Comfrel received reports of interference in the work of voter registration stations by some CPP party agents.

In June and July 1998, Comfrel organised 23 roundtables in 16 provinces and towns in cooperation with PECs, some CECs, local authorities and political parties, and included participation by political party agents. These meetings discussed election-related issues, seeking to reduce areas of conflict and minimise potential for election-related violence.

On polling day and during the vote counting, party agents were seen on hand at almost all polling stations and all counting centres. They did not, however, launch complaints on either polling day or after vote counting, thus neglecting an important step in the complaint resolution procedure. Therefore, when the leadership of the opposition parties later produced allegations of electoral fraud, they were in a weaker position to pursue their claims.

Comfrel therefore believes that in advance of an election, political party agents should be given training in what to observe and how to launch complaints. This appears to be important to help ensure a more satisfactory resolution of complaints and minimise post-election conflict.

10. Aftermath of the Election

The post-election situation in August was marked by a serious deterioration from the earlier optimism that prevailed on polling day and during vote counting.

In various scenarios postulated in advance of the polls, the major concern was whether the ruling party would be willing to concede defeat if it lost the election. It appears no-one had anticipated the furious protests that would come from the opposition.

Additionally, the seat allocation formula had been quickly changed from the Balinsky/Young formula published in the 25 May 1998 version of the NEC documents to the Jefferson formula in the 29 May 1998 version, signed by NEC Chairman Chheng Phon. No attention had been drawn to the change in formula with the more than 200-page document, resulting in the assumption by the opposition parties and observer groups alike that seat allocation would take place according to Balinsky/Young. This set the stage for a long drawn out and bitter controversy over seat allocation after the polls.

Almost as soon as initial results became available, opposition parties began to decry the polls, claiming fraud. Within days, the opposition parties also began pressing demands for parliamentary seat allocation according to the Balinsky/Young formula.

Within the same week, a fresh round of intimidation and violence broke out, targeting opposition party activists in some areas and lasting for several days. Comfrel and various human rights organisations condemned these actions, and following a televised appeal by the Second Prime Minister, the violence largely eased.

However, the most prolonged and intractable difficulties arising from the polls concerned the unresolved disputes over the results and the seat allocation formula and the opposition boycott of the formation of a new government.

During August 1998 Comfrel was flooded with faxes from the Sam Rainsy Party protesting alleged irregularities. Most of these complaints, however, lacked adequate evidence concerned relatively small details less likely to affect the result of the polls. The sheer volume of complaints of lesser substance, however, detracted from the potential effectiveness of pursuing a smaller number of complaints with merit. Nevertheless, Comfrel continued to support the proposed investigation of complaints with merit and in particular recounting of a larger number of communes to help put to rest the prevailing doubts and suspicions over the election results.

The opposition-aligned media was quick to pick up on the opposition party charges of fraud and published these allegations as if they were facts. EU observers came under criticism as early as 3 August 1998, but by the end of the month the opposition media had turned up the heat considerably.

Comfrel attributes the sad deterioration in the first few weeks after the polls to prevailing suspicions and lack of confidence in the integrity of the electoral process, the NEC's poor handling of the seat formula in advance of the election and lack of transparency and rapid breakdown of the complaint resolution process at the NEC, which in turn fuelled the political rhetoric of the opposition parties.

Despite a commendable performance in organising the polls, the NEC failed dismally in providing a credible response to the complaints of the opposition parties with sufficient investigation of alleged irregularities. Had the NEC been confident of the integrity of the polling process, a more transparent approach would have helped to improve the credibility of the polls and therefore the acceptability of the results.

When the initial recounting was halted and legal recourses available to the opposition parties became effectively blocked by the NEC, the opposition campaign then took to the streets with a sit-in in front of the National Assembly that quickly became dubbed "Democracy Square." Tensions escalated with a grenade explosion at the Ministry of Interior and increasing use of inflammatory political rhetoric, including the call for a cruise missile strike and the exploitation of historical ethnic resentments for political gains.

As it appears, however, there may have been some hope of avoiding or at least alleviating this tension. Comfrel emphasises that it was at the critical juncture in the immediate aftermath of the polls, when confidence was still high, that the NEC had a vital role to play in bolstering the credibility of the election process.

The evaluation of the process by the international observers as "broadly representative" or by Comfrel's using its own cautious phrase of "reasonably credible" did indicate a basic underlying soundness in the process and therefore also of the results. Nevertheless, the use of such tentative and qualified language also pointed to a need for further measures to ensure better credibility of the election process in the eyes of all participants and members of the public.

On 23 August 1998, events took a significant turn with the commencement of the "Democracy Square" sit-in in front of the National Assembly to protest alleged election irregularities while the Constitutional Council held hearings into the opposition's complaints. This sit-in attracted thousands of protestors and was to last two weeks.

One month after the polls, on 27 August 1998, Comfrel issued an appeal for better demonstration of good faith by the NEC and Constitutional Council (CC) in response to the complaints lodged by the opposition parties. Comfrel also called for a satisfactory legal ruling to resolve the controversy over the seat allocation formula, citing its reasoning that the first formula announced by the NEC in May was more representative of the ballots cast.

In the same statement, Comfrel announced that having completed an indepth analysis of its observer reports, it stood by its earlier assessment of the polling and vote counting as reasonably credible. Therefore, recounting would have been a useful measure for settling the controversy over the results of the 26 July 1998 polls. Comfrel insisted that there was no reason for the NEC and CC to refuse the recounts other than the technical problems posed by organising recount of ballots for the large number of communes as demanded by the opposition parties.

Although the prospect of recounting 800 communes would undoubtedly have represented a daunting task for the NEC, Comfrel believed that recounting of a significant number of randomly selected communes was still technically feasible and indicated its willingness to assist the NEC for this purpose.

On 31 August 1998, the Constitution Council issued a ruling dismissing the opposition's complaints as "inappropriate" and effectively shutting down the election appeals process. The next day, the NEC announced official election results despite opposition objections and complaints.

Demonstrations then gathered force with growing numbers of protestors. The opposition parties immediately reiterated their demands for reconciliation of used, unused and spoiled ballot papers, recounting to confirm the official results, revoting in some areas and reallocation of seats according to the earlier Balinsky/Young formula announced by the NEC instead of the Jefferson formula published on 29 May 1998.

On 5 September 1998, talks between the political parties began in Siem Reap under the chairmanship of King Norodom Sihanouk. These talks failed to produce results and came to an abrupt halt on the morning of 7 September 1998, when two grenades exploded at the residence of Hun Sen in Phnom Penh.

That morning, Hun Sen held a televised press conference in Phnom Penh condemning the explosion and threatening action against opposition party leaders. He also announced a travel ban on approximately 70 members of the opposition. That night, security forces took action against demonstrators attempting to protect Sam Rainsy at the Cambodia. At least 2 were killed, including a monk, and 6 were injured. Some were also arrested.

The next day, amid escalating demonstrations, security forces cleared the "Democracy Square" in front of the National Assembly and another sit-in that had been taking place outside the Ministry of Information.

Demonstrations then took on a sporadic nature with protestors scattered in various areas around Phnom Penh. Demonstrators gathered daily in smaller groups daily near the US Embassy and were repeatedly dispersed by police. Students continued to attempt to amass despite repressive efforts. Shootings resulted in some serious injuries and fatalities.

On 12 September 1998, violence escalated further with the entry of counter-demonstrators wielding steel bars, bamboo rods and in a few cases, firearms. Larger counter-demonstrations were held in Phnom Penh on 13 September; some of these counter-demonstrators assaulted bystanders and looted shops.

In the afternoon after more waves of protests on Monday, 14 September 1998, Prince Ranariddh went on radio to call for an end to the street protests. By the next day, the demonstrations had largely ceased.

After the meeting between King Sihanouk and Prince Ranariddh and Sam Rainsy on 16-17 September 1998, an agreement was reached in which the opposition parties would join talks chaired by the King. At Siem Reap on 22 September 1998, Hun Sen agreed to reconciliation of used, unused and spoiled ballot papers and the three parties agreed to hold an inaugural meeting of the new National Assembly on 24 Sept, chaired by King Norodom Sihanouk.

On 24 September 1998, the inaugural meeting of the new National Assembly took place at the King's residence in Siem Reap. That day, the rocket attack took place while Hun Sen's motorcade was heading toward Angkor Wat for the swearing in ceremony. The attack claimed at least one life and injured three other persons.

Just after the swearing of MPs, two opposition parties left Siem Reap for Bangkok, following the lifting of the travel ban by Hun Sen. The hoped-for resolution of outstanding disputes between the two largest parties failed to materialise and during October, meetings between working groups produced little change in the respective positions.

Only in November 1998 did a meeting on the eve of King Sihanouk's departure to Beijing produce some significant breakthroughs to pave the way for resolving the deadlock. The negotiations resulted in agreement for amnesty for key figures, the creation of a senate to be chaired by the CPP President, thereby allowing the Funcinpec President to chair the National Assembly. Finally, on 30 November 1998, the new coalition government was sworn in at the National Assembly.

11. Conclusions

The 1998 National Assembly election was marked by numerous weaknesses that undermined its credibility. Because of intimidation and other problems, the election could not be described as free. Additionally, inequitable access to media and lack of neutrality of the Provincial and Commune Election Commissions (PECs and CECs) also meant that the election could not be described as fair.

Despite these vital concerns, the positive improvements witnessed during the registration period, campaign, polling and vote counting did allow the election to have some degree of effectiveness. Some problems did occur during polling and counting, though Comfrel's observers reported that the majority of polling stations were not affected. Despite the vociferous protests launched by the opposition in the aftermath of the polls, these complaints failed to yield evidence of problems that would have significantly changed the election results, much less prove any systematic pattern of fraud.

Comfrel has therefore assessed the 1998 National Assembly election as 'reasonably credible.' In doing so, it believes that the election process has sufficient positive points to deserve a higher rating than the bare minimum 'acceptable' while on the other hand it could not be rated free and fair. Neither, in light of the many problems especially preceding the polls, could Comfrel give an unequivocal assessment as 'credible.'

The experience of the 1998 election has demonstrated that it is possible to lobby for improvements in support of fairness and credibility of elections and achieve substantial progress in the face of seemingly intractable resistance from entrenched interests. Many Cambodians have now been educated to some degree in the electoral process and approximately 70,000 citizens were directly involved in organising or monitoring the polls. Despite numerous problems, intimidation, violence, interference in the process by some officials and party agents and inequitable media access, it was possible to achieve some genuine improvement in respect for the ballot box.

Nevertheless, Comfrel's emphasises that its assessment of the election as 'reasonably credible' carries with it the message that serious improvements are necessary for future elections. These improvements are detailed in the recommendations on the following page.

12. Recommendations

- 1) It is extremely important that the NEC review its composition with the aim of ensuring its credibility as a neutral body in the eyes of all political parties and the public. The NEC must also review the composition of PzCs and CECs for the same purpose.
- 2) The NEC needs to review and improve its complaint resolution procedures to ensure that complaining parties receive proper responses and that all complaints can be resolved in a credible, transparent manner in the presence of media and election observers.
- 3) The NEC needs to be better equipped for taking action in response to complaints of violence and intimidation and to have better liaison with the law enforcement authorities for this purpose.
- 4) The NEC needs to review and improve its rules governing media access to ensure more equitable access to the media for all political parties in a credible manner.
- 5) The Election Law should be amended to stipulate the seat allocation formula in the exact form as to be applied by the NEC, and not merely express seat allocation in an undefined phrase open to multiple interpretations.
- 6) The Law on Political Parties should be amended to stipulate that members of the military, police and judiciary and the members of the Constitutional Council and the NEC who pass judgement on any election shall be non-partisan.
- 7) Political parties and especially political party agents should be given training in advance of elections on how to launch and follow up complaints.
- 8) Voter/civic education should be carried out on an ongoing basis, not only to inform the public about correct voting procedure and their rights on polling day, but also on the wider subject of the democratic process as a whole.
- 9) Election observers, including those under Comfrel, should be provided more comprehensive training in their election monitoring tasks.
- 10) Cambodia's election monitoring organisations, including Comfrel, should do more to strengthen their public profile with the aim of gaining greater recognition as a source of credible information on the election process and in so doing help improve stability during future elections.

APPENDIX I

COMFREL'S MASTER PLAN
FOR THE
1998 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION

APPENDIX I

Master Plan for the 1998 Election

(The following are key excerpts from Comfrel's master plan for the 1998 National Assembly election, produced for donors in late March 1998.)

Aims of Project: Involvement in the July 1998 National Election:

- To provide effective input into all election-related laws, regulations and procedures;
- To contribute toward the creation of a neutral and free environment especially provide the understanding the role and responsibility of the state institutions and civic organisations which are involved within election to redress human rights and democracy;
- To educate and inform Cambodians about the election process and to foster a broad-based understanding of the fundamentals of democracy and the rights of eligible citizens to vote without fear of reprisal.
- To take part in the national election observation campaign and deploy trained non-partisan observers to the nation's polling stations on Election Day to observe vote counting and tabulation to deter impropriety, and to report on the conduct of the polling.
- To monitor all cases of human rights abuses, intimidation and violence or irregularities during election process, especially during voter registration and political party campaigning.

Main activities:

- *Advocacy and Lobbying;*
- *Training;*
- *Development of Election Education Materials and radio and television public education campaigns;*
- *Voter Registration Monitoring;*
- *Civic/Voter Education, Information Workshop for Voters;*
- *Electoral Campaign Monitoring; Election Day Observation.*

Location of project: 23 provinces/towns throughout the country

I - ADVOCACY and LOBBYING

The above mentioned considerations indicate that the legal framework is not currently in place to facilitate the smooth running of the election. While it is certainly hoped that the Government will urgently address these issues, the absence of this framework complicates the role of civic organisations. There are several legal considerations to be taken into account in the run up to the 1998 National Elections and local elections.

First, there is the current Electoral Law. Second, through the Nationality Law had been passed it still has to be promulgated. An independent National Electoral Commission has been appointed. There will be also the insistence on convincing election plan and convincing legislation guaranteeing free and fair election and an independent and impartial election body to organise the election. There will be an assurance of the neutrality of the armed forces and civil servants.

COMFREL's board members will play an active role in participating in the formulation of electoral regulations and electoral bodies relevant to Election instruments. This includes providing advice concerning the preparation of the Electoral Law and the establishment of a National Electoral Commission, taking into account the provisions of the National Constitution and respect for human rights.

Input to election related regulations will be provided on an ongoing basis.

The ability of the lobby group to influence the design and operation of the election system require election experts who have access to decision makers in Cambodian government and mobilise public opinion on the specific issues through the media, joint statements and campaigns.

II - UPGRADING SKILLS TRAINING AND RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

II.1 Recruitment of Commune Volunteers (CV's)

Voter Registration Monitoring

A total of 22 Provincial town Co-ordinators will be responsible for recruiting 175 district contact persons (DPs)

A total of 2,000 Commune Volunteer (CV's) will be recruited by provincial co-ordinators (PCs) to visit electoral registration offices in order to monitor possible violations of the electoral law, intimidation or fraud.

Additionally, 23 provincial observers (POs) and 23 PC's will receive instruction in the methods of monitoring, reporting and code of conducts by central office of COMFREL. This instruction session will be held for one day in Phnom Penh.

POs and PCs will pass the above knowledge to the 2,000 CV's, who will monitor the electoral registration offices. Each province will be responsible to organise a one day-echo workshop for 50-90 CV's at districts.

Election Day Monitoring

A total of 6,000 COMFREL Volunteer observers (VOs) will be recruited from local communities and CVs.

The DPs, POs and PTs will be responsible for conducting the instruction sessions for VOs.

II-2 Training

Stage-1: Civic education (or political education) and voter registration

The workshop will be 50 participants (PCs and PTs) to be held over 3 days. The curriculum will include the following: democracy, citizen's voting rights, and understanding on the good poll-candidacies for political parties. Trainers will be invited from the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC), Cambodian Defender Project (CDP) and Human Rights Vigilance, and several EU consultants will also be available.

The above curriculum will be organised by PCs and PTs to have 23 training workshops for 175 DPs at different provinces. These training workshops will be held for 2 days in provincial towns.

DPs and PTs will deliver a total of 175 training sessions to train all 2,000 Commune Volunteers (CVs), equal to one or two persons per commune (depending on the size of commune). This one-day training will be held at the district level.

Stage-2: Voter or election information

COMFREL will prepare two kinds of report forms for gathering information on the polling day situation and on the counting process. COMFREL central office trainers will conduct a training for PCs, POs and PTs to upgrade knowledge and skills for DPs and CVs (observers), how to complete these report forms and methodology on monitoring (during Campaign and election day) and election information.

The training will be provided to 69 participants at one course to be held over 2 days in each province.

PCs, PO, and PTs will pass the above skill and knowledge on to 175 DTs. The one-day training will be held in each province.

DPs, PTs and POs will conduct training for 6,000 VOs to be recruited from villages. PCs and DPs will be responsible for selecting 6,000 VOs and for giving instruction. The one-day training will be held in each district.

III- ELECTION MONITORING

III - 1 COMFREL VOTER REGISTRATION MONITORING

These activities assume that the National Assembly election will be scheduled on July 26th 1998 and that the five weeks of voter registration will presumably start on 27 April – 23 May, 1998. The COMFREL Plan assumes the recruitment of 2,000 Registration Observers to cover the 10,000 plus Voter Registration Stations.

There will, no doubt, be detailed regulations issued by the National Election Commission in due course, but the process, according to the current draft of the Law on the Election of the National Assembly Members, will be as follows:

- [a] The NEC establishes the Voter Registration Stations (VRS) - for a maximum of 600 potential voters;
- [b] The names and locations of the VRSs are published, and made available to registered parties;
- [c] by public proclamation, voters are invited to attend in person to register;
- [d] voters either are allowed to register or are refused;
- [e] if refused voters may invoke appeals process - at four possible levels.
- [f] registration must be legally completed three months before polling day;
- [g] the voter register must legally be published at polling stations, and at Commune (CEC) and Provincial Election Commission (PEC) offices one month before polling day; the actual registration record books are to be kept at the PEC.

Each COMFREL observer will be asked to cover a number of registration centres. Obviously the number will vary in each area - more in Phnom Penh, fewer in Mondulkiri and Preah Vihear. Over the registration period the observer will be asked to visit each VRS as often as possible and to complete a report form for each visit. The form (attached) provides a checklist for the information, which is valuable to COMFREL in order to monitor the registration process.

The registration process will give a good indication of how efficiently the election itself will be run - and also how well COMFREL will be able to monitor it.

III-2 PRE-ELECTION DAY AND ELECTION CAMPAIGN MONITORING

COMFREL observers will detect and report all cases of intimidation, violence, irregularities and fraud during the election campaign of 25 June-25 July 98.

COMFREL will utilise the resources of its member organisations, current good working relations and networking with its activists, other local NGOs and people organisations to observe the human rights situation within the context of the election campaign.

Weekly information on human rights and electoral provision abuses gathered from member human rights organisations of COMFREL (such as ADHOC and Vigilance) and other sources will be stored in a computer-based data system. COMFREL will transmit reports or complaints of violations to National Electoral Commission.

The establishment of monitoring and communication systems will require an expert who will carry out this work in close co-ordination with the sub committees of COMFREL.

III-3 ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION

COMFREL will also monitor the election process and detect, and report any cases of intimidation, violence or irregularities in the electoral rolls on Election Day.

A total of 6,000 COMFREL observers will be deployed to 6,000 polling stations throughout the country, reporting any cases of intimidation, violence, fraud, or manipulation during polling, vote counting, tabulation, and result announcement and implementation at the village level.

All VOs will monitor the polling and counting over two days at 6,000 polling stations and all counting offices, in addition to post election developments.

All provincial staff (POs, PTs, PCs) and DPs will supervise the VOs and collect regular reports from VOs throughout Election Day polling and counting. Any discrepancies or irregularities will be reported, through the Executive Committee to local and/or National Election Commission.

IV- CIVIC EDUCATION/INFORMATION

IV.1- Education

COMFREL will provide education on human Rights and the obligation to participate in the election process to citizens of all provinces, districts, communes and villages under the control of the government of the Kingdom of Cambodia. COMFREL will build crucial confidence in the election process and encourage large-scale participation in the election process through two-way communication afforded by village level meetings and dissemination of information.

Citizens will be encouraged to cast their votes without fear of reprisal and full participation. The CVs will conduct a total of 6,500 information workshops to provide all villages with explanations and information on the elections, which will be disseminated through public meetings and distribution of posters and brochures. These meetings will be held for about 80-110 participants in each session per village or group. The voter information workshops aim to help voters to understand the nature of the democratic and election process, as well as citizen's rights and voting procedures.

IV-2 Information/Publications

Radio and Television

COMFREL will utilise the radio and television media to promote and further the public understands of the free and fair election process and the principle of democracy through civic education and election information.

COMFREL will produce 3 programs which provide information to the public on what action they can take if they witness or are subjected to election-related violence or intimidation and abuses. These program will be broadcast on television and radio.

COMFREL will assist the adhoc voter education committee (joint committee among local NGOs) to broadcast 20 spots on the topics (civic education, election), which are being produced by the Women's Media Center in co-operation with COMFREL, COFFEL and Cambodian Institute for Human Rights.

Publications

COMFREL will produce 12,500 illustrated election posters to be distributed at voter education sessions to participants and to be posted in all electorates and villages of the country.

COMFREL will publish 5 issues of the "MONITOR" bulletin during an 8 month period, with 5,000 copies of each of the 5 issues. This Bulletin will be distributed to all level of the National Electoral Commission, local authorities and election workers. This Bulletin provides information on the election situation and COMFREL activities. Another aim of the Bulletin is to provide education on democracy and elections. The 5 issues of "the Monitor" bulletin's copies will be distribute to all COMFREL election activists.

V - REPORTING, ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION, REGIONAL OBSERVATION CO-ORDINATION

Pre Election

Board members and executive committee members will visit 20 provinces/towns before election to assess the situation: political parties, media, and voters. During these visits, the group will provide instruction for the COMFREL provincial staff and district contact persons.

Election and Post Election Activities Evaluation

Within the project implementation, provincial co-ordinators will have a meeting with different sub committees to discuss and evaluate their activities. The sub committees will report on the situation and project implementation to the Executive Committee for every month.

Every 3 months during project implementation, the Executive Committee will review and evaluate the impact of the project through feedback from target groups. Then the Executive Committee will then redesign and reorient the methodology and strategy according to the opinion of the Board of Directors and advisors to COMFREL.

Situation Evaluation

The Monitoring Sub Committee (MSC) will prepare the situation report and submit it through the Executive Committee to the COMFREL Board of Directors. The Executive Committee will prepare interim reports and a pre-election and post election report on human rights and the election.

Upon completion of the election, the 23 Provincial Training Co-ordinators will return to Phnom Penh for debriefing and preparation of documentation.

COMFREL has invited the Asian Network For Free Elections (ANFREL) to participate in the international monitoring of the election. ANFREL and COMFREL observers will work closely together, but the two organizations will issue their own reports. In the pre-election phase, four international observers will make seven day visits with a further ten days of observations of election day polling and the post-election implementation of the election results before issuing an in-depth report.

The report on the evaluation of the 1998 National Elections will be completed two months after election day and distributed to all levels of government as well as interested international and national bodies and the media.

VI - STAFFING AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

STAFFING

Executive Committee members (drawn from member organisations) manage the program and supervise all staff and overall activities. The members consist of a director, 3 heads responsible for different sub committees, such as Education, Monitoring, Media Liaison, and Administration and Finance.

One full time staff of the Education sub committee and 2 volunteers work for the education, printing and broadcasting project. He/she is a co-ordinator.

One full time staff of the Monitoring sub committee and one volunteer work for the project of monitoring, voter registration, election campaign, Election Day monitoring. He/she is a project co-ordinator.

One full time officer of the Media liaison section and one volunteer worker for media monitoring and public relations duties.

One full time co-ordinator for the Finance sub committee responsible for managing the budget and to work as an assistant to the executive director.

The Core Central Administration/Secretariat comprises seven staff. Five of these work in full-time positions as senior secretary, administrator, accountant, clerk, cleaner and a security guard jobs and two of them are part-time - for the 12 months prior to work as a translator and assistant to accountant. However, the Director is hired to work full time for 8 months only.

Provincial/town sections

There are 4 staff on average in each province/towns (23 provinces towns) responsible for co-ordination, education, monitoring and logistics.

All provincial staff are recruited from provincial staff of member organisations of COMFREL. These will be involved working for 6 months - part time (1/2 of office work hours) from March - July 1998.

District contact person (DPs)

The Provincial Office will identify the DPs. He or she will, whenever possible, be selected from the district itself. COMFREL member NGOs will be responsible for recruitment and expected to provide them with administrative and logistical support. A District Contact Person may work from an NGO office, or from home. The District Contact Persons will receive specialised training in voter education, election monitoring, and training techniques.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The Financial structure, the Director - General of Finance (signature specimen of bank withdrawing money) or financial coordinator will be responsible for receiving provincial and district financial reports from lead NGOs and prepare comprehensive COMFREL financial reports for donors and a cashier to supervise cash.

In provinces, the COMFREL financial officer will be responsible for the disbursement of funds for activities and other expenses to COMFREL provincial coordinators at the end of each month.

The provincial coordinators will be responsible for the disbursement of funds for activities and other costs to the district contact persons and observers at the beginning of each month. The Provincial Co-ordinators may use the assistance of provincial staff to assist in the financial process where necessary. There is a clear line of control of funds from the Finance Officer at the central COMFREL office, through the Provincial Co-ordinators, to the District Contact Persons who will be responsible for the management of activities and the number of Observers.

In addition, COMFREL is being assisted by the Financial Department of the Asia Foundation to develop its financial policy and set up its computerised system.

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APPENDIX II

POLLING
AND
VOTE COUNTING

OBSERVATION RESULTS

BY PROVINCE

Appendix II:

Polling and Vote Counting Observation Results by Province

1. Banteay Meanchay:

Polling stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	588
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel observers	588
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	554
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	94.2%
No. of polling stations with problems	34

- General observations of polling day:

Observers at 573 of the polling stations (97.5%) reported that the polling procedure inside and at closing was free of irregularities. However, 21 polling stations (3.6%) experienced problems outside with control of the crowds queuing to vote during the first few hours of polling.

Summary of Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of irregularity	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	1	0.2%	Banteay Ampil
2.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	1	0.2%	Mong Koul Borey
3.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	1	0.2%	Thmor Pourk
4.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	3	0.5%	Mong Koul Borey
5.	Interference by unauthorised persons	1	0.2%	Mong Kou! Borey
6.	Problems outside polling stations	21	3.6%	Banteay Ampil, Phnom Srok, Mong Koul Borey
7.	Problems at closing	6	1.0%	Banteay Ampil, Phnom Srok, Mong Koul Borey
8.	Problems during transport to counting centre	2	0.3%	Svay Cheau, Thmor Pourk

- Polling day incidents:

At 8:50 on polling day, about 30 Comfrel observers were not allowed entry into polling stations because the names written on the observer cards were different from the ones on the voter registration cards.

At 07:30 in Ou Sngourt village in Banteay Ampil commune, an observer dispatched by Mr Sen San was seen looking at voters in the voting booth.

- General observations of vote counting:

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Banteay Meanchay			
No.	Vote counting process	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	69	N/A
2.	No. of commune counting centres covered by Comfrel observers	69	N/A
3.	No irregularities	48	69.6%
4.	A few irregularities	18	26.1%
5.	Some serious irregularities	2	2.9%
6.	Many serious irregularities	1	1.4%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	5	7.2%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	1	1.4%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incidents during vote counting:

On 27 July 1998 at 12:00 in the vicinity of counting centre 065 in Treal commune, Svay Chek district, an unidentified policeman fired a gun repeatedly for almost half an hour. This took place on the orders of a Mr Hourt. Comfrel observers and the CEC immediately fled for cover in a nearby rice field before resuming counting of the ballots. The policeman was later arrested, but the authorities later said that he was drunk at the time the offence was committed. No one was hurt in the incident.

On 27 July 1998 at 12:10 at counting centre 0377 in Sophy village, Kampong Svay commune, only one Comfrel observer was permitted to enter although counting was taking place of 23 ballot boxes.

On 27 July 1998 after counting was completed at 13:00 in Tienkam commune, Prahnet Preah district, the CEC was transporting ballot boxes and was ambushed by about five Khmer Rouge soldiers about 6 km from the counting station. Fortunately, police were able to intervene quickly in the situation.

On 27 July 1998 at 14:00 in Being village, Being commune in Banteay Ampil district, three Khmer Rouge guerillas seized three Comfrel observers and two Funcinpec party agents and held them for two hours. The guerillas threatened to kill their captives and eventually confiscated five wristwatches and 5,000 baht. The observers and party agents were released at 16:00.

On 27 July at 16:00 in Tmorkol village, Pkam commune in Svay Chek district, a group of NGO staff failed in an attempt to grab a ballot box with a hook. This incident caused fright for the Comfrel observers at the scene.

2. Battambang:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	766
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	766
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	538
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	70.2%
No. of polling stations with problems	228

- Observations of the polling process:

Polling at 714 of the 766 polling stations (93.2%) was reported free of irregularities inside the polling stations. However, 176 polling stations (22.8%) experienced problems outside with control of the crowd queuing early in the morning to vote and some CPP party agents attempting to influence voters in the queues.

No violations took place inside polling stations in five districts: Samlot, Phnom Prek, Khum Rieang, Mong Russey and Ek Phnom. Polling irregularities in Battambang province were concentrated mainly in three districts: Svay Por, Borvail and Banan.

A summary of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

Summary: Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	22	2.9%	Banan (19 p.stns), Battambang, Sangkei
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	21	2.7%	Svay Por (10 p.stns), B'bang, Sangkei, Borvail, Sampoul Lunn
3.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	1	0.1%	Borvail
4.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	2	0.3%	Svay Por, Borvail
5.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	3	0.4%	Rattanak Mondul, Borvail
6.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	2	0.3%	Battambang, Sangkei
7.	Intimidation of polling station staff	1	0.1%	Rattanak Mondul
8.	Problems outside polling stations	176	22.8%	All except Khum Rieang & Sampou Lunn
9.	Problems at closing	3	0.4%	Svay Por, Sangkei

- Polling day incidents:

Previously, on 25 July 1998, the Commune Election Commission (CEC) in Om Ek commune opened several ballot boxes before the permitted time to examine the polling materials. On the same day, Comfrel went to the scene of the incident with four representatives of the Provincial Election Commission (PEC) and party agents from the CPP, Sam Rainsy Party and Funcinpec. The case was finally resolved by returning the ballot boxes to the PEC.

At the polling stations in Samrong Knong, Eik Phnom, Tatanak communes in Svay Por district, CPP-aligned village militia, village chiefs and commune chiefs wore stickers on their sleeves with an intimidating effect on voters.

In the morning of polling day, voters in almost all polling stations in Baveil district were initially not allowed to vote because their registration cards did not have the official stamps. Later, however, Comfrel co-ordinators resolved this problem and these cardholders were able to cast their votes.

On 26 July 1996 at polling station 0106 in Viel Trie village, Taki commune in Battambang district, a Funcinpec party agent complained because he was not allowed to vote.

Polling station 0334 in Kot village, Borvail commune, closed at 15:00, leaving 30 voters without opportunity to vote.

On the evening of polling day at commune counting centre 020 in Samlot, the CEC chairman refused to allow Comfrel observers and party agents to spend the night guarding the ballot boxes. Only the CEC officials were allowed in the room and they locked the door. The officials also prevented Comfrel observers from communicating by telephone or radio.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at all commune counting centres, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is available for 88 of the 89 commune counting centres in Battambang province. A breakdown of this information is presented in the following table.

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Battambang			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	89	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	88	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	62	70.4%
4.	A few irregularities observed	24	27.3%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	2	2.3%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	2	2.3%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	9	10.2%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incidents during vote counting:

From 07:00 to 09:00 on 27 July at counting centre 058, the CEC obstructed Comfrel observers from entering to observe the count. However, this situation was resolved through the intervention of the PEC.

Ballot counting in Samlot and Rattanak Mondul districts was completed at 11:45 but the CECs failed to send the counting reports, ballots and election materials to the PEC. Comfrel observers were threatened of reprisals if they reported the incident or attempted to communicate by telephone.

In Battambang district, Ngorb Pick, a former district chief, threatened a CEC in an attempt to prevent transport of ballot boxes to the PEC because Funcinpec had won the majority of votes. The CEC asked the PEC to intervene and the PEC arranged for the ballot boxes to be transported under armed escort.

An unidentified policeman in Khach Romeas commune made threats to Ros Sen Chhoeurn, a Comfrel observer. This observer had complained that official procedure had not been followed in the case of the tearing of a ballot paper. The policeman demanded, "such a strong man should be taken away."

At 05:00, Jek Plen, a district chief, gained access to a counting centre and engaged in shouting. Later in the day, he prevented CPP party agents from signing the count results because only three CPP party agents had been permitted to observe the counting.

3. Kampong Cham:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	1,795
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	1,623
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	90.4%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	1,434
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	88.35%
No. of polling stations with problems	189

- General observations of the polling process.

Observers at 1,585 of the 1,623 polling stations (observed by Comfrel observers reported 97.7%) that the polling procedure inside the polling stations was free of irregularities. However, 165 polling stations (10.2% of observed) experienced problems outside.

A breakdown of irregularities recorded by Comfrel observers in Kampong Cham is presented in the following table:

Summary of Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	14	0.9%	Krouh Chmar, Chom Kal, Kampong Sev, Kampong Cham, Dombe
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	15	0.9%	Srey Sonthor, Prey Chor, Krouh Chmar, Steng Trong, Ba Chay, Krong Meas, Thoug Kmum, Cheng Prev, Dombe
3.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	4	0.2%	Thoug Kmum
4.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	1	0.1%	Prey Chor
5.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	6	0.4%	Srey Sonthor, Prey Chor, Kampong Siem, Koh Sotin
6.	Unauthorized persons inside polling station	8	0.5%	Steng Trong
7.	Interference by unauthorized persons	3	0.2%	Krouh Chmar
8.	Intimidation of polling station staff	1	0.1%	Ba Chay
9.	Vote buying	1	0.1%	Srey Sonthor
10.	Problems outside polling stations	165	10.2%	All districts except Cheng Prev

Summary of Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
11.	Problems at closing	3	0.2%	Srey Sonthor, Ponh Nie Krek, Kampong Cham
12.	Problems during transport to counting centre	1	0.1%	Korong Meas

- Polling day incidents:

At 07:30 in polling station 0625 in Beng Trav village, Sokorng commune, PSC chairman Horng Savat confiscated the observation papers from So Thida, a Comfrel observer. This happened because Horng Savat confused So Thida with a political party agent, but later So Thida was allowed to resume his observation of the polling process.

At polling station 0302 in Tropiang Kor commune, Chieung Prey district, 58 unused ballot papers numbered from 1248958 were lost.

At polling station 0204 in Tropiang Kor commune, Chieung Prey district, the PSC deputy chairman tore 288 ballot papers one by one as voters cast their ballots.

On polling day at 17:00 in polling station 0392 in Wat Dey Doh commune, after the polling station had closed, the ballot box was closed with a black, unnumbered seal. According to the PSC chairman, the blue numbered seal was locked inside the ballot box.

In several communes in Memut district, commune chiefs wore security guard armbands and intimidated the polling process by standing in front of polling stations to watch.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at all commune counting centres in Kampong Cham province, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is available for only 71 of the 173 commune counting centres (41.0%) in nine of the sixteen districts of the province.

A breakdown of this information is presented in the following table.

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Kampong Cham			
No.	Vote counting process	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1	Total commune counting centres in province	173	N/A
2	No. of commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	79	N/A
3	No irregularities	71	89.9%
4	A few irregularities	8	10.1%
5	Some serious irregularities	0	0.0%
6	Many serious irregularities	0	0.0%
7	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incidents during vote counting:

At 06:25 at Prey Chakrey pagoda in Osvay commune, Kampong Siem district, a lighted ceremonial candle fell down for no apparent reason on the ballot box from polling station 0485, damaging the blue waterproof bag and some documents. The ballots inside the box, however, escaped damage.

In Trapang Kor commune, Tabong Khmom district, 228 used ballot papers were lost.

Comfrel observers launched a complaint with the CEC in Tralop commune. At 17:45, the CEC had taken the ballot boxes to the PEC, but removed them again because they said that it would be difficult to provide adequate security for the ballot boxes. At that point, the Comfrel observers objected to the transportation of the ballot boxes back to the commune.

In Koki Tbong commune, Seng Song, the CPP-aligned commune chief threatened reprisals for opposition parties if the CPP wins.

- Post-election violence:

On 29 July 1998, four SRP members and 22 Funcinpec members received death threats from Sen Vy, the militia chief in Vihear Long commune, and two militia members, Kun Ry and Sun Soeurn. These opposition party members have since fled their homes and at the date of writing their whereabouts remain unknown. (Report from ADHOC, Kampong Cham.)

At 11:00 on 1 August 1998, a militia chief called Sin Sam Ol together with five militia members beat three men and tied their arms behind their backs. They proceeded to drag the three men along the street saying that they would kill all Funcinpec people. The three victims were then taken to Chhouk commune. (Report from witness.)

4. Kampong Chhnang:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	417
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	417
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	259
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	62.1%
No. of polling stations with problems	158

- General observations of the polling process:

Polling at 347 of the 417 polling stations (83.2%) in Kampong Chhnang was reported free of irregularities in the polling process. However, 87 polling stations experienced problems outside and 13 had problems at closing.

A breakdown of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

Summary of Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of irregularity	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	16	3.8%	All except Kp Trolach, Kp Chhnang
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	8	1.9%	Kp Trolach, Tekphosh, Rolea Phear, Kp Chhnang, Bori Bou
3.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	3	0.7%	Bori Bou
4.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	8	1.9%	Kp Trolach, Tekphosh, Rolea Phear, Kp Chhnang, Bori Bou
5.	Exclusion of registered voters from voting	1	0.2%	Rolea Phear
6.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	8	1.9%	Tekphosh, Bori Bou
7.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	4	1.0%	Kp Chhnang, Rolea Phear
8.	Interference by unauthorised persons	20	4.8%	Rolea Phear, Chhoul K.R. (19 cases)
9.	Intimidation of voters	1	0.2%	Kp. Trolach
10.	Vote buying	1	0.2%	Kp Trolach
11.	Problems outside polling stations	87	20.9%	All districts
12.	Problems at closing	13	3.1%	Kp. Trolach, Kp Chhnang, Bori Bou, Samki

- Polling day incidents:

In Prey Pih village in Chreah commune, Kampong Tralach district, a village chief stayed within a polling station from 07:00 to 12:00. At that polling station, the ballot box did not have its required seals.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers at 21 of the 69 commune counting centres in Kampong Chhnang reported only a small number of irregularities in the counting process. However, some serious problems were reported at a further four counting centres. At many counting centres, the staff did not appear to understand their duties properly.

A breakdown of the observation results is presented in the following table:

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Kampong Chhnang		
No.	Analysis	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	N/A
2.	Commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	63.8%
4.	A few irregularities observed	30.4%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	5.8%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	27.5%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	27.5%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	26.1%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

No incidents concerning the vote counting process were reported from Kampong Chhnang.

5. Kampong Speu:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	578
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	567
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	98.1%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	397
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	70.2%
No. of polling stations with problems	262

- General observations of the polling process:

Observers at 512 of the 567 polling stations observed by Comfrel observers (90.3%) reported that the polling procedure inside the polling stations was free of irregularities. However, 108 polling stations (19.0% of those observed) experienced problems outside.

A breakdown of irregularities recorded by Comfrel observers in Kampong Speu is presented in the following table:

Summary: Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Explosion within audible range	1	0.2%	Phnom Srouch
2.	Serious intimidation	2	0.4%	Phnom Srouch
3.	Missing any essential polling station materials	2	0.4%	Kong Pisey
4.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	6	1.1%	Samrong Tong, Borseth, Phnom Srouch, Tapong
5.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	2	0.2%	Samrong Tong, Borseth
6.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	32	5.6%	Samrong Tong, Kong Pisey (14 p.stns), Oudong, Ph. Srouch, Oral
7.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	3	0.5%	Borseth, Phnom Srouch
8.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	3	0.5%	Phnom Srouch, Chbamorm
9.	Interference by unauthorised persons	4	0.7%	Kong Pisey, Borseth, Phnom Srouch, Chbamorm
10.	Problems outside polling stations	108	19.0%	All districts
11.	Problems at closing	91	16.0%	All districts except Oral, In Borseth 81 poll stns.
12.	Problems during transport to counting centre	11	1.9%	Samrong Tong, Borseth, Oudong, Phnom Srouch.

- Polling day incidents:

In Phnom Srouch, one polling station reported an explosion within audible range. At two other polling stations in the same district, observers reported intimidation and violence.

At polling station 05081 in Amlaing village, Tapong district, a CPP party agent joined the queue and told everyone to write the "35" (CPP) number on the palms of their hands. In a similar incident at Wat Tropiang Ampil, people were given the same instructions by the PSC chairman before entering the voting booth.

At the Prey Eth polling station in Pou Angkrong commune, two village chiefs and a policeman put on security armbands and stood in the crowds lined up to vote to persuade them to vote for CPP.

At a polling station in Wat Prey Romeart, the PSC placed a sample ballot paper in the voting booth. A SRP party agent accused the PSC of using this sample to direct voters to tick "35." A Comfrel observer then looked into the voting booth and saw a large number of ticks on the ballot paper.

At polling station 05083 in Trapaing Kreung, also in Tapong district, Sourn Sem, the PSC chairman, ticked the number "35" (for CPP) in place of the voters on five ballot papers. In the same locality, the PEC and the CEC failed to inform Comfrel in advance that the polling station would be divided into two. As a result, Comfrel was unable to keep an observer in both polling stations throughout the day.

Another incident of five ballot papers marked by the PSC chairman took place at the Kraingsbou polling station in Moharussey, Kong Pisey district.

At polling station 05061 (Prey Romdul) in Phnom Srouch district, the deputy chairman of the CEC placed a ticked ballot paper in the voting booth. A complaint was lodged by the SRP party agent present.

At Wat Sampov polling station (0104) in Shbar Morn district, the PSC was unable to prevent the crowd outside from surging inside the polling station.

At 09:40 at polling station 0106, some people voted twice as a result of being permitted to cast proxy votes for their mothers who were ill at the time.

At polling station 05037 (Sangkei Sat) Oral district, CPP members rounded up people to vote, which stirred fears of intimidation. The CEC also prevented Comfrel observers from observing the transport of ballot boxes because the ballot boxes were carried by helicopter.

At polling station 05059 (Trapaing Om) in Phnom Srouch district, the PSC chairman told voters to tick the number "35."

At polling station 05064, the PSC allowed large numbers of voters to enter the polling station at one time.

In Ou commune, village chiefs explained to voters how to vote for CPP. In that commune at the Wat Putrai polling station, the PSC chairman allowed large numbers of voters inside and then pointed to number "35."

In Treng Troryeng village, Ou commune in Phnom Srouch district, local authorities passed out money to voters.

In Krang Speu polling station in Moharisey commune, Kong Pisey district, the PSC chairman helped five voters mark their ballot papers in the booth.

In Troopian Kreung, Chbarmorn district, Sourn Sem, a village chief, marked ballot papers for five voters by ticking "35."

In the polling station in Samnorng village, Rokar Thom commune, Tapong district, the PSC chairman allowed 2 or 3 voters into a voting booth at one time.

In Oudong district, village, commune and district chiefs passed out Ri 20,000 to each voter and asked them to vote for CPP.

At polling station 05082 in Sen Monorom village, Tapong district, most of the PSC staff did not have the competence to perform their duties.

At polling station 05084 in Roung Reung village, Tapong district, Moeun Sen, a deputy village chief, participated as a security guard.

- General observations of vote counting:

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Kampong Speu			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	87	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	87	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	40	46.0%
4.	A few irregularities observed	25	28.7%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	22	25.3%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	4	4.6%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incidents during vote counting:

In Samrong Tong district, ballot papers were not shown to observers and they could not see which parties had been ticked. This affected all 15 commune counting centres in the district.

Between 08:30 and 09:10 in Ou commune, Phnom Srouch district, two provincial officials and the local commune chief (Vanna) and a member of the commune militia (Nhem Thorng) took part in calling out and counting the ballots in violation of the election law.

At counting centre 05084 in Rong Roeurng, Tapong district, Moerung Sen, the district chief, participated in security duties.

At three counting centres in Borseth district and one in Chbamorn district, some polling station staff did not appear to be adequately informed of the correct counting procedure.

6. Kampong Thom:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	584
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	580
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	99.3%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	531
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	91.6%
No. of polling stations with problems	49

- General observations of the polling process:

Summary of Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	3	0.5%	Sen Dang
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	14	2.4%	All except Kampong Svay
3.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	2	0.3%	Stung, Sen Dang
4.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	6	1.0%	Stung, Brasat Sambo, Sen Dang
5.	Exclusion of registered voters from voting	2	0.3%	Brasat Balang, Sen Dang
6.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	7	1.2%	Stung, Brasat Sambo, Sen Dang, Baraiy
7.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	8	1.4%	Stung, Brasat Sambo, Sen Dang, Baraiy
8.	Interference by unauthorised persons	3	0.5%	Brasat Sambo, Sen Dang
9.	Intimidation of polling station staff	1	0.2%	Sen Dang
10.	Vote buying	3	0.5%	Brasat Sambo, Sen Dang
11.	Problems outside polling stations	n.a	n.a	n.a
12.	Problems at closing	n.a	n.a	n.a
13.	Problems during transport to counting centre	n.a	n.a	n.a

Note: n.a = information not available

- Polling day incidents:

In the polling station No. 060412 in Chheu Teal village in Chheu Teal commune, Sandan district, a Mrs. Soeun Sopheap was allowed to vote twice, once for herself and once for her child.

In polling station No. 060380 some CPP supporters were allowed to vote twice.

A CPP-aligned village chief in Tapaung commune was seen helping to queue the voters at polling station 060181.

At the O Takao polling station in Kaol commune, Prasat Sambo district, 100 voters were not allowed to vote because their names were not included in the voter registration list. Later, however, they were allowed to vote. The reason cited was that the NEC had forgotten to enter their names in the computer-printed roll.

- General observations of vote counting:

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Kampong Thom			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	81	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	81	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed		
4.	A few irregularities observed	45	55.6%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	36	44.4%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incident during vote counting:

In Srour Youv commune in Steng Sen district, ballot box 0292 was discovered to contain more ballot papers than the number of voters enrolled on the voter registration list.

7. Kampot:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	524
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	518
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	98.6%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	473
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	91.3%
No. of polling stations with problems	58

- General observations of the polling process:

At 485 of the 518 polling stations observed (93.6%), no irregularities were reported concerning the polling procedure. Problems were observed outside 20 polling stations in five districts.

The most common polling violation reported was the inclusion of voters not listed on the voter register, which was observed at a total of 25 polling stations including 24 in Kampot district. An overview of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

Summary: Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	1	0.2%	Choum Kiri
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	3	0.5%	Kp Bay & Choum Kiri
3.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	1	0.2%	Dorng Tong
4.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	25	4.8%	Kampong Trach (1) & Kampot (24)
5.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	1	0.2%	Chouk
6.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	1	0.2%	Kampot
7.	Interference by unauthorised persons	1	0.2%	Dorng Tong
8.	Problems outside polling stations	20	3.7%	All except Banteay Meas and Choum Kiri
9.	Problems at closing	2	0.4%	Kompong Trach & Chouk
10.	Problems during transport to counting centre	3	0.6%	Chouk

- Polling day incidents:

At 11:00 on polling day at the 1 January Hun Sen primary school polling station No. 0511 in the North Twi village in On Dong Thmei commune, Kampong Bei district, two people were allowed to vote twice. The two names had been ticked off the voter registration list but the fingers had not been dipped into the indelible ink. A Sam Rainsy Party agent lodged a complaint at the CEC.

- General observations of vote counting:

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Kampot			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1	Total commune counting centres in province	100	N/A
2	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	100	N/A
3	No irregularities observed	69	69.0%
4	A few irregularities observed	18	18.0%
5	Some serious irregularities observed	13	13.0%
6	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	1	1.0%
8	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	1	1.0%
9	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	1	1.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

8. Kandal:

No. of polling stations in province	1,109
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	1,069
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	96.4%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	852
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	79.7%
No. of polling stations with problems	217

- General observations of the polling process:

Observers at 1,016 of the 1,069 polling stations observed by Comfrel (95.0%) reported that the polling procedure inside the polling stations was free of irregularities. However, almost 20% of polling stations experienced problems outside.

A summary of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	1	0.1%	Kandal Steng
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	11	1.0%	Kandal Steng, Lvea Hem, Sahang, Ang Snoul, Kean Svay
3.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	3	0.3%	Ksach Kandal, Kean Svay
4.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	14	1.3%	Sahang, Ang Snoul, Kean Svay
5.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	2	0.2%	Ang Snoul
6.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	4	0.4%	Ksach Kandal, Sahang, Kean Svay
7.	Interference by unauthorised persons	6	0.6%	Mouk Kampoul, Koh Thom, Ksach Kandal, Sahang
8.	Intimidation of voters	1	0.1%	Mouk Kampoul
9.	Intimidation of polling station staff	8	0.7%	Ponh Neak Lev, Sahang, Kean Svay
10.	Vote buying	3	0.3%	Ang Snoul
11.	Problems outside polling stations	213	19.9%	All districts

- Polling day incidents:

From 07:00 to 10:00 in polling station 0052 in Prek Roka commune, ballot papers 4372251 to 4372809 were stamped with a plastic stamp that made no clear identifying mark. This situation was rectified at 10:00 when the PEC sent an official stamp, which was used for ballot paper 4372900 onwards.

Two polling stations (08-0001 and 08-0002) in Ampouv Prey primary school in Ampouv Prey commune, Kandal Steng district, Kandal, had two different voter registration lists in each polling station (one produced by the NEC and another by the PEC). A similar situation was reported from polling station 0031 in which one voter registration list had been produced by the NEC and another by the CEC.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at all commune counting centres, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is available for only 72 of the 147 commune counting centres in Kandal Province. A breakdown of this information is presented in the following table.

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Kandal			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	147	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	72	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	66	91.7%
4.	A few irregularities observed	6	8.3%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incidents during vote counting:

At 09:00 in Sereypheap High School in Takhmao commune, Takhmao district, only one political party agent was allowed into the counting station because the available room was too small. One and a half hours later, after intervention by the PEC, an additional room was engaged for counting with four ballot boxes counted in the first room and five in the second. Two political party agents and one Comfrel observer were then permitted into each counting room.

At 11:30 in office 003 of counting centre 0010, some ballot papers had been marked in several places. Party agents present at the counting centre objected to these ballot papers, but the CEC chairman included these ballot papers into the vote count for the CPP.

9. *Kep:*

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	30
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	30
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100.0%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	22
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	73.3%
No. of polling stations with problems	8

- General observations of the polling process.

At eight polling stations in Kep district, observers reported that some persons not on the voter register were permitted to vote. No other violations were recorded and there were no problems outside or problems during closing and transport of ballot boxes to the commune counting centres.

- General observations of vote counting

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Kep			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	10	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	10	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	5	50.0%
4.	A few irregularities observed	3	30.0%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	2	20.0%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

10. Koh Kong:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	120
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	46
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	38.3%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	40
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	87.0%
No. of polling stations with problems	6

- General observations of the polling process:

Comfrel observers reported no irregularities or violations taking place inside polling stations or during the polling process at the polling stations observed.

Six polling stations, however, experienced problems outside because of large crowds that formed early in the morning to vote.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel had observers present at ten of the 30 commune counting centres in Koh Kong. No irregularities or difficulties with the CEC or PSC staff were reported.

11. Kratie:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	274
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	239
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	87.2%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	239
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	100.0%
No. of polling stations with problems	0

Comfrel observers in Kratie reported no irregularities in polling procedure or other problems or incidents at polling stations.

- General observations of vote counting:

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Kratie			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	46	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	46	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	5	10.9%
4.	A few irregularities observed	29	63.0%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	12	26.1%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

No incidents concerning the vote counting process were reported from Kratie.

12. Mondulkiri:

Of the 46 polling stations in the province, all were covered with one Comfrel observer dispatched to each polling station.

Polling stations, observer coverage and prevalence of problems	
No. of polling stations in province	46
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	46
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	46
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	100%
No. of polling stations with problems	0

- General observations of the polling process:

No polling day irregularities or violations were reported from Mondulkiri province.

- Vote counting:

At all 21 commune counting centres, vote counting was reported to have taken without irregularities or problems with the CEC or PSC staff.

13. *Pailin:*

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	32
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	32
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	30
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	93.7%
No. of polling stations with problems	2

- General observations of the polling process:

Summary of Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Violence and/or intimidation	1	3.1%	Pailin
2.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	1	3.1%	Polling station 00230020

- Polling day incidents:

Intimidatory threats were reported from one polling station in Pailin district.

In another incident at polling station 00230020, five persons not on the voter register at that station, but holding cards for another polling station, were allowed to vote.

At the Speanyold polling station, the PSC chairman went out for one and a half hours, bringing polling activity to a halt during this time.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at all eight commune counting centres, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is not available for the Pailin constituency.

14. *Phnom Penh:*

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in city	910
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	910
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100.0%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	396
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	52.1%
No. of polling stations with problems	474

- General observations of the polling process:

At 831 of the 910 polling stations in Phnom Penh (91.3%), polling was reported free of irregularities in procedure. At 435 polling stations, problems arose early in the day with crowd control outside.

A breakdown of the irregularities recorded on polling day in Phnom Penh is presented in the following table:

Summary: Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	39	4.3%	All except Chamkarmon
2.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	8	1.3%	7 Makara, Meanchay, Toul Kork, Daun Penh
3.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	2	2.0%	Meanchay, Toul Kork
4.	Exclusion of registered voters from voting	4	0.5%	7 Makara, Russey Key, Daun Penh
5.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	6	1.0%	Meanchay, Toul Kork
6.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	8	0.9%	All except Chamkarmon & Dang Kau
7.	Interference by unauthorised persons	8	0.9%	All except Chamkarmon and Russey Key
8.	Intimidation of voters	3	0.3%	Meanchay, Toul Kork
9.	Vote buying	1	0.1%	Daun Penh
10.	Problems outside polling stations	435	47.8%	All districts
11.	Problems at closing	1	0.7%	Daun Penh

- Polling day incident:

Comfrel observers at Neak Wane primary school polling station were refused entry because the polling station staff confused them with KYAD observers. By 09:30, this case had been solved.

- General observation of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at all commune counting centres, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is available for only 71 of the 76 commune counting centres in Phnom Penh.

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Phnom Penh			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	76	N/A
2.	Commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	71	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	41	57.7%
4.	A few irregularities observed	25	35.2%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	5	7.1%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	4	5.6%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	4	5.6%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	4	5.6%

*percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incidents during vote counting:

At the Sangkat Meanchay counting centre, the CEC locked the door to the counting room after having prevented Funcinpec party agents from entering.

At counting centre 7173, the counting revealed a discrepancy of one ballot paper, but a thorough check by the CEC failed to clear up this error.

15. *Preah Vihear:*

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage, Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	120
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	60
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	50.0%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	0
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	0.0%
No. of polling stations with problems	60

- General observations of the polling process:

Polling procedure at 21 of the 60 polling stations (35%) was reported free of irregularities. Details of irregularities at the remaining polling stations are presented in the following table:

Summary: Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	8	9.5%	Tbeng Meanchey, Kou Len
2.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	3	3.6%	Tbeng Meanchay, Ro Veang
3.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	6	7.1%	All districts
4.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	2	2.4%	T. Meanchay, Ro Veang
5.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	2	2.4%	T. Meanchay, Ro Veang
6.	Problems outside polling stations	14	16.7%	All districts
7.	Problems at closing	60	100.0%	All districts
8.	Problems in transport to counting centre	2	2.4%	Ro Veang

- General observations of vote counting:

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Preah Vihear			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	49	N/A
2.	Commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	22	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	12	54.5%
4.	A few irregularities observed	10	45.4%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

No specific incidents during vote counting were reported from Preah Vihear province.

16. Prey Veng:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	1,051
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	985
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	92.8%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	662
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	67.2%
No. of polling stations with problems	232

- General observations of the polling process:

Observers at 928 of the 985 polling stations covered in Prey Veng province reported no irregularities in the polling procedure (94.2%). However, 255 polling stations experienced problems outside, mainly related to crowd control during the first few hours of polling. Observers also reported problems during the closing of 129 polling stations.

A breakdown of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

Summary of Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1	Missing any essential polling station materials	7	0.7%	Prah Sacch, Kang Chriech
2	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	2	0.2%	Piem Chor, Kampong Trobek
3	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	2	0.2%	Piem Rot, Kang Chriech
4	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	5	0.5%	Piem Chor, Kampong Trobek
5	Exclusion of registered voters from voting	6	0.6%	Prah Sacch, Mei Sang, Kam Charma
6	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	2	0.2%	Piem Chor, Mei Sang

Summary of Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
7.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	10	1.0%	Prey Veng, Prah Sdach, Kang Chriech, Kp Trobek
8.	Interference by unauthorised persons	5	0.5%	Prah Sdach, Kang Chriech
9.	Intimidation of voters	5	0.5%	Prah Sdach, Kang Chriech
10.	Intimidation of polling station staff	7	0.7%	Prey Veng, Prah Sdach, Kampong Liew
11.	Vote buying	6	0.6%	Prey Veng, Prah Sdach
12.	Problems outside polling stations	255	25.9%	All districts
13.	Problems at closing	129	13.1%	Pie Rieng, Prah Sdach, Mei Sang, Kampong Liew, Sithor Kandal, Bar Phrom
14.	Problems during transport to counting centre	3	0.3%	Mei Sang

- Polling day incidents:

In one polling station in Cheu Kach commune, Baphnom district, disorder broke out after a drunk man threw a stone into the polling area. The man was later arrested and the situation brought under control.

From 08:00 to 10:30 on polling day in polling station 0923 in Kampong Liew district, Prey Veng, the Polling Station chairman refused entry to the Comfrel observer. Only CCOC observers were allowed into the polling station during this time. The reason for the refusal was a discrepancy between the name on the voter registration card of the Comfrel observer and the name on the observer card.

At a polling station in Pral village, Smoung Cheng commune in Kam Charma district, the polling station commission tore 138 ballot papers.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at all commune counting centres, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is available for only 75 of the 116 commune counting centres in Prey Veng province. A breakdown of this information is presented in the following table.

No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	115	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	75	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	65	86.6%
4.	A few irregularities observed	8	10.7%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	2	2.7%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

17. Pursat:

No. of polling stations in province	335
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	335
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100.0%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	75
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	22.3%
No. of polling stations with problems	260

- General observations of the polling process:

Comfrel observers reported that out of the 335 polling stations in Pursat province, polling at 319 polling stations (95.2%) was free of irregularities in the polling procedure. However, most polling stations in Pursat experienced problems outside, mainly related to crowd control in the first few hours of polling day.

A summary of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	2	0.6%	Phnom Krovang
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	2	0.6%	Phnom Krovang
3.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	3	0.9%	Phnom Krovang
4.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	5	1.5%	Koun Dieng, Sompov Meas, Phnom Krovang
5.	Exclusion of registered voters from voting	1	0.3%	Phnom Krovang
6.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	1	0.3%	Phnom Krovang
7.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	1	0.3%	Sompov Meas
8.	Problems outside polling stations	252	75.2%	All districts
9.	Problems at closing	1	0.3%	Koun Dieng

- Polling day incident:

At polling station 150208 in Sna Ansa commune, Krakor district, an unidentified man set down a grenade at a distance of 35 metres from the polling station. This, however, did not seriously disrupt the polling.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at all commune counting centres, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is available for only 29 of the 49 commune counting centres in Pursat province. A breakdown of this information is presented in the following table.

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Pursat			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	49	N/A.
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	29	N/A.
3.	No irregularities observed	22	75.9%
4.	A few irregularities observed	7	24.1%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	1	3.4%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incidents during vote counting:

At 21:00 on the night of 27 July 1998 in Sampou Meas district, two unidentified men riding motorcycles threw a grenade into a crowd in front of the Pursat railway station, not far from the Comfrel office. Nine people (7 men and 2 women) were injured in the blast.

In Sompou Mean district, Comfrel observers were obstructed from entering two commune counting centres.

18. Rattanakiri:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	106
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	106
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100.0%
No. of polling stations without reported problems (estimated)	36
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	34.0%
No. of polling stations with problems (estimated)	70

- General observations of the polling process:

Polling at 94 polling stations (88.7% of observed polling stations) was reported free of irregularities in the polling process. However, almost half of the polling stations reported problems with crowd control outside and observers reported problems during the closing of about one quarter of polling stations.

A summary of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

Summary: Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	3	2.8%	Banlong
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	2	1.9%	Ven Say, Banlong
3.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	2	1.9%	Ven Say, Banlong
4.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	2	1.9%	Banlong, Borkeo
5.	Exclusion of registered voters from voting	1	0.9%	Banlong
6.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	1	0.9%	Banlong
7.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	1	0.9%	Ven Say
12.	Problems outside polling stations	50	47.2%	All except O'Choum, Andong Meas, Bor Keo
13.	Problems at closing	26	24.5%	All except O'Choum, O'Yada, Bor Keo
14.	Problems during transport to counting centre	8	7.5%	Andong Meas, Koun Mom, Bor Keo, Lomphat

- Polling day incidents:

At 15:30 in polling station 160071, Bok Ngei village, Oyadau district, uniformed border guards entered the polling station carrying loaded firearms and without producing voter registration cards.

In polling station 0093 in Koh Pek village, Koh Pek commune, Veun Say district, the deputy CEC chairman (name not available) instructed voters to tick number "35" (for CPP) when he gave the ballot papers to them. The same violation was also committed by a member of the PSC in Phaknam village, Phaknam commune, Koh Pek district.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at 49 of the 50 commune counting centres, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is available for only 28 commune counting centres in Rattanakiri province. A breakdown of this information is presented in the following table.

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Rattanakiri			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	50	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	28	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	28	100.0%
4.	A few irregularities observed	0	0.0%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

19. Siem Reap:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	701
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	678
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	96.7%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	527
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	77.7%
No. of polling stations with problems	151

- General observations of the polling process:

Comfrel observers were on hand to observe 678 of the 701 polling stations in Siem Reap constituency. No observers were allowed access to the Anlong Veng area. Observer reports indicated that 647 polling stations (95.4% of those observed) were free of irregularities other than for problems with control of the queues outside.

A summary of the reported polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

Summary: Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	5	8.6%	Puok, Kram Lanh
2.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	4	0.7%	Siem Reap
3.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	7	1.0%	Siem Reap, Puok, Prasa: Bakong
4.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	4	0.7%	Svay Le
5.	Interference by unauthorised persons	1	0.1%	Var Ren
9.	Intimidation of voters	1	0.1%	Sam Rong
10.	Intimidation of polling station staff	2	0.3%	Var Ren
12.	Problems outside polling stations	125	18.4%	Siem Reap, Chong Kal, Angkor Chum, Puok, Sout Nekum, Kram Lanh, Chi Kreng

Summary: Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
13.	Problems at closing	16	2.4%	Siem Reap, Sout Nekum, Kram Lanh, Chi Kreng
14.	Problems during transport to counting centre	1	0.1%	Chi Kreng

- Polling day incidents:

At 08:00, a police chief in Angkor Chum district named Khat wrote a threatening sentence on the back of a photograph of Prince Ranariddh, warning that the Funcinpec and SRP were traitors. This photo was thrown into the queue of voters waiting outside a polling station.

In Pak Sna village in Sang Veuy commune, Chi Kreng district, polling halted at one station for 10-20 minutes because one voter wrote a "35" (for CPP) number on a polling booth. This incident triggered disorder in the polling station.

In Banteay Srei and Chi Kreng districts, village and commune chiefs stood nearby polling stations and asked people which party they had voted for.

In Champey and Tayek villages in Samrong commune, village chiefs behind polling stations threatened serious problems for people who did not vote for the CPP. Kieu Leath, a commune chief, instructed voters to tick number "35."

In Koak Chork, two village chiefs, Cheit and Kish, made threats to a family to prevent them from supporting any parties from the opposition. As a result, some Sam Rainsy Party members fled their homes, fearing that they might be killed.

In the Wat Prodak polling station, two persons wearing CPP T-shirts entered to vote and then threatened the party agents present, saying that their families would be subject to reprisals.

At 16:00, Moy Nan, deputy inspector in Banteay Srei district and CEC security guard in Reunta Ek commune, refused to sign for the protection of the ballot boxes.

Near polling station No. 0096 in Mort Klar village in Anglung Sam Nor commune, a boat carrying a ballot box collided with a house on the river bank. All polling materials were swept away by the river except for the ballot box. At the time, the ballot box had contained 312 ballot papers.

- Reported grenade attack:

On polling day, a preliminary report arrived from the Siem Reap provincial office stating that a grenade explosion had taken place at a polling station in Svay Reu district. On Monday, 27 July 1998, Comfrel observers travelled from Siem Reap town to the area to verify the report and found that the incident had not taken place.

- Other information:

In the province, international observers concentrated their presence in Siem Reap town and the vicinity. No international observers were seen in Sam Ang, Chong Kal, Banteay Ampil, Var Ren and Svay Leu districts or in remote polling stations.

- General observations of vote counting:

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Siem Reap			
No.	Vote counting process	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	113	N/A
2.	No of commune counting centres covered by Comfrel observers	91	N/A
3.	No irregularities	42	46.2%
4.	A few irregularities	33	41.8%
5.	Some serious irregularities	7	7.7%
6.	Many serious irregularities	4	4.3%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	21	23.1%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	20	22.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	18	19.8%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incidents during vote counting:

At counting centres in Reu Leu commune and one other commune in Prasat Bakong district, Comfrel observers and political party agents were kept about four metres from the vote counting tables, making it difficult to verify the markings on the ballot papers during the count. The party agents spent most of the day sitting over in one corner passively watching proceedings from a distance. No party agents complained to the CEC or PEC.

An unidentified attacker in Svay Leu commune, Svay Leu district, tossed a grenade in the vicinity of counting station 098 and seized the two-way radio belonging to the CEC.

In Pongror Krom commune, Chikreing district, the ballot paper count fell short by one ballot paper at 2,974 compared to the 2,975 people recorded as having cast votes. However, Comfrel and Coffel observers managed to locate the missing ballot paper in a voting booth.

20. Sihanoukville:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	162
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	121
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	74.7%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	31
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	25.6%
No. of polling stations with problems	90

- General observation of the polling process:

Among the 121 polling stations covered by Comfrel observers, 98 polling stations (81.0%) were reported free of irregularities in the polling procedure. More than half of the polling stations experienced problems outside, mainly related to crowd control.

A summary of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

Summary of Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	3	2.5%	Mittapheap
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	6	5.0%	Prey Nob, Srei Ambel
3.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	7	5.8%	Prey Nob, Srei Ambel
4.	Exclusion of registered voters from voting	2	1.7%	Prey Nob
5.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	2	1.7%	Prey Nob, Srei Ambel
6.	Interference by unauthorised persons	2	1.7%	Prey Nob, Srei Ambel
7.	Intimidation of polling station staff	1	0.8%	Srei Ambel
8.	Problems outside polling stations	77	63.6%	All districts
9.	Problems at closing	2	1.7%	Srei Ambel

- General observations of vote counting:

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Sihanoukville			
No.	Analysis	No. of commune counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	21	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	21	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	7	33.3%
4.	A few irregularities observed	6	28.6%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	3	14.3%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	5	23.8%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	1	4.8%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	4	19.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	4	19.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

21. Stung Treng:

Polling Stations, Observer Coverage and Prevalence of Problems	
No. of polling stations in province	89
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	89
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	100.0%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	12
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	13.5%
No. of polling stations with problems	77

- General observations of the polling process:

Observers at 75 of the 89 polling stations (84.3%) reported no irregularities with the polling procedure inside the polling stations. Sixty seven polling stations, however, experienced problems outside, mainly because of difficulties with crowd control. At 25 polling stations, observers reported problems with the closing procedure.

Summary: Polling Day Irregularities				
No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	1	1.1%	Stung Treng
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	1	1.1%	Tna Lach
3.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	10	11.2%	Stung Treng, Siem Bok, Kom Phun
4.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	2	2.2%	Stung Treng, Tna Lach
5.	Problems outside polling stations	67	75.3%	All except Siem Pang
6.	Problems at closing	25	28.1%	All districts

- Polling day incidents:

At the Kriovong school polling station, a group of about 12 Khmer Rouge came to have a look at the polling process, but they did not disrupt proceedings.

On the night of polling day in Srei Kror Sang commune in Siem Bok district, a group of Khmer Rouge fighters were seen ready for combat. As a result, the NEC and the PEC discussed the issue and decided to consult with several party agents and observers about where to keep the ballot boxes. Eventually, the decision was to change the ballot box overnight holding area to Samnay Island, 8 km from Srai Kror Sang.

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at all 34 commune counting centres, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is available only for nine of the commune counting centres in Stung Treng province. A breakdown of this information is presented in the following table.

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Stung Treng			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	34	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	10	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	7	70.0%
4.	A few irregularities observed	0	0.0%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	3	30.0%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

- Incidents during vote counting:

At the counting centres in Srash Russey commune and Stung Treng commune in Stung Treng district, the count took place within very small areas that did not permit observers and party agents to see the ballot papers properly.

In the Shrash Russey commune counting centre, the ballot papers were counted very quickly and the observers and party agents were mostly unable to keep pace with the count.

22. Svay Rieng:

No. of polling stations in province	522
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	518
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	99.2%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	506
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	97.7%
No. of polling stations with problems	12

- General observations of the polling process:

Among the 518 polling stations covered by Comfrel observers, 513 polling stations (99.0%) were reported free of irregularities in the polling procedure. Nine polling stations (1.7%), however, experienced problems outside. A summary of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table:

No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of poll stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Lack of competency of polling station staff/ voting procedure not correct	1	0.2%	Romeas Hek
2.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	1	0.2%	Romeas Hek
3.	Exclusion of registered voters from voting	1	0.2%	Kampong Ro
4.	Interference by unauthorised persons	1	0.2%	Romdul
5.	Intimidation of voters	1	0.2%	Svay Rieng
6.	Problems outside polling stations	9	1.7%	Svay Rieng (7 polling stations), Svay Teah, Romdul

- Polling day incident:

In Dong commune, Romeas Hek district, the Funcinpec Party campaign activities carried over into polling day with attempts to persuade the population to vote for the party.

- General observations of vote counting:

No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	80	N/A
2.	Commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	80	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	77	96.3%
4.	A few irregularities observed	3	5.7%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	0	0.0%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

No incidents concerning the vote counting process were reported from Svay Rieng.

23. Takeo:

No. of polling stations in province	826
No. of polling stations covered by Comfrel	710
Percentage coverage by Comfrel observers	85.0%
No. of polling stations without reported problems	521
Percentage of observed polling stations without reported problems	73.4%
No. of polling stations with problems	189

- General observations of the polling process:

In Eprey Chulsa, Koh Andath and Angkor Borey districts, no procedural violations were seen inside polling stations. Overall in Takeo province, reports indicated that 596 polling stations (84.0% of observed) were free of irregularities in the polling process inside polling stations. However, observers at 124 polling stations in all districts (17.4%) reported problems outside, mainly to do with crowd control.

An overview of polling day irregularities is presented in the following table

No.	Type of violation	No. of polling stations	% of polling stations obsvd	Districts affected
1.	Missing any essential polling station materials	41	5.7%	Daun Keo, Kirivong, Bati, Trang
2.	Lack of competency of polling station staff; voting procedure not correct	10	1.4%	Daun Keo, Trang, Sam Rong, Tram Krok, Prey Kabash
3.	Lack of neutrality on part of polling station staff	1	0.1%	Bati
4.	Inclusion of voters not listed in the voter list	13	1.8%	Kirivong, Bati, Trang, Sam Rong, Tram Kork
5.	Exclusion of registered voters from voting	1	0.1%	Kirivong
6.	Inadequate guarantee of voter secrecy	11	1.5%	Daun Keo, Trang, Sam Rong, Tram Kork
7.	Unauthorised persons inside polling station	3	0.4%	Sam Rong, Tram Kork
8.	Interference by unauthorised persons	25	3.7%	Trang (25 p. stns), Sam Rong
9.	Intimidation of voters	4	0.6%	Bati, Tram Kork
10.	Intimidation of polling station staff	2	0.3%	Bati
11.	Vote buying	2	0.3%	Bati
12.	Problems outside polling stations	124	17.4%	All districts
13.	Problems at closing	4	0.6%	Daun Keo, Bati, Tram Kork
14.	Problems during transport to counting centre	1	0.1%	Tram Kork

- Reported polling day incident:

At the Wat Mongkul Meanleak polling station in Ang Trao village, Tram Kork district, Eth Sakun, a CPP member, stepped out of his car and told a monk, "You must vote for CPP or I will come to hang you at midnight when CPP is declared the elected party."

- General observations of vote counting:

Comfrel observers were present at all commune counting centres, in particular to track the vote count. However, detailed information on the observation of the counting process is available for only 58 of the 98 commune counting centres in Takeo province.

A breakdown of observations on the vote counting process in Takeo is presented in the following table.

Summary of Vote Counting Observation Results: Takeo			
No.	Analysis	No. of counting centres	Percent*
1.	Total commune counting centres in province	98	N/A
2.	Total commune counting centres with detailed reported observations	58	N/A
3.	No irregularities observed	45	77.6%
4.	A few irregularities observed	11	19.0%
5.	Some serious irregularities observed	1	1.7%
6.	Many serious irregularities observed	1	1.7%
7.	PSC staff did not understand vote counting process	0	0.0%
8.	CEC did not understand the vote counting process	0	0.0%
9.	Vote counting results not filled in correctly on appropriate forms	0	0.0%

* percentage of commune counting centres with detailed reports from Comfrel observers

No incidents concerning the vote counting process were reported from Takeo province.