

# Live from Damascus: The Syrian Election Results

By [Ken Stone](#)

Global Research, April 18, 2016

[21st Century Wire](#)

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [US NATO](#)

[War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

*“Syria’s ruling Ba’ath Party and its allies have won the majority of the votes in the recent parliamentary elections in the country, official results show.*

*The Syrian electoral commission announced late Saturday that the National Unity coalition, comprising the ruling party and its allies, had won 200 of the 250 seats at the People’s Assembly (Majlis al-Sha’ab).” ~ [Press TV](#)*

Tuesday’s Syrian election was a vote of confidence by the Syrian people in their government. 5,085,444 voters cast their ballots out of a possible 8,834,994 eligible voters.

The overall participation rate of 58% (virtually identical to Canada’s last federal election) exceeded the government’s expectations in most places but was low in others.

For example, it was over 80% in Homs but only 52% in Tartous. What might explain the uneven results is the history of the war. People who suffered the most from the war, for example in Homs, were probably more grateful for their liberation and more motivated to exercise their political rights than people in Tartous who saw no fighting at all (though they lost thousands upon thousands of sons and grandsons in the war).

Also significant was the fact that over 140,000 refugees returned across the Lebanese border in just one day in order to vote.



And the polling hours in Damascus, which suffered a lot from the fighting, had to be extended until 11 pm to accommodate all the voters.

There were even polling stations set up by the government in recently liberated Palmyra and Al-Qaryaten, though those polls were largely symbolic because the inhabitants of those towns have not yet been able to return to their homes due to widespread destruction, prior to liberation by the Syrian Arab Army.

The voter participation rate is key to this election, more important than the individual candidates who were elected.

Here's why: you need to understand elections in a constitutionally-created state, in which one party dominates, in terms of a strike vote in a trade union.

It demonstrates continuing confidence in the leadership at a turning point in the struggle. A union would not be satisfied with a strike vote of 58%, going into a strike. And probably the Syrian government would have wished for a higher rate going into the negotiations at Geneva. But it knew from the start that holding the elections under the conditions of war and occupation was a gamble, because there are a lot of eligible voters living outside of Syria right now, living in places besieged by the terrorists, and who have died but not yet been accounted for.

Taking into account these factors, the participation rate would probably have been much higher.

Among our solidarity delegation, we have been pleased that the Syrian authorities did not try to inflate the figures to make the election results appear better than they actually were:

It reinforces our contention that the Syrian government is a credible force in the serious

negotiations ahead.

As mentioned, the turning point for Syria is the current round of negotiations taking place right now in Geneva to find a lasting political solution to the crisis.

Today, the Syrian delegation took their seats with a mandate from the Syrian people, whereas the opposition delegation of head-choppers cobbled together at the last minute by the USA and Saudi Arabia have no mandate at all from the unfortunate Syrians who suffer under military occupation in “rebel-held” areas.

No elections were held there. Western governments, such as the USA, have dismissed the Syrian election out of hand, though the participation rate in the last US election was only 48%.

But that’s not to say there weren’t any interesting candidates elected. The sister of a Syrian soldier, Noor Al-Shogri, stood for election as an independent in parliament. Her brother, Yahya Al-Shoghri, was filmed as he was being executed by ISIS terrorists in 2014 in Raqqa. (If you can stomach the summary execution in cold blood of a prisoner of war, you will find the video brazenly posted by the terrorists on Youtube.)

The barbarians demanded that he say, as his dying words, “Long live the caliphate!” He famously refused and declared instead that “It will be erased!”

His last words then became a rallying cry in the national resistance against the foreign aggression. Noor Al-Shogri easily won her seat.

I met an independent candidate in the Old City of Damascus, Nora Arissian, a small Armenian woman with flaming red hair. She came up to me in the Greek Melkite Patriarch’s procession to the polling station and thanked me for Canada taking in 25000 Syrian refugees and then she pointedly added, “We want them all eventually to come home!”

She too won her seat.

The election results were delayed by a couple of days because the Syrian election commission was unsatisfied with the preparedness of eight polling stations in partially-occupied Aleppo. As I understand it, the elections in Aleppo had to be continued on the day following election day.

Some people have asked what is the role of Palestinian refugees in this election. The answer is that Palestinians, ethnically-cleansed in 1948 and after, do not vote in Syrian elections.

The political and social status of Palestinians in Syria is the highest of any Arab country but the Syrian government doesn’t grant them citizenship or let them vote because it doesn’t want to dilute their right under international law, reaffirmed by numerous resolutions of the United Nations, to return to their homes and farms in Palestine.

The fact that the Syrian government has been so adamant about this principle, is one of the main causes of the foreign aggression against the country (and in support of the State of Israel.) So the Syrian government pays a heavy price for its strong support of the Palestinian people.

In turn, the vast majority of Palestinian refugees in Syria strongly support their government,



even though many have been made refugees a second time by the invasion into their neighbourhoods of the terrorist mercenaries from over 80 countries.

For example, a fierce struggle is taking place in Yarmouk right now just a few kilometres from where I write, among Isis, Al Nusra, and other terrorist gangs, over control of this former Palestinian neighbourhood/camp, which used to hold a quarter of a million people but is now a devastated ghost town with only a few thousand souls.



It bears repeating that these parliamentary elections were defiantly called by the Syrian government as “an exercise in national sovereignty.”

The point was to show the world, especially those western and Gulf states, who have waged the five-year long war of aggression against Syria, that Syrians are united in the belief that Syrians, and only Syrians, will decide the fate of Syria.

It appears that the gamble paid off.

**[Ken Stone](#)** is a veteran anti-war and peace activist.

The original source of this article is [21st Century Wire](#)  
Copyright © [Ken Stone](#), [21st Century Wire](#), 2016

**[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)**

**[Become a Member of Global Research](#)**

Articles by: **[Ken Stone](#)**

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)