

The Role of the Constitutional Court in the Electoral Process

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Abstract

The constitutional founder established a Constitutional Court under the 2020 constitutional amendment as an independent constitutional institution overseeing the constitutionality of laws and ensuring respect for and the supremacy of the Constitution, replacing the Constitutional Council. Unlike the Constitutional Council, which possessed a limited role in the electoral process, the Constitutional Court enjoys extensive powers directly impacting the electoral process. The Court's effective role in embodying fair and legitimate elections is highlighted through its supervisory authority over any act that could affect the transparency of the vote. Consequently, the Constitutional Court occupies a crucial position in preserving voters' choices and safeguarding them on the ground, away from manipulations that render elections subject to doubt and public rejection.

Keywords: Constitutional Court, Elections, Voting, Transparency.

Introduction

The existence of fair and credible elections constitutes one of the principal pillars of modern democracy, seeking to translate the will of voters on the ground as the ultimate holders of the original right to choose their representatives. To this end, the Algerian legislator has consistently sought to surround the electoral process with a set of guarantees that ensure its credibility.

In the presence of effective electoral guarantees, the integrity of the process is affirmed. To achieve a tangible realization of these guarantees, the recent constitutional amendment instituted a new constitutional body—the Constitutional Court—replacing the Constitutional Council. Its objective is to strengthen the rule of law and consolidate democracy. By doing so, the constitutional founder abandoned the political oversight previously exercised by the Constitutional Council in favor of judicial oversight entrusted to the Constitutional Court.

The Constitutional Court has been endowed with broad and diverse powers focused on preserving the supremacy of the Constitution and preventing its violation. Regarding the scope of this study, the powers of the Constitutional Court in the electoral field and in guaranteeing the integrity and transparency of elections are extensive, encompassing the entire process—both prior to and following the vote. The Constitutional Court thus serves as an impenetrable bulwark for the popular will, confronting any infringement on the rights of voters and candidates to embody free and fair elections, thereby instilling public confidence and reassuring voters by establishing a body that exercises rigorous oversight over the polling process to guarantee the faithful expression of the people's choice.



The significance of this study lies in the paramount importance of the electoral process, which determines the destiny of citizens through the legitimate selection of their representatives. Accordingly, the Constitutional Court was established to oversee the fairness of the vote and monitor its progression through procedural mechanisms that prevent electoral manipulation and preserve voters' ballots.

This paper aims to highlight the powers of the Constitutional Court in the context of voting, spanning from the receipt of candidacies to the proclamation of provisional and final electoral results. To address the objectives outlined above, the following research problem is posed:

How effective are the supervisory procedures exercised by the Constitutional Court in achieving fair and transparent elections?

This study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach to examine and analyze the legal provisions governing this topic. To address the central problem, the study is structured as follows:

- **Section I: Powers of the Constitutional Court Prior to Voting**
- **Section II: Powers of the Constitutional Court After Voting**

Section I: Powers of the Constitutional Court Prior to Voting

The Constitutional Court was granted distinct competencies prior to the commencement of the voting process. These duties aim to safeguard constitutional legitimacy, which forms the fundamental core of the rule of law ¹.

Subsection I: Adjudicating Appeals by Candidates Whose Presidential Candidacies Were Rejected

Previously, presidential candidacy files were deposited before the Constitutional Council, which held exclusive jurisdiction over them. However, this power was subsequently transferred to the National Independent Authority for Elections (ANIE) ².

Declarations of candidacy for the Presidency of the Republic are deposited with the President of ANIE in exchange for a receipt of delivery, pursuant to Article 249(1) of Ordinance No. 21-01, as amended and supplemented. ANIE decides upon the validity of candidacies submitted through a reasoned legal decision within a maximum period of seven (7) days from the date of deposit, in accordance with Article 252(1) of Ordinance No. 21-01. This review results in either the acceptance or rejection of the candidacy. In the event of rejection, the candidate retains the right to appeal if the application fails to satisfy the

¹ Cherif Kaiss, "The Role of the Constitutional Court in Establishing the Rule of Law," Journal of the Constitutional Council, no. 17 (Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou, 2021), p. 51.

² Organic Law No. 19-07 of September 14, 2019, relating to the National Independent Authority for Elections, Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, no. 55, September 15, 2019, pp. 5–11.



conditions stipulated in the Organic Law on the Electoral System. Article 252(2) explicitly requires ANIE to notify the candidate of its decision immediately upon issuance ³.

Furthermore, the law explicitly affirms the candidate's right to lodge an appeal against the rejection before the Constitutional Court within a maximum of forty-eight (48) hours from the time of notification, pursuant to Article 252(2) of Ordinance No. 21-01 ⁴.

The appeal against ANIE's decision may be lodged by any individual possessing candidate status; however, the right to appeal a candidacy rejection decision remains strictly limited to the candidate concerned ⁵.

ANIE transmits its decisions regarding candidacies, along with the candidate files, to the Constitutional Court within twenty-four (24) hours of their issuance. The Constitutional Court holds exclusive jurisdiction to rule on appeals concerning ANIE's decisions regarding presidential candidacies.

The Constitutional Court adjudicates the appeals submitted to it within a maximum of seven (7) days from the date of receipt of the last decision issued by ANIE, as provided in Article 252(4) of the Organic Law on the Electoral System. The Court's decision is subsequently published in the Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria ⁶.

The Constitutional Court also approves the final list of candidates for presidential elections within a maximum period of seven (7) days. A candidate may not withdraw their candidacy following the Court's approval of the final list, except in circumstances established by the Court pursuant to Article 95(1) of the Constitution ⁷, as well as Article 255 of Ordinance No. 21-01, which stipulates that: *"No withdrawal of candidacy shall be accepted or recognized after the Constitutional Court approves the candidacies, except in the event of severe incapacity legally established by the Constitutional Court or in the event of the candidate's death."* In such instances, an additional period is granted for submitting a new candidacy, provided it does not exceed the deadline preceding the election date.

In the event of a candidate's death or severe incapacity following the Constitutional Court's approval and publication of the final list of candidates in the Official Gazette, the date of the election is postponed for a period not exceeding fifteen (15) days ⁸.

The Constitutional Court's decision regarding the final list of candidates is officially published in the Official Gazette.

³ See Article 252(1, 2) of Ordinance No. 21-01 of Rajab 26, 1442 AH (March 10, 2021) bearing the Organic Law on the Electoral System, Official Gazette, no. 18, as amended by Ordinance No. 21-05 of April 23, 2021, and Ordinance No. 21-10 of August 25, 2021, p. 100.

⁴ See Article 252(2) of Ordinance No. 21-01, *ibid.*, p. 100.

⁵ Chadia Rehab, "Competencies of the Constitutional Court in Electoral Matters," *Journal of the Constitutional Council*, no. 17 (2021), p. 71.

⁶ See Article 252(4) of Ordinance No. 21-01, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

⁷ See Article 95 of Presidential Decree No. 20-442 bearing the Constitutional Amendment, Official Gazette, no. 82 (2020), p. 34.

⁸ Article 255 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *op. cit.*, p. 102.



Subsection II: Constitutional Court Oversight Regarding Withdrawal of Presidential Candidacies

A withdrawal of candidacy in the first round of presidential elections may not significantly impact the electoral process due to the presence of multiple candidates; however, a withdrawal in the second round—involving only two (2) candidates—directly alters the process, whether the withdrawal is voluntary or involuntary ⁹.

In the event of a legal incapacity or death of one of the candidates, and upon the Constitutional Court's verification of such circumstance, the Court officially announces the necessity of re-initiating the electoral process and extends the timeframe for organizing elections up to a maximum of sixty (60) days.

Pending the organization of new elections, the incumbent President of the Republic remains in office, or the person assuming the presidency of the state continues in that capacity until the newly elected President takes the oath of office ¹⁰.

Section II: Powers of the Constitutional Court After Voting

The Constitutional Court exercises jurisdiction over procedures following the voting phase. It adjudicates appeals concerning the provisional results of legislative and presidential elections and oversees subsequent operations tied to the electoral process.

Subsection I: Adjudicating Appeals Related to Provisional Electoral Results

Out of the constitutional founder's commitment to the integrity of the electoral process and the weight of citizens' votes in building the rule of law, the legal system guarantees every qualified person the right to submit grievances and appeals against provisional results, ensuring transparency and fairness.

Upon the conclusion of the vote counting process and the preliminary announcement of results, disputes may arise regarding the regularity or accuracy of procedures. In such cases, the Constitutional Court acts as an electoral judge, evaluating the credibility of the process and ruling on the appeals presented before it.

Article 191 of the 2020 Constitutional Amendment provides that: *(The Constitutional Court considers appeals received regarding the provisional results of presidential and legislative elections, as well as referendum results, and proclaims the final results of all these operations)* ¹¹. This article explicitly affirms the Court's inherent authority to hear such appeals.

Branch I: Examining Appeals Related to Presidential Elections

While the task of ruling on provisional presidential election results previously belonged to the Constitutional Council, this jurisdiction was transferred to the Constitutional Court under the recent constitutional amendment. Consequently, the Court serves as the primary guarantee for citizens to freely express their will ¹².

⁹ Amar Abbas, "Presidential Elections in Light of the Jurisprudence of the Constitutional Council," *Journal of the Algerian Constitutional Council*, no. 15 (2013), p. 121.

¹⁰ Article 95 of Presidential Decree No. 20-442, op. cit., p. 34.

¹¹ Article 191 of Presidential Decree No. 20-442, *ibid.*, p. 63.

¹² Mouloud Nacef, *Legal Guarantees for Protecting the Electoral Process in Algeria*, Ph.D. diss., University of Algiers 1 (2017–2018), p. 200.



The Organic Law on the Electoral System grants every candidate in a presidential election (or their legally authorized representative) the right to contest provisional results, subject to statutory conditions. Article 258 provides that: (*...An objection must be entered into the counting record at the polling station. ANIE shall immediately be notified of this objection to decide upon it in accordance with the provisions of this law*)¹³.

The appeal contesting the validity of provisional results is lodged with the Registry of the Constitutional Court within the legal deadline of forty-eight (48) hours following the proclamation of provisional results, pursuant to Article 259(4)¹⁴.

Although appeals submitted past the statutory deadline are rejected on formal grounds, the law does not explicitly state the rejection of appeals in cases of force majeure, leaving a window where the Court evaluates the appeal context. In managing these disputes between the contesting candidate and the contested candidate, the Court reviews the grounds of appeal and accompanying documentation in an atmosphere of impartiality.

In these circumstances, the appeal does not conflict with the victory of a candidate who was not a party to the dispute; correcting the result records may lead to the victory of a candidate who did not originally lodge an appeal¹⁵.

In such cases, the Constitutional Court notifies the winning candidate whose victory is contested, allowing them a period of seventy-two (72) hours from notification to submit a written counter-memorandum, pursuant to Article 259 of Ordinance No. 21-01¹⁶.

The statutory framework grants the Constitutional Court a period of three (3) days to rule on appeals concerning provisional presidential election results from the date of receipt, pursuant to Article 260 of Ordinance No. 21-01¹⁷. This brief period reflects the urgency of the electoral process, requiring swift adjudication through straightforward procedures to eliminate doubts that could cloud delayed results¹⁸.

Regarding the substance of the Constitutional Court's decisions on provisional results, the Court may reject the appeal if it contains formal defects—such as a failure to record the objection in the polling station count record—or it may order a re-drafting of the result records in cases where arithmetic errors or fraud affecting the election outcome are uncovered, as provided in Article 260(1)¹⁹.

Branch II: Announcement of Final Results for Presidential Elections

Following the adjudication of all appeals, the Constitutional Court proclaims the final results of the presidential election, endowing the outcome with legitimacy and public acceptance²⁰.

The Constitutional Court proclaims the final results within ten (10) days from the date of receiving the records from the President of ANIE, pursuant to Article 260 of Ordinance No.

¹³ See Article 258 of Ordinance No. 21-01, op. cit., p. 103.

¹⁴ See Article 259(4) of Ordinance No. 21-01, ibid., p. 103.

¹⁵ Chadia Rehab, op. cit., p. 81.

¹⁶ Article 259 of Ordinance No. 21-01, op. cit., p. 103.

¹⁷ Article 260 of Ordinance No. 21-01, ibid., p. 103.

¹⁸ Amar Abbas, op. cit., p. 66.

¹⁹ Article 260(1) of Ordinance No. 21-01, op. cit., p. 103.

²⁰ Cherif Kaiss, op. cit., p. 50.



21-01²¹. In the event a second round is required, the Court designates the two leading candidates invited to participate. The second round of voting takes place on the fifteenth (15th) day following the proclamation of the first-round results by the Court, provided the period between the two rounds does not exceed thirty (30) days²².

The Constitutional Court proclaims the final results of the second round within ten (10) days of receiving the records from ANIE. If a candidate in the second round dies or suffers a legal incapacity, the Court orders the re-initiation of the entire electoral process and extends the timeframe for holding new presidential elections up to a maximum of sixty (60) days²³.

Subsection II: Constitutional Court Oversight of Legislative Elections

The Constitutional Court also holds jurisdiction over appeals contesting the provisional results of legislative elections. The President of ANIE proclaims provisional results for legislative elections within forty-eight (48) hours from the receipt of the records of the electoral commissions. This deadline may be extended by an additional twenty-four (24) hours by decision of the President of ANIE, pursuant to Article 209(1, 2) of Ordinance No. 21-01²⁴. Immediately following the proclamation, candidate lists, participating political parties, and individual candidates may submit appeals regarding the validity of the provisional results.

Branch I: Adjudicating Appeals Related to Provisional Results of Legislative Elections

The Constitutional Court possesses full authority to hear legislative election disputes, serving as a pillar of justice by uncovering irregularities through its binding decisions²⁵. Pursuant to the Organic Law on the Electoral System, appeals contesting legislative results must be submitted in the form of a formal petition.

For elections to the People's National Assembly (APN), any candidate list or participating political party may file an appeal regardless of their rank in total votes cast, pursuant to Article 209(3)²⁶. For elections to the Council of the Nation (Senate), any candidate holds the right to contest the election results²⁷.

Appeals against provisional legislative results must be filed within forty-eight (48) hours following the proclamation of provisional results. The Constitutional Court notifies the contested winning candidate or list, who is given seventy-two (72) hours from notification to submit a written counter-memorandum²⁸.

For Council of the Nation elections, the appeal deadline is fixed at twenty-four (24) hours following the proclamation of provisional results²⁹. The Constitutional Court decides

²¹ Article 260 of Ordinance No. 21-01, op. cit., p. 103.

²² Articles 256 and 257 of Ordinance No. 21-01, ibid., p. 102.

²³ Article 95 of Presidential Decree No. 20-442, op. cit., p. 34.

²⁴ See Article 209(1, 2) of Ordinance No. 21-01, op. cit., p. 85.

²⁵ Chadia Rehab, op. cit., p. 86.

²⁶ Article 209(3) of Ordinance No. 21-01, op. cit., p. 85.

²⁷ Article 240 of Ordinance No. 21-01, ibid., p. 94.

²⁸ Article 209 of Ordinance No. 21-01, ibid., p. 85.

²⁹ Article 240 of Ordinance No. 21-01, ibid., p. 94.



on legislative election appeals within three (3) days from the expiration of the deadline for submitting the written counter-memorandum ³⁰.

Upon reviewing the appeals, the Constitutional Court issues decisions that may reject the appeal (on formal or substantive grounds) or order the modification/re-drafting of the result records.

If the Court finds an appeal well-founded regarding APN elections, it issues a decision annulling the contested vote in the relevant polling stations where violations occurred, or it re-drafts the result records and proclaims the winning candidate ³¹.

For Council of the Nation elections, the Court issues a reasoned decision either annulling the contested election and ordering a new election within eight (8) days from the notification of the decision to the President of ANIE, or re-drafting the result record and declaring the winning candidate ³².

An annulment decision limited to a specific constituency (whether total or partial) invalidates the vote in that constituency without invalidating the broader legislative elections. ANIE subsequently reorganizes the election within the contested constituency ³³.

Branch II: Announcement of Final Results for Legislative Elections

After ruling on the appeals, the Constitutional Court proclaims the final results of the APN elections within ten (10) days from receiving the records from the President of ANIE. This period may be extended by forty-eight (48) hours by decision of the President of the Constitutional Court, pursuant to Article 211 of the Organic Law on the Electoral System ³⁴. The Court proclaims the final results for the Council of the Nation elections within ten (10) days from receiving the provisional results ³⁵.

Subsection III: Constitutional Court Oversight of the Referendum Process

A popular referendum represents one of the most prominent manifestations of direct democracy, through which the electorate expresses its sovereign will on matters of general public importance ³⁶. A referendum involves submitting a political or legislative proposal to the people to obtain their approval or rejection ³⁷. In its specific constitutional sense, it refers to the process of referring a proposed constitutional amendment or law to the populace for a "yes" or "no" vote, serving as a direct democratic instrument ³⁸.

³⁰ Articles 210 and 241 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *ibid.*, pp. 86, 95.

³¹ Article 210 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *ibid.*, p. 86.

³² Article 241 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *ibid.*, p. 95.

³³ Chadia Rehab, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

³⁴ Article 211 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

³⁵ Article 241 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *ibid.*, p. 95.

³⁶ Samira Anouna, *Oversight of the Constitutionality of Laws in Algeria*, Ph.D. diss., University of Bordj Bou Arreridj (2020–2021), p. 133.

³⁷ Nafissa Bekhti, *Constitutional Amendments in Arab Countries Between Obstacles and Solutions*, Ph.D. diss., University of Tlemcen (2015–2016), pp. 50–52.

³⁸ Mohamed El-Bordj, "The Legal Framework Governing Referendums in Algeria," *Journal of Comparative Legal Studies*, no. 02 (2020), p. 1480.



Professor Boukraa Idriss defines a referendum as *"resorting to the people to ascertain their opinion on a specific matter, whether legislative, constitutional, or political, by presenting it to voters for decision"* ³⁹.

Branch I: Adjudicating Appeals Submitted on Provisional Referendum Results

To ensure the integrity and credibility of referendums, the legislator empowered the Constitutional Court to exercise oversight over appeals concerning provisional referendum results.

Granting electoral oversight over national elections to the Constitutional Court while leaving local election disputes to administrative courts—except for registration disputes in electoral lists, which fall under ordinary jurisdiction—makes Algeria an exception compared to nations that unify all electoral litigation under a single judicial hierarchy ⁴⁰.

The Organic Law on the Electoral System grants every voter the right to contest the regularity of referendum voting operations ⁴¹. To do so, an objection must first be entered into the count record at the polling station before filing an appeal with the Registry of the Constitutional Court within forty-eight (48) hours following the proclamation of provisional results, under penalty of formal rejection. ANIE is immediately notified of the objection ⁴².

The Constitutional Court adjudicates referendum appeals within three (3) days from receipt. The Court's decision may reject the application on formal or substantive grounds ⁴³, or order the correction and re-drafting of result records where count errors or fraud are identified. The Court's decision remains final and unappealable.

Branch II: Announcement of Final Referendum Results

The legal text grants the Constitutional Court the power to proclaim the final results of a referendum. The Court officially announces the final results within ten (10) days from receiving the records from the regional electoral commissions and the commission for voters abroad ⁴⁴.

Subsection IV: Role of the Constitutional Court in Decisions on Campaign Financing

Candidates seeking a broad popular base frequently utilize campaign tools to present their programs. Because these campaign activities require financial backing, candidates are bound by strict statutory campaign finance limits to prevent foreign influence, illicit funding, or electoral manipulation.

Campaign accounts for presidential and legislative elections were previously submitted to the Constitutional Council. However, this supervisory competence was subsequently assigned to the Campaign Finance Monitoring Committee established under ANIE ⁴⁵.

³⁹ Amar Abbas, "Competencies of the Constitutional Court in the Electoral Field," *Journal of the Constitutional Council*, no. 17 (2021), p. 124.

⁴⁰ Article 258 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

⁴¹ Article 263 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *ibid.*, p. 104.

⁴² Mohamed El-Bordj, *op. cit.*, p. 1480.

⁴³ Amar Abbas, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

⁴⁴ Abdelhalim Merzougui, *The Nature of the Algerian Political System Under the 1996 Constitution*, Master's thesis, University of Annaba (2005), p. 230.

⁴⁵ Articles 115–122 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *op. cit.*, pp. 40–42.



The Campaign Finance Monitoring Committee audits the accuracy and legitimacy of campaign financial transactions. Following its review, the Committee issues decisions approving, adjusting, or rejecting the campaign account within six (6) months of submission ⁴⁶.

The Constitutional Court holds jurisdiction to hear appeals filed against the decisions of the Campaign Finance Monitoring Committee within one (1) month from the date of notification to the candidate concerned. Through this procedure, candidates may obtain state reimbursement for campaign expenses—up to 30% for presidential elections and 20% for legislative elections—provided they secure the statutory threshold of votes cast ⁴⁷.

Subsection V: Role of the Constitutional Court in Postponing Elections

Exigencies may arise that prevent holding elections within statutory deadlines. Recognizing the risks of institutional vacancies, the constitutional founder established specific procedures to govern such contingencies.

Branch I: Extension of the Timeline for Organizing Presidential Elections

In cases involving the extension of presidential election deadlines, the Constitutional Court plays a central role, as its consultative opinion is mandatory.

Under the legal framework, in the event of a vacancy in the Presidency of the Republic, presidential elections are organized within a maximum period of ninety (90) days. If holding elections within this period proves impossible, the timeframe may be extended for an additional period not exceeding ninety (90) days, following the mandatory opinion of the Constitutional Court. The Court also intervenes in the event of a simultaneous vacancy in the offices of the President of the Republic and the President of the Council of the Nation, in which case the President of the Constitutional Court assumes the functions of Head of State to ensure constitutional continuity ⁴⁸.

Branch II: Extension of the Timeline for Organizing Legislative Elections

The Constitutional Court similarly issues advisory opinions regarding the extension of legislative election deadlines. In the event of the dissolution of the People's National Assembly or early elections called by the President of the Republic—who must consult the President of the Constitutional Court ⁴⁹—legislative elections are organized within a maximum of three (3) months. If holding elections within this timeframe is impossible, the period may be extended once for a maximum of three (3) months, upon the opinion of the Constitutional Court.

Additionally, the Constitutional Court declares vacant the seat of a member of the People's National Assembly or the Council of the Nation upon receiving notification of vacancy from the relevant parliamentary chamber ⁵⁰. Such vacancies occur due to death,

⁴⁶ Articles 93–95 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *ibid.*, pp. 35–36.

⁴⁷ Article 94 of Presidential Decree No. 20-442, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–34.

⁴⁸ Articles 49, 122, and 151 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *op. cit.*, pp. 35, 42, 54.

⁴⁹ Organic Law No. 12-02 of January 12, 2012, establishing cases of incompatibility with the parliamentary mandate, *Official Gazette*, no. 01 (2012), p. 29.

⁵⁰ Articles 215, 216, 242, 243, and 244 of Ordinance No. 21-01, *op. cit.*, pp. 45, 78, 87, 95.



appointment to incompatible offices, forfeiture of mandate, resignation, or legal incompatibility⁵¹.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates the prominent status occupied by the Constitutional Court as a supervisory institution within the Algerian constitutional framework. Endowed with broad competencies spanning presidential and legislative elections as well as referendums, the Court is charged with upholding the Constitution, guaranteeing its supremacy, and safeguarding citizens' rights and freedoms—most notably the right to vote and choose representatives through legitimate democratic means.

Based on the analysis, the following conclusions are reached:

1. **Ensuring Legitimacy:** Entrusting the Constitutional Court with monitoring the electoral process confirms the safety and credibility of elections. The Court's independence and impartiality serve as essential guarantees for fair outcomes accepted by voters.
2. **Procedural Efficiency:** Endowing the Court with specific supervisory tools across all stages of the electoral process enhances the efficacy of its oversight role.
3. **Strengthening Public Trust:** The Court's powers in electoral litigation generate public confidence and solidify democratic legitimacy.

Recommendations:

- The legislator should address procedural ambiguities and lacunae in the electoral law by introducing more detailed provisions governing the Court's supervisory role.
- The Constitutional Court's supervisory mandate should be further expanded and detailed prior to and on polling day to ensure comprehensive oversight over all preliminary voting procedures.

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