

to each candidate and completes enough copies of a statement of the poll so that each candidate, or their respective election or counting agent, receives one copy and another is sent to the returning officer.

The postal ballots are counted by the returning officer. We observed the counting proceedings at several polling stations and the counting of postal votes by the returning officers. All the teams found the counting procedures to be in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations and to have been efficiently executed.

## **11. COMPLAINTS**

We received a number of representations from leaders of Opposition parties, certain pressure groups and individuals making complaints concerning unfair practices on the part of the Government and the Election Commission relating to various aspects of the election process. Basically, the complaints were of two categories: long-standing complaints such as uneven application of the law with regard to the use of the media in election campaigning, restrictions on election campaign meetings and malpractices in the operation of postal ballots; and allegations relating to specific irregularities in the actual preparation and supervision of the 1990 general elections.

We did not see it as our task to become embroiled in any disputes or to take sides in any arguments. We explained to the complainants that our role was to observe the organisation and conduct of the elections by the Election Commission in accordance with the law of the country. Accordingly, we did not see it as within our terms of reference to investigate and establish the validity of the allegations made, although we felt it was important to bring to the attention of the Election Commission the complaints we received. In particular, in those cases where the allegations made related to specific aspects of the procedures, we drew the attention of the Election Commission and sought their clarification.

Finally, we would like to express our appreciation to all individuals and groups from both Government and Opposition who volunteered to come forward and discuss their views with us and more so in the demanding circumstances of the election.

## **12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We wish to record our deep appreciation to all those who contributed to the carrying out of our mandate, and particularly to those without whose assistance we would not have been able to function effectively. To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, we extend our special thanks for support and for facilities so willingly placed at our disposal. We wish in particular to pay a warm tribute to the devoted and untiring

labours of Ambassador Hashim Taib and members of the Malaysian Task Force, both in the States and in Kuala Lumpur. They worked efficiently and with a high sense of purpose, and our mission would not have been possible without their tireless devotion to their task. We would also like to thank all those, including the Chairman and members of the Election Commission and their staff, as well as the many Malaysian officials throughout the country, for the help and co-operation which we received from them.

We wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, the Deputy Secretary-General (Political), Sir Anthony Siaguru, and those members of the Commonwealth Secretariat who accompanied us to Malaysia. Their support was invaluable in helping us to discharge our responsibilities in all their aspects. In expressing our deep appreciation to all of them, we would like, in particular, to highlight the special contribution to our work of Mr Carl Dundas, the leader of the Secretariat team.

Our final words of thanks must be to the political leaders and people of Malaysia and especially to those who spent their time in the most demanding circumstances of the election to express their views to the Observer Group. We would like to express our deep appreciation for the kind hospitality and welcome accorded to us.

Kuala Lumpur  
22 October 1990