

## AFGHANISTAN

**Dates of Elections:** 6 to 15 April 1988

### **Purposes of Elections**

Elections were held for all the elective seats in Parliament provided for in the November 1987 Constitution\*.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The bicameral Parliament of Afghanistan, the National Assembly, is composed of the Council of Representatives and the Council of Elders. The 234 Representatives are all popularly elected for 5-year terms. Of the 128 Elders, 2 are elected from each of the country's provinces for 5 years; 2 members of each provincial council are elected by the council for 3 years; and the remaining one-third of the Elders are appointed by the President of the Republic for 3 years from among "well-informed, scholarly, prestigious and national figures".

### **Electoral System**

All Afghan citizens have the right to elect and be elected members of the National Assembly.

Members of the Council of Representatives are elected from constituencies having equal population.

### **Background and Outcome of the Elections**

General legislative elections had not been held since August/September 1969, when the seats of the former bicameral Parliament were renewed. It was dissolved in July 1973 after the monarchy was overthrown.

Pursuant to the provisions of the November 1987 Constitution, the election dates were set on 19 March 1988. All National Assembly candidates were members of the National Front of Afghanistan, a "socio-political organization [which] unites political parties, social organizations and individual members included in its ranks for their active participation in the social, political and state spheres on the basis of a common programme". The leading political group is the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

\* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 8.

The polling process was marked by violence and boycotted by the rebel *mujaheddin* population. On 8 May, the central election commission announced that elections had taken place in 184 of 234 Council of Representatives constituencies, most of the unfilled seats having been reserved for the opposition (moderate *mujaheddin*), while polling for the Council of Elders was held in 51 constituencies.

On 29 May, the newly-elected Parliament was inaugurated by President of the Republic Najibullah Ahmadzai, who at the same time announced the disbandment of the Revolutionary Council that had assumed legislative powers since the April 1978 coup d'Etat. Three days earlier, the President had appointed Mr. Mohammed Hassan Sharq as Prime Minister. The latter announced the composition of the Council of Ministers on 7 June.

**Statistics**

*1. Results of the Elections*

Voters. . . . .1,547,000 (approx.)