

KIRIBATI

Dates of Elections: 12 and 19 March 1987

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the elective seats in Parliament on the normal expiry of the members' term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Kiribati, the House of Assembly (*Maneaba ni Maungatabu*), comprises 39 elected representatives and one nominated representative of the Banaban community, all of whom have 4-year terms of office. In addition, the Attorney-General is an *ex-officio* member if he is not already an elected member of the Assembly.

The number of elected members was increased by 3 since the previous (January 1983) elections.

Electoral System

Every citizen of Kiribati at least 18 years of age who resides within an electoral district is entitled to vote in parliamentary elections. Disqualified are persons serving a sentence of imprisonment of at least 12 months, the insane and persons guilty of electoral offences.

Registers of electors are revised prior to a general election once every four years. Voting is not compulsory.

Qualified electors who have attained the age of 21 years may be elected to the House of Assembly. Disqualified are persons under allegiance to a foreign State, those holding election-related employment or public office, and persons under sentence of death.

Candidates must be nominated by three electors registered in the same district.

Assembly members are elected in 23 constituencies allotted one, two or three seats by absolute majority vote (or simple majority, if not successful in the first round). By-elections are held within three months to fill parliamentary vacancies which arise during the legislative term.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

Parliament was dissolved on 1 February 1987 in preparation for the general elections.

Among the campaign issues was that concerning an agreement to grant fishing rights within Kiribati's ocean areas to the USSR. Opposition to this agreement concluded by the Government had led to the formation of the country's only political group, the Christian Democratic Party. All other Assembly candidates ran as independents.

In accordance with the Electoral Law, polling was held in two rounds, the second in constituencies where no candidate had obtained an absolute majority the previous week. Final voting results spelled defeat for 16 incumbent Assembly members.

On 19 May, President of the Republic Ieremia Tabai, who had himself been re-elected on 12 May, appointed a new Cabinet.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections

Voters 84% (approx.)