
IRAQ'S HIGH ELECTORAL COMMISSION WARNS AGAINST CIVIL WAR

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Baghdad – Hamza Mustafa

Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission has warned of a potential civil war after the Iraqi parliament decided on Sunday evening to cancel some of the parliamentary elections results and manually recount 10 percent of the votes.

The head of the commission, Riyadh al-Badran said that the failure to comply with the official poll results could have dire political repercussions.

On Monday, Iraq's parliament decided to annul the expatriate vote and recount about 10 percent of all ballots cast due to evidence of fraud.

Poll results from major displacement camps in the Anbar, Salaheddine and Diyala provinces were also canceled.

The Victory Coalition led by Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi said that legal and constitutional procedures must be taken into account in resolving complaints and violations.

It is necessary to preserve the integrity and legitimacy of the democratic path and the political process in the country, coalition spokesman Hussein Darwish al-Adli said in a statement.

This requires commitment to legal and constitutional frameworks by dealing with the election issue in order to achieve justice and to preserve the ballots of voters, he added.

In remarks to Asharq Al-Awsat, legal expert and advisor Jamal Al-Asadi commented on parliament's decision, saying: The proceedings of the extraordinary session of the parliament are illegal, and therefore do not impose any obligation on the Electoral Commission.

Those affected by the results have no recourse but to challenge the results by legal means, through the Judiciary, which alone can decide whether there was fraud in the general elections or in certain regions or provinces.

In the same context, Dr. Magida Tamimi, a member of the outgoing Iraqi parliament and the winner of the highest number of votes among women in the current session (55,000 votes in Baghdad), described Monday's parliamentary session as the meeting of the losers.

Speaking to Asharq Al-Awsat, Tamimi said: The majority of those who today are crying over results are the product of political parties and forces that have become addicted to fraud.

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