

Voting Does Not Ensure Democracy

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BEFORE YOU READ: Discuss the title. How could it be true that voting does not ensure democracy?

Voting is very important in a democratic process. It is a good way to express your opinion on the issues and decisions that influence your life. Voting

contributes to the proper functioning of society. But democracies are not perfect.

My country Haiti has been democratic since 1990. In 1990, the people overthrew the dictator Duvalier and introduced universal suffrage. Every two years, we elect our local officials and one part of

the Senate. Every four years we elect our congress-people, and every five years we elect the president.

The voting process, however, is very difficult. The government often does not respect the elec-

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Clean Elections in the U.S.

Some people argue that the role of money in U.S. elections makes the elections less democratic. Fourteen states now give candidates the option to run a “clean” election. These candidates accept small donations from individuals and not big donations from special interests. In return, they get public funding for their campaign. What do you think about the role of money in elections? Research clean elections and write about or report back what you learn.



General election in Haiti in 2006. Photo from Wikimedia.

tion schedule, and the election results often do not reflect the voting. For several decades, the international community has influenced the vote count in a way that locals are not happy with. Often, after the vote, people protest against the result and it ends in violence. Therefore, from the outset, the elected officials have a deficit of legitimacy. Nowadays, voter participation is very low because people are tired of promises being broken.

Fair elections have not been held in Haiti for decades. How long can this situation continue?

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, what are three ways the vote in Haiti is not democratic?
2. Have you experienced anything similar in your country or in the U.S., where voting took place, but it wasn't democratic in the end?



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