Recently Tanzania held its first multi-party election in 30 years. Five past and present Indiana University graduate students from the Bloomington campus served as election observers during the October 22 Zanzibar elections and the October 29 Tanzanian Union elections. Election observers conducted interviews with representatives of the various political parties and electoral officials, observed campaign rallies, and monitored the actual voting on election day. The reports made by the various observation delegates will be made available to the Tanzanian government and donor community.

Out of 13 registered political parties, four ran candidates for the Union President while the ruling party, CCM (Party of the Revolution), as well as CUF (Civic United Front) put up candidates for the Zanzibar Presidency. In a close election, Dr. Salmin Armour of CCM was officially declared winner of the Zanzibar Presidency despite widespread allegations of election fraud. In the Union elections, CCM won a large majority of the parliamentary seats and its Presidential candidate Benjamin Mkapa was poised to win the presidency. However, the official results of the October 29 Union elections could not be announced, as voting in the capital city Dar es Salaam had to be redone on November 19 due to widespread logistical problems, such as shortages of ballot papers and ballot boxes. The results of the November 19 redone elections showed Mkapa to be the winner.

Four of the observers, Nathalie Arnold (Anthropology), Bruce Heilman (Political Science), Ahmed Shariff (SPEA and Political Science), and Paul Kaiser (recent Ph.D. in Political Science), were invited by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). Gary Burgess (History) was hired by the United Nations. IFES, a Washington, D.C.-based non-governmental organization, provides technical assistance to emerging, evolving and developed democracies around the world. IFES has offices in Ghana, South Africa, Haiti, The West Bank/Gaza, Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, Kazakhstan and Peru. In Tanzania, IFES received a USAID grant to observe the elections.

Arnold was deployed to the remote southern regions of Lindi, Mtwara, as well as Mbeya and Iringa to assess the pre-election environment. She was sent to Zanzibar for the presidential election, and for the Union elections she was dispatched to Kigoma, an area where she had previously conducted her pre-dissertation research. Arnold remained in Dar es Salaam for the November election re-run. Heilman was a long-term observer in Zanzibar and was deployed to the Arusha region for the Tanzanian Union election results and monitored the national elections there. Kaiser was sent to Zanzibar to observe the vote tallying and official announcements of the Zanzibar election results. Shariff, who was conducting research on political parties in Tanzania, was deployed to Pemba for the Zanzibar elections and to Mbeya for the Union elections. He was also retained by IFES to observe the Union election re-run in Dar es Salaam.

Burgess was hired by the UN Electoral Secretariat to be the regional coordinator in Iringa. He spent a couple of months observing the preparations for the election and coordinated logistics for those UN election observers deployed to his area. He too observed the election re-run for Dar es Salaam.

— Bruce Heilman
Political Science, IU Bloomington

African Children's Choir at IU Kokomo

The internationally acclaimed African Children’s Choir, whose mission is to help children in crisis, presented a performance in IU Kokomo in November. Donations were accepted by “Friends In The West,” the relief organization helping orphanges around the world, to provide food, housing, educational, and medical needs for children around the world. Proceeds help to shelter, feed, and educate more than 5,000 children in Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, and Rwanda, and the group is even reaching out to provide building supplies, medicine, and medical equipment to orphanages and children’s hospitals in other troubled countries, including Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Somalia, and Sudan. “Friends In The West” also works alongside other relief organizations to develop feeding stations and provide medical assistance to orphaned children.

The choir is made up of a group of children ages five to twelve who are selected annually from among the thousands of orphans and disadvantaged children in East Africa. They perform a wide variety African tunes accompanied by drums and ethnic instruments. Included in the program were well loved children’s songs, popular gospel tunes, and hand clapping traditional spirituals. In 1992, the Choir was nominated for a Grammy Award as “Best Gospel Choir.”

The IU Office of Campus Climate helped to sponsor the concert.