Wardman Park Hotel Washington, D.C.

August 12, 2010

Dr. S. Y. Quraishi, Chief Election Commissioner Election Commission of India Nirvachan Sadan Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

Dear Dr. Quraishi:

We, the undersigned participants in the 2010 Electronic Voting Technology Workshop / Workshop on Trustworthy Elections (EVT/WOTE), had the privilege to attend a panel discussion on the state of India's electronic voting machines (EVMs). We greatly appreciate the participation of Dr. Alok Shukla, Deputy Election Commissioner, and Prof. P. V. Indiresan, Chairman of the Expert Committee, who were joined by G.V.L. Narasimha Rao of VeTA¹ and Prof. J. Alex Halderman of the University of Michigan. We were fascinated to learn about the complexities and challenges of conducting elections in the world's largest democracy, and about the Election Commission's accomplishments in this regard. However, as experts in electronic voting technology and computer security, we have significant concerns about the security, verifiability, and transparency of India's EVMs.

Although India's EVMs have a simple design that avoids many of the problems found in other direct-recording electronic (DRE) voting machines, they are still vulnerable to a wide range of attacks. New classes of attacks have been discovered since the time the EVMs were introduced that render many of their security assumptions obsolete. Therefore, we conclude, after listening to the arguments of the panelists, that India's EVMs do not today provide security, verifiability, or transparency adequate for confidence in election results.

We urge the Election Commission to explore other forms of voting that are suitable to the Indian context and that do provide adequate transparency, verifiability, and security. Other democracies have adopted and then abandoned DRE voting as science's understanding of election security has progressed. Our research community has been involved in this process around the world, and you are welcome to draw on our collective experience and expertise as you see fit.

Sincerely,

¹Citizens for Verifiability, Transparency, and Accountability in Elections

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²ACCURATE (A Center for Correct, Usable, Reliable, Auditable, and Transparent Elections) is a multi-institution voting research center funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF).