

Honduran Government Applauds International Electoral Observers for Overseeing Honduras's Supreme Electoral Tribunal

This material is distributed by Keybridge Communications LLC on behalf of the Republic of Honduras. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

TEGUCIGALPA (November 29) – Today, the government of the Republic of Honduras applauded the hard work of the domestic and international observers overseeing the country's independent Supreme Electoral Tribunal. The tribunal is currently tabulating the results from this past Sunday's election.

As of this morning, more than 23 percent of ballots in the presidential election remain to be processed.

At a press conference November 28, Supreme Electoral Tribunal President David Matamoros said, "There are no more records to receive, the cases [containing the ballots] are in line to be downloaded and processed and our calculation is that [today] at 8:00 p.m. we will have 100 percent of the votes [processed]."

"I, as the president of TSE, take orders from no one," Matamoros said. "I have an obligation, as part of the TSE, to respect the results."

At the same press conference, Matamoros dismissed accusations of election fraud. "[The people] made their decision on Sunday the 26th," he said. "The tribunal will not change it, no candidate will change it, no press conference will change it, because the parties have all the results, as does the European Union, the OAS, the Cohep [Honduran Council of Private Enterprise], the media and the ten parties."

"On Sunday, the people went to vote and make their choice and that is why international entities are saying we [TSE] have done a good job," Matamoros said.

TSE expects to announce the official winner of Honduras's presidential election tonight, November 29 at 8pm Honduras time (9pm ET).

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Honduras Election Preparations on Track

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TEGUCIGALPA (November 25) -- Today, electoral authorities of the Republic of Honduras announced that Operation Peace and Democracy II, a joint operation of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal and armed forces to safeguard the country's electoral process, is 100 percent on track for Sunday's election

At 6 a.m. this morning, officials set up the operation's command and oversight post, which will stay up and running until the Supreme Electoral Tribunal concludes the electoral process.

Over 40,000 members of Honduras's Armed Forces, National Police, state intelligence community, and rapid response groups are contributing their respective agencies' resources to the operation. Stationed at the national emergency headquarters and trained to respond to violent situations, these organizations' leaders are prepared to immediately address any threats to safety on Election Day.

The Armed Forces are contributing their entire air, sea, and ground fleets, as well as their special forces to the operation. The National Police and Prosecutors' Offices have teams on alert all over the country.

This election is poised to be the best monitored and most secure in Honduras's history. Polling stations will be outfitted with 4,000 monitoring cameras, facial recognition technology, license plate readers, gunshot sensors, and panic buttons.

Authorities running the operation will be stationed in each of Honduras's 18 departments. Local police and military units will provide minute-by-minute reports on Election Day.

Supreme Electoral Tribunal President David Matamoros has called this election a "demonstration of civic responsibility."

"These will be the most observed elections in the democratic history of the country and the entire international community will have its eyes on Honduras on Sunday," Matamoros said.

The following agencies are participating in Operation Peace and Democracy II: the Armed Forces, the National Police, the National Directorate of Investigation and State Intelligence, the National Anti-Extortion Force, the Permanent Contingency Committee (Copeco), the Fire Department, the Red Cross, the Green Cross, the Prosecutors' Offices, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, the National Institute of Migration, and the National Penitentiary Institute, among others.

Election by the Numbers:

- The Supreme Electoral Tribunal has called on the more than 6 million voters registered with Honduras's National Electoral Census to come to the polls tomorrow.

- More than 50,000 Hondurans that reside in the United States are authorized to cast their votes in this election.
- More than 16,000 international and domestic observers will monitor the integrity and transparency of the electoral process.
- Hondurans will vote to fill 3,016 positions in this election (four at the executive level; 40 for the Central American Parliament, or PARLACEN; 256 for the National Congress; and 2,688 for municipal councils).

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Honduran Government Official Says Opposition Colluded with Organized Crime

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TEGUCIGALPA (December 3) -- Yesterday, in an interview with Honduran outlet Proceso Digital, Honduran Secretary of the Council of Ministers Ebal Díaz denounced former president Manuel Zelaya for inciting violence following the Honduran national elections on November 26. Díaz said that Zelaya had partnered with a South American country and domestic gangs to sow discord during vote-counting.

"Manuel Zelaya signed a pact with a government to the south that has been tied to violence, and that has provided financing, so that [the Honduran government] would be the focus of international attention for the disorder created while they take a secondary role," Díaz said.

Díaz stressed that former president Zelaya was actively working to incite violence in the streets of Honduras.

"[Zelaya and Salvador Nasralla] have called people to the streets [in protest], but there are many things they do not want to say," Díaz said. "They have a pact with gang members and many people that are involved in organized crime."

In the past year, Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández's Special Commission for the Purging and Transformation of the National Police has removed thousands of national police officers for various crimes. According to Díaz, many who were removed are working with Zelaya and opposition presidential candidate Salvador Nasralla to provoke violence.

"[The Libre Alliance] has purged police officers on their payroll, and they have been working with them [to perpetrate violence]," Minister Díaz said.

The violence has led to delays in the vote count following the presidential election. The Honduran Council of Private Enterprise, or COHEP, and church leaders have asked the Honduran Supreme Electoral Tribunal, or TSE, to resume counting ballots. During a recent press conference, COHEP and its 75 member organizations called on the candidates to accept the TSE's official, final result.

President Hernández and his National Party have formally pledged that they will recognize the TSE's official results.

Since taking office in 2014, the Hernández administration has taken several steps to stamp out organized crime in Honduras, including extraditing 16 drug lords and destroying 150 airstrips used by drug traffickers.

Thanks in part to these policies, Honduras's score in the Gallup Law and Order Index rose eight points this year. In recent months, international credit rating agencies Moody's and S&P have also raised Honduras's sovereign credit rating.

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Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro attacks the democratic institutions of the Republic of Honduras: <https://actualidad.rt.com/actualidad/256662-maduro-acusar-eeuu-golpe-honduras>

Video showing former Honduran president Manuel Zelaya and supporters of Salvador Nasralla inciting violence in the streets of Honduras: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=se7Odw_PQGI

Video showing former Honduran president Manuel Zelaya leading a protest near a storage facility for ballots from the November 26 national election:
https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1812885238735576&id=860432717314171&_rdr

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Honduran Government Laments Violence Surrounding Presidential Election

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TEGUCIGALPA (December 2) -- *Today, the Government of the Republic of Honduras issued the following statement lamenting violence on the streets of Honduras in the wake of the country's November 26 election:*

"We are deeply saddened that violence has erupted on the streets of Honduras, and that our nation's democratic institutions have come under attack.

"This week, Honduran and international media reported that supporters of presidential candidate Salvador Nasralla waved red flags, set bonfires, and barricaded roads in the nation's capital and other cities throughout the country. Evidence has also emerged that former Honduran President Manuel Zelaya incited supporters of Salvador Nasralla in a violent protest outside a Honduran Supreme Electoral Tribunal facility.

"The Government of Honduras has taken painstaking precautions to make this a peaceful election. We called upon and collaborated with respected electoral observers from the Organization of American States and the European Union. We sincerely hoped that our nation's election would inspire national unity and respect.

"This administration has made it extremely clear that violence and corruption have no place in Honduras. We will continue to call for peace and for the safety of every Honduran citizen. The past few days have been difficult, but the spirit of the Honduran people will not be broken."

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