



CEPPS' Resident Directors in Guatemala Discuss 2015 Elections transcript

Tony Garrastazu: CEPPS conducted a series of modules, there's a series of ten modules, there's three left, post-election. It's a certificate program that we did with the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala. One hundred twenty two academic hours. And basically it's a political and electoral journalism module where we worked with forty journalists throughout the twenty municipalities and the departments we were working on...on strengthening their ability to cover an election.

Maximo Zaldivar: The most success I need to highlight is the work done on electoral violence prevention and coordination. What helped also was that the national prosecutor in Guatemala created specific units for election felonies this time around which we didn't see in 2011. And I think working closely with the prosecutor's office and the other institutions and coordinated through the TSE with our support was very efficient to be in place and to be ready and to try to counter the electoral violence.

Eduardo Nuñez: El hecho de que por primera vez, haya habido un proyecto vinculado a las elecciones para promover la participación de las comunidades y personas LGBT es un paso adelante en Guatemala. Con el tiempo hemos aprendido que es solo cuando estas comunidades se reconocen como sujetos políticos, como actores políticos, que se organizan en función a hacer valer sus intereses, sus derechos y sus necesidades, que se vuelven sujeto de política pública. Yo creo que este proyecto ha tenido el éxito de poner el tema.

English translation: The fact that for the first time, there has been a project linked to the elections to promote the participation of the indigenous communities and LGBT people is a step forward in Guatemala. Over time we have learned that it is only when these communities recognize themselves as political subjects, as political actors, that they organize in order to make their interests, rights, and needs count, that they become subjects of public policy. I think that this project has been successful in putting the topic out there.

Maximo Zaldivar: We've seen outsiders all over Latin America, but it's really hard when an outsider really wins an election. That's the interesting thing to see here. And it shows citizens were disenchanted and detached from the political system and the vote reflects that. But I think it's a historic election for Central American definitely.

Tony Garrastazu: I think it was a victory for the rule of law. I think Guatemala has shown the world, the region, the Isthmus that institutions can work if you have the right leadership. So very optimistic.

Eduardo Nuñez: Es sumamente positivo y creo que es evidencia que de veras, en su conjunto la sociedad guatemalteca camina hacia otra fase, hacia otro momento en el desarrollo político.



English translation: It is overwhelmingly positive and I believe that it is evidence that Guatemalan society as a whole is moving towards a new phase, towards a new time in its political development.