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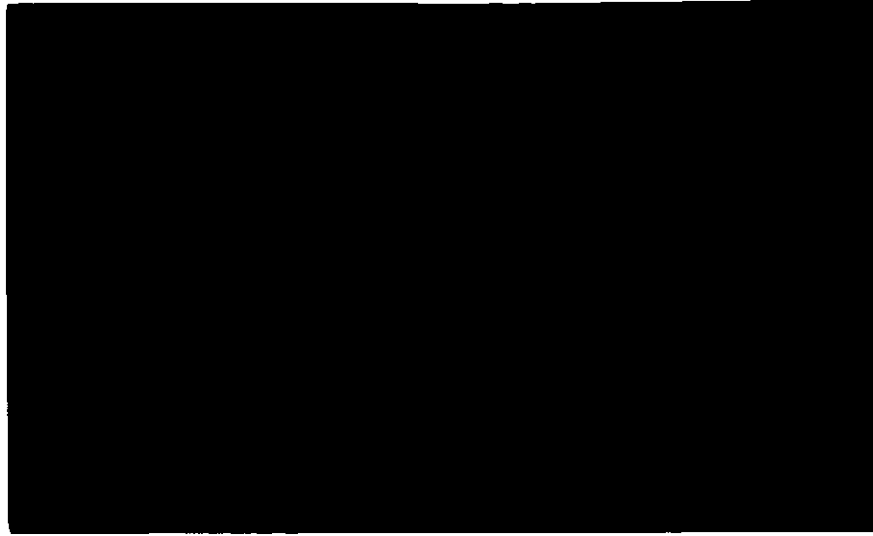


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**MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK**



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**ELECTIONS**



**MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK**

**ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION  
HONDURAS GENERAL ELECTIONS**

**NOVEMBER 25, 2001**

**FINAL REPORT**

**Developed by the  
International Foundation for Election Systems  
(IFES)**

**Presented to the  
United States Agency for International Development  
(USAID)**

**Under  
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**December 31, 2001**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 25, 2001, Honduras celebrated its sixth general elections since its return to a democratic system of government in 1980. The 2001 elections took place in a peaceful atmosphere, demonstrating the continuing maturation of the country's democracy. Hondurans elected the President of the Republic, 128 Deputies to the National Congress, 2,446 municipal leaders nationwide, and 20 representatives to the Central American Parliament. The presidential candidate for the National Party, Ricardo Maduro, was proclaimed winner with 52.21 percent of the vote, with Rafael Pineda Ponce of the Liberal Party in second place with 44.26 percent.

Financed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) developed and implemented an international election observation program to Honduras that began with two pre-election missions in mid-October 2001 and early November in preparation for the general elections observation.

The IFES pre-election missions highlighted important improvements made in recent years to Honduras' electoral and broader democratic systems. These include separation of the ballots for the presidency, legislators and municipal leaders in order to reduce straight party-line voting. Honduras also progressively increased the number of polling sites (known in Honduras as *voto domiciliario*), created a highly counterfeit-resistant new national identity card system (which serves as the voting credential) and begun a pilot program to allow citizens living abroad to vote. Most leaders with whom the IFES delegations met expressed conviction that the electoral process included sufficient safeguards to make serious fraud or manipulation unlikely. It was also reassuring that questions about whether Maduro is a Honduran-born citizen (a requirement to register as a candidate) were resolved with relatively little public disorder. Lingering controversy about Maduro's eligibility to run nevertheless colored the entire electoral process, even after formal resolution of the matter in Maduro's favor via a constitutional interpretation



issued by the National Congress. Despite the positive atmosphere, the IFES pre-election missions also revealed possible areas for future improvement.

After the pre-election visits, a 30-member IFES election observation mission arrived in Tegucigalpa four days prior to election day for briefings and training sessions. The day before the elections, the delegation divided into 15 teams of two and deployed to nine departments of the country. At their observation sites, the IFES teams prepared by meeting with local political party leaders, departmental and local elections tribunal representatives and other knowledgeable contacts. Throughout election day, the observation teams reported to the IFES central office in Tegucigalpa on what they saw at the more than 300 polling tables observed. This information contributed to the public statement IFES released the day after the elections.

Based on information gathered during the pre-election missions and observation of the electoral process, IFES commends the responsible democratic participation of the Honduran people, as well as the work done by the Honduran election authorities and all the actors involved in the electoral process. IFES also recommends that Hondurans continue efforts to strengthen their vibrant democracy. Recommendations include electoral reforms to reduce partisanship within the National Elections Tribunal (TNE), development of institutional strengthening programs to modernize the TNE, increasing training for poll-workers and reducing partisan influence in that function, and development of a comprehensive plan for citizen registration and distribution of ID cards.

## CURRENT ELECTORAL SYSTEM IN HONDURAS

The National Elections Tribunal (TNE) is divided into departmental and local elections tribunals. Its general structure and functions are defined by the political reforms of 1981, implemented as part of the democratic transition. The TNE is led by seven magistrates, five of whom represent each of the registered political parties (Liberal Party, National Party, Christian Democratic Party, Innovation and Unity Party, and Democratic Unification Party), and two magistrates appointed by the Supreme Court.

The TNE has conducted free and fair elections for nearly two decades that have resulted in peaceful and orderly transition of power. This track record serves as assurance of the effectiveness of progressive reforms undertaken by the TNE. These reforms include:

### *Issuance of New Identity Cards*

The new Honduran national identity card (also used as a voting identification) incorporated significant security features, notably including a fingerprint, which can be verified digitally, and a bar code. The project was delivered from a private firm contracted to the TNE and National Registry of Persons (RNP) during 1998-1999. The new card's protections against counterfeiting added substantially to public confidence in the electoral system. In 2001, however, significant shortcomings were evident in the production and distribution of the cards, a problem that will be addressed later on.

### *Improved Voters' List*

In a crucial finding, the IFES delegation encountered a very high level of confidence that the voters' list were as accurate as possible. An innovation introduced in 1997 of using laser printers to produce the voters' list and including each voter's national identity card number and the bar code found on each voter's identification greatly increased the security of the voter identification process. The National Registry of persons (RNP -- which falls under the TNE) also made a concentrated effort during that timeframe to

improve the quality of data on the voters' list. A program begun in 1999 to permit immediate issuance of birth certificates to those requesting such documentation has been extended to Honduras' six largest cities. This further strengthened the national/voter identification process. In 2001, for the first time, preliminary lists were published twice before the date of the vote, to allow citizens to find information on themselves and seek any needed corrections. Also for the first time in 2001, the political parties were integrated into an auditing commission to oversee the management of the voters' list database.

Despite the positive track record, perhaps the most significant criticism of the TNE in recent years has been its politicized structure and operations. Since TNE is multi-partisan, with five of its seven magistrates responsible for safeguarding the political interests of the parties they represent, multiple, overlapping safeguards with each party checking the others were built into the system to compensate for the level of distrust between members. Yet, as confidence has been instilled over time in the Honduran electoral system, the extreme degree of partisan structure in the TNE has made the institution less efficient and more bureaucratic since personnel and other resources must be in multiples of five. Perhaps paradoxically, the extreme set of partisan checks and balances within the TNE designed to generate confidence among political parties has begun to seriously erode the general public's confidence in the system, which is widely regarded now as too partisan.

#### *Domicile Voting (Voto Domiciliario)*

The TNE has significantly increased the number of polling stations to over 3,300 so that voters do not have to travel to vote at municipal seats. This innovation helped increase voter participation from the 65 percent registered in 1993 to 74 percent achieved in 1997. In 2001, however, voter participation dropped to 66.27 percent.

### Separate Voting

The 1993 elections introduced the use of two separate ballot papers, one to elect the President of the Republic, Designees to the Presidency and Deputies of the National Congress and the second to elect mayors and aldermen. Previously, one ballot paper was used for all positions. Continuing this type of reform, in 1997 a third ballot paper was introduced, for Congressional Deputies. Thus, in 2001 three ballot papers were used, one for President and Designees to the Presidency, the second for Congressional Deputies and Members of the Central American Parliament, and the third for mayors and aldermen. These reforms to separate the voting for different types of offices are thought to encourage ticket splitting between political parties, helping voters identify more closely with their particular elected representatives, rather than only with a political party. The system is still new enough, however, that it is not clear to what extent in the long term these changes will affect the traditional two-party Honduran political system, characterized by party-slate voting. It appears that in these 2001 general elections, the Democratic Unification Party (UD) and the Christian Democratic Party of Honduras (PDCH) were greatly benefited by the new separate ballot system. In the 1997 elections, the UD obtained only one seat in congress and five seats in 2001, while the PDCH obtained two seats in 1997 and four seats in 2001. Ironically, the third small political party that took the initiative in its political campaign to increase its representation in congress, the Innovation and Unity Party (PINU), did not gain any new seats as it remains with the same three representatives won in 1997.

### Transmission of Results

A new system was implemented in 1993 to transmit preliminary results to inform the public of the progress made in vote counting and, at midnight following the voting day, to reveal the preliminary results. In 1997, this system was again updated. In 2001, however, the system encountered difficulties, which are covered below.

## IFES PRE-ELECTION MISSIONS

In preparation for the international election observation mission, the first IFES pre-election visit took place on October 15 – 18, 2001, and was composed by Myles Frechette, former U.S. Ambassador to Colombia; Rafael Roncagliolo, Secretary General of *Transparencia* of Peru; Rosa Marina Zelaya, former President of Nicaragua's Supreme Electoral Council; and Fernando Mark Rondon, Deputy Director for IFES Americas Program. The second visit took place on November 6 – 10, 2001, and included Rosa Marina Zelaya; Felix Ulloa, former Magistrate of El Salvador's Supreme Electoral Tribunal; and Fernando Mark Rondon (See Appendix A for Pre-Election Reports).

The IFES teams enjoyed frank conversations with representatives of all the political parties, TNE, national and capital city governments, the Archbishop of Tegucigalpa, civil society organizations, the U.S. Ambassador, USAID, and other knowledgeable contacts. The teams were very favorably impressed with the progress Honduras has made in recent years in continuing development of democracy. In particular, there was a clear consensus among Honduran political actors that no serious fraud or manipulation was expected for the voting (as distinct from allegations regarding some campaign processes). Contacts expressed confidence in the reliability of the voters' list and voter identification mechanisms, while noting areas for possible future improvement. They highlighted enhancements made in recent years to the voting process, such as those discussed above.

Although the picture was very positive on balance, doubts were expressed by knowledgeable individuals about how well the Honduran electoral, political and judicial systems would respond to a possible scenario under which the difference in votes between the presidential candidates of the large Liberal and National Parties may have been extremely close. Systemic shortcomings, which might have been highlighted under such scenario, included the highly partisan and politicized nature of the TNE and the national Supreme Court, delays in distributing thousands of national identity cards, and lack of domestic Honduran electoral observation. A pilot project to allow Honduran citizens living in the United States to vote for the first time in the presidential elections

presented a new challenge. As it turned out, the relatively wide margin of victory (eight percentage points) Maduro earned meant that none of these troubling scenarios came to pass. Nevertheless, shortfalls in the transmission of preliminary vote counts, and other systemic shortcomings, should be corrected for future Honduran elections with results characterized by narrow margins of victory between candidates.

## **THE IFES OBSERVATION**

Through a grant by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) developed and implemented an international election observation program. The 30-member IFES election observation delegation arrived in Tegucigalpa on November 21 and remained in the country until November 27, 2001 (See Appendix B for the Program Agenda). The mission was led by Myles Frechette, former U.S. Ambassador to Colombia, and by Thomas Dodd, former U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica and Uruguay; Carlos V. Corach, Senator for Buenos Aires in the Argentine Congress; Arturo Sanchez Gutierrez, Executive Director of Political Prerogatives for the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico; Jack Vaughn, former U.S. Ambassador to Colombia and Panama; and Rosa Marina Zelaya, former President of the Supreme Electoral Council of Nicaragua. Countries represented by the IFES delegation included Argentina, Canada, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, and the United States of America (See Appendix C for a complete List of Observers).

### *Observers' briefings and training*

Between the arrival in Honduras of the observation delegation and election day, a comprehensive program was developed to brief the delegation on the Honduran electoral process. The observers met with the President of Honduras, political party leaders, civil society, members from the international community, TNE representatives, among other actors in the country. The delegation also received two training sessions from the TNE

and the OAS regarding regulations and procedures governing the voting process (See Appendix D for IFES Press Releases).

#### *Deployment of observers*

The 30-member delegation was divided into 15 teams of two, to be deployed to locations in Tegucigalpa; Choluteca, Choluteca; Danli, El Paraiso; Comayagua, Comayagua; La Esperanza, Intibuca; San Pedro Sula and Puerto Cortes, Cortes; El Progreso, Yoro; Tocoa and La Ceiba, Colon. Five IFES observation teams remained within the vicinity of Tegucigalpa and its surroundings. Upon arrival in their assigned localities, the two-member teams held meetings with local political party leaders, representatives from the Departmental and Local Elections Tribunals, police and military officers, OAS observers and other knowledgeable contacts to get local perspectives on the electoral process and gather any concerns.

#### *Election day*

On election day, the IFES teams began to observe the opening process of the polls between 5:00 and 5:30 am (See Appendix E for Newspaper Articles). All teams were equipped with election observation forms, which included a questionnaire about the opening time of the polls, its members, the polling table materials, accessibility of the voting center, among other questions (See Appendix F for IFES Observation and Tabulation Forms). This provided the observers with guidance on what to look for. The observers were also given tabulation forms for the vote count at the end of the day. The IFES teams observed voting at more than 300 tables (See Appendix G for IFES polling results).

#### *Dissemination of findings*

The IFES office in Tegucigalpa served as the information-gathering center while the observers were deployed. Every observation team was equipped with a cellular phone for

communication with the IFES office, other teams, OAS observers, and others. IFES has learned that maintaining multiple open lines of communication with the teams is particularly useful when communicating inconsistencies or complaints (*denuncias*) about the voting. Open communication also tends to enhance security of observers. In addition to spot reports throughout the day, at the end of the day IFES gave overviews of their findings and transmitted any preliminary results available (See Appendix G for IFES Tabulation Results). These reports contributed to a statement made by IFES the morning after the elections at a press conference.

## **ASSESSMENT OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS**

Hondurans showed a great deal of resilience in moving forward with their commitment to democracy in spite of serious natural disasters, including hurricane Mitch in October of 1998 and then tropical storm Michelle in 2001. While the social and economic repercussions of these events were severe, the disasters did not impede the way in which Honduran institutions operate. The TNE was forced to compensate for polling places destroyed or damaged by the storms, thousands of voters displaced, thousands of identity cards lost, and a host of related challenges. A few lingering effects of these difficulties were observed on voting day, but on the whole the electoral system coped commendably.

### *The training of poll workers*

On election day, some polling tables were run by very capable and efficient workers, while other tables were not as well managed. In many locations observed by IFES, the major difference came down to the personalities of the poll workers present, and whether they chose to cooperate respectfully with one another. Based on what the IFES teams witnessed, it can be concluded that the poll worker-training program in place by the TNE (supported in 2001 by training from the OAS) is capable of producing poll workers who in most cases can correctly and efficiently run the voting process. Yet the training program did not appear to be implemented in a uniform manner. IFES observers often noted poor understanding among poll workers on what constituted a legally-voted ballot.



Even more striking was the widespread confusion among poll workers regarding proper procedures to conduct the preliminary voting results transmission process (*Transmisión de Resultados Electorales Preliminares – TREP* by its Spanish-language acronyms). In fact, many polling tables observed by IFES abandoned the TREP process entirely, since procedures were not understood by workers. Other possible factors that may have contributed to inadequate training for some poll workers include:

- Poll worker training was conducted by political parties, rather than directly by the TNE. This contributed to the wide variance in the quality of training.
- The poll workers' training program began later than planned.
- Instructions for the TREP were issued at the last possible minute and were not covered by training.
- There was a large variation of education levels among poll workers.

#### *The registry of voters and distribution of ID cards*

One of the most important advances made by the National Registry is the development of a new ID card. This new Honduran national identity card, which is also used to vote, incorporates significant security features, notably including a fingerprint, which can be verified digitally, and a bar code. The project was delivered from the private firm contracted to the TNE and National Registry in 1998 and 1999.

During the 2001 general elections, however, the National Registry encountered difficulties in distributing the ID card in time for many would-be voters to cast their ballots. This was a persistent complaint by many of the Honduran citizens which whom IFES spoke, and occasioned some tense scenes at registry locations just before and during the voting day. It was also surprising to learn that political parties see themselves as facilitators between the National Registry and the voters by distributing accumulated ID cards to their supporters. This can have serious implications on the transparency of the electoral process, as political parties generally act to gain political advantages in order to meet their goals and political objectives. If political parties can retrieve ID cards, the

single document required to vote, for their sympathizers from the National Registry, nothing can guarantee that political parties do not have access to ID cards belonging to followers of other parties. There are no norms or specific procedures to follow when retrieving these documents from the National Registry. By having access to voters ID, in a way, political parties have direct control as to who can and cannot vote. ID cards should only be retrieved by their owners, the person that appears on the ID photograph. Political party representatives justify these actions due to the inefficiency of the National Registry to distribute ID cards.

### The vote count

As with the running of the polling tables, the rhythm and efficiency of the vote count process varied from one polling table to the next. Many tables observed by IFES began and ended the voting process strictly by the book, constantly consulting the Guide (*Instructivo Electoral*) provided by the TNE to seek answers to any disagreements. However, other polling tables were not certain about the closing time of the table. Again, the level of education by the poll-workers, the timeframe in which the training program was implemented, and previous experience by poll-workers may have played a role in the lack of uniformity in the vote count process.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Unquestionably, the November 25, 2001, general elections in Honduras surpassed the international community's expectations of free and fair elections. This can be attributed to the Honduran people for their tireless determination and commitment to move forward with a relatively young democratization process. No one, however, should mistakenly conclude that the work to strengthen the Honduran electoral system is done. Although transparent and fair elections are highlights of democracy, the journey toward a sustainable democratic system does not end on election day or with the peaceful transition of power. As a result of the pre-election visits and the international observation mission, IFES makes the following recommendations:

- *Set forth electoral reforms aiming to minimize partisanship of TNE*

Political reform efforts should attempt to create an electoral body independent from any political interests, particularly those of organized political parties. The TNE should be a permanent body totally dedicated to successfully running free and fair elections. This implies that the TNE should not only include in its leadership magistrates with jurisprudence background but also proven leaders in the field of administration and logistical operations.

- *Develop institutional strengthening programs to vitalize and modernize the TNE*

Generally, institutional strengthening programs begin with a baseline study to determine specific strengths and weaknesses of an organization. Without that information available, IFES can only estimate that the TNE needs to endeavor into a modernization process in order to, combined with the other recommendations, enhance its transparency and credibility. Great efforts should be made to create strategic plans and specific objectives to preserve and ensure for decades to come the institutional memory, as magistrates finish their term in office.

- *Increase training efforts of poll-workers*

More often than not, certain items on an electoral calendar leave room for a very small margin of error; poll-workers' training is not one of those items. The dynamics of running a successful electoral process can easily be compared to providing a service in a very competitive serviced-based society. Poll-workers are the ones who will come in direct contact with the voters; thus, adequate training is essential for the satisfaction and approval of its customer, in this case the voters. On election day, IFES observed that most polling sites visited lacked uniform patterns of efficiency. It was apparent that the level of efficiency varied

from one polling table to the next, as some poll-workers were very knowledgeable and efficient, while at other tables poll-workers did not appear to have had the adequate training required to run the voting process. This lack of uniformity was consistent in most localities IFES observed. A comprehensive poll-workers training program should be developed and implemented by the TNE within reasonable time prior to election day.

- *Develop a comprehensive plan of voter registration and distribution of ID cards*

Perhaps the most persistent complaint by voters was the fact that a number of them did not receive their voting ID card in time to vote. This was due, in part, to the overburden of the National Registry that led to the inability to keep up with the demand. Derived from numerous meetings with national and local political party representatives, IFES found it striking to learn that when distributing accumulated ID cards, political parties served as facilitators between the National Registry and voters. The National Registry should take all the necessary measures to ensure the completion of the registration and distribution of ID cards process before election day, independently from any political-interest third party facilitator.

- *Consider reforms to make political and campaign finance more transparent*

Honduras has been so successful in consolidating an increasingly mature electoral system that the timing now seems right for the country to consider taking the next steps – making political and campaign financing more regulated and transparent. Both the sources and the uses of political party finance should be made as clear as possible to the public. The rules for political campaigns and those demarcating electoral periods should be clear and enforceable. Civil society organizations could play an active role in helping political parties and public authorities consult as widely as possible in designing such reforms. After reforms are approved, civil society may help with civic education programs and monitoring political

campaigns to report any suspected infractions to proper electoral authorities. As much attention should be paid to designing effective and equitable detection and enforcement mechanisms for new rules as to the content of the reforms. Unenforceable new rules, after all, would not produce effective reform. A wide variety of Hondurans in the political parties and from other backgrounds shared with the IFES delegations their ideas for reforming political and campaign finance. Many Hondurans' suggestions included some measure of increased public funding for parties, possibly to include facilitating access to mass communications media. No consensus emerged on exactly what political finance reforms might be best for Honduras, but it became abundantly clear that many politically-aware Hondurans believe that their country should now open a broad discussion on how to take these next steps.



# Notes

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**MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK**

**HONDURAS 2001 GENERAL ELECTIONS  
IFES PRE-ELECTORAL MISSION I  
OCTOBER 15 - 18, 2001**

**SUMMARY**

IFES conducted the first of two pre-electoral missions to Honduras October 15-18, 2001, in preparation for the international election observation mission planned for that country's November 25 presidential, legislative, local and Central American Parliamentary elections. The IFES team enjoyed frank conversations with representatives of all the political parties, National Electoral Tribunal (TNE), national and capital city governments, Catholic Cardinal, civil society organizations, the U.S. Ambassador and other knowledgeable contacts. The team was very favorably impressed with the progress Honduras has made in recent years in continuing development of the country's democracy. In particular, there was a clear consensus among Honduran political actors that no serious fraud or manipulation is expected for the voting (as distinct from allegations regarding some campaign processes). Contacts expressed confidence in the reliability of the voters' list and voter identification mechanisms, while noting areas for possible future improvement. They pointed to enhancements made in recent years to the voting process, such as separating the voting into three ballot papers, one for the presidential and presidential designees race, the second for mayors and aldermen, and the third for the National Congress and the Central American Parliament. Voting has also been facilitated by increasing the number of polling locations, known in Honduras as "voting by domicile."

Although the picture was very positive on balance, several significant issues will require more examination. In particular, doubts were expressed by knowledgeable individuals about how well the Honduran electoral, political and judicial systems would respond to a possible scenario under which the difference in votes between the presidential candidates of the large Liberal and National Parties may be extremely close. If such a situation were not resolved with sufficient transparency, the public may not have full confidence in the legality of the outcome, although none of the persons consulted by IFES predicted any significant violence as a result. Systemic shortcomings which might be highlighted under such a scenario include the highly partisan and politicized natures of the TNE and the national Supreme Court, delays in distributing thousands of national identity cards, lack of domestic Honduran electoral observation, and absence of a parallel vote tabulation mechanism to verify voting results. A delay in distributing some identity cards is an issue on which IFES particularly plans to seek clarification. Lingering controversy over whether the presidential candidate of the Nationalist Party was born a Honduran citizen, and is thus eligible to run for national office, continued to color some contacts' concerns regarding whether transparent application of law or politically expedient deal-making may characterize resolution of a potential electoral results dispute. Some contacts wondered if these and other aspects of the polarized partisan atmosphere might lead to a reduction in voter turnout, falling from the highly respectable 74% achieved in 1997. A pilot project for Honduran citizens residing in the United States to vote for the first time in the presidential election has also introduced a new factor, which could potentially have some impact in the event of an extremely close race.



## **PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

This report is intended for the exclusive use of IFES, USAID and U.S. Government entities that USAID selects. Since it represents preliminary data and opinions, it is not intended for further distribution. The IFES International Observer Mission will make a public statement regarding the elections shortly after the balloting.

## **STRENGTHS OF THE HONDURAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM**

Since 1982, four national governments have been elected through generally free and fair processes, resulting in peaceful, orderly transitions in power. This record of success represents the bedrock upon which is founded most Honduran contacts' confidence that the 2001 elections will be similarly correct. Over the years, Honduras has progressively improved its electoral system, which now enjoys significant strengths, including

- **Separate Voting:** The 1993 elections introduced the use of two separate ballot papers, one to elect the President of the Republic, Designees to the Presidency and Deputies of the National Congress and the second to elect mayors and aldermen. Previously, one ballot paper was used for all positions. Continuing this type of reform, in 1997 a third ballot paper was introduced, for Congressional Deputies. Thus, in 2001 three ballot papers will be used, one for President and Designees to the Presidency, the second for Congressional Deputies and Members of the Central American Parliament, and the third for mayors and aldermen. These reforms to separate the voting for different types of offices are thought to encourage ticket splitting between political parties, helping voters identify more closely with their particular elected representatives, rather than only with a political party. The system is still new enough, however, that it is not yet clear to what extent these changes will affect the traditional two-party Honduran political system, characterized by party-slate voting. (See below a discussion of small parties and independent candidates.)
- **Transmission of Results:** A new system was implemented in 1993 to transmit preliminary results to inform the public of the progress made in vote counting and, at midnight following the voting day, to reveal the preliminary results. In 1997, this system was again updated.
- **Issuance of New Identity Cards:** The new Honduran national identity card (also used as a voting identification) incorporated significant security features, notably including a fingerprint which can be verified digitally and a bar code. The project was delivered from the private firm contracted to the TNE and National Registry of Persons (RNP) during 1998-1999.
- **Voting by Domicile:** The TNE has significantly increased the number of polling stations to over 3,300 so that voters do not have to travel to vote at municipal seats. This innovation helped increase voter participation from the 65% registered in 1993 to the 74% achieved in 1997.

- **Improved Voters' List:** In a crucial finding, the IFES delegation encountered a very high level of confidence that the voters' list will be as accurate as possible. An innovation introduced in 1997 of using laser printers to produce the voters' list and including each voter's national identity card number and the bar code found on each voter's identification greatly increased the security of the voter identification process. The RNP (which falls under the TNE) also made a concentrated effort during that timeframe to improve the quality of data on the voters' list. A program begun in 1999 to permit immediate issuance of birth certificates to those requesting such documentation has been extended to Honduras' six largest cities. This further strengthened the national/voter identification process. In 2001, for the first time, preliminary lists will have been published twice before the date of the vote, to allow citizens to find information on themselves and seek any needed corrections. Also for the first time in 2001, the political parties have been integrated into an auditing commission to oversee the management of the voters' list database.
- **Roles of the Armed Forces and Police:** Although Honduras had a history until 1982 of intermittent military regimes, all of the contacts with whom IFES consulted expressed confidence that the Armed Forces would limit involvement in the electoral process in 2001 to the logistical support needed by the TNE. (Some concern was expressed, however, that the financial management of this Armed Forces support to the TNE had not been organized well.) Political party representatives may accompany military convoys which transport voting materials and completed tally sheets, and the political party representatives with whom IFES consulted displayed no concern that this precaution might be circumvented by any elements of the Armed Forces. (Members of the Honduran Armed Forces are not eligible to vote.) The Police are likewise expected to continue their record of recent years of maintaining public order regarding the voting, and avoid any appearance of trying to influence the electoral process.

### **ISSUES FOR CONTINUED EXAMINATION FOR THE 2001 ELECTIONS**

The first pre-electoral mission found needs to examine the following groups of issues in greater depth during the second pre-electoral mission and main observer mission:

- **Issuance of National Identity Cards:** The top-level TNE representatives with whom the first IFES pre-electoral team met did not have readily available precise statistics on how many national identity cards (which also serve as voter identification cards) Honduran citizens have applied for correctly but not yet received. In part, this is because the number changes day by day and some citizens may be waiting until a time closer to the elections before picking up cards which have been issued but not yet distributed. Furthermore, the TNE explained that use of the digitized fingerprint comparison system of the identity cards had outstripped the Tribunal's available computing power, causing backlogs that would be resolved over time. Yet the IFES delegation believes it will be important for the TNE to provide either precise statistics or a clear estimate of the number of cards outstanding. Perhaps paradoxically, any imprecision of information regarding identity card issuance may cause particular concern precisely because so many Hondurans are confident that safeguards against fraud built into the identity card system underpin the credibility of the electoral system as a whole. If the presidential race is extremely close and it turns out that a significant number of would-be voters had applied for cards correctly but not received them in time to vote, an embarrassing question may arise about whether the citizens who were unable to exercise their right to suffrage may

have changed the outcome if they had been able to cast their ballots. This is one of the most important issues which IFES plans to have the second pre-electoral mission follow in more depth to seek clarification.

- **Counting, Transmission and Computation of Results:** It cannot be over-emphasized that all the contacts with whom IFES consulted expressed confidence that the TNE would not conduct any manner of electoral fraud. The primary reason given for this was that the several political parties watched one another's behavior regarding the TNE very closely. On the other hand, some contacts expressed concern about whether the TNE is sufficiently well-organized and administered to carry out its functions in a way that would so minimize "irregularities" or errors as to garner firm public confidence, especially if results of the presidential election are extremely close. The TNE has contracted a private firm to assist with transmission of election results, and IFES hopes to have the second pre-electoral mission meet with that firm, as well as with TNE technical officials in charge of this critical task. Since the first IFES pre-electoral team met only with top-level TNE magistrates and other officials to receive an overview, however, it did not receive sufficiently detailed explanations of precisely how each step of the vote counting, results transmission and results computation processes will be conducted. In addition to greater precision as to procedures to be followed for transmission of results, the IFES team would like to see a detailed schedule for the different steps for moving information and transmitting results.
- **Training Electoral Officials:** TNE magistrates stressed that proper training of polling station and other electoral officials is crucial to a smooth process, and expressed regret that less international assistance has been forthcoming to help meet this need for the 2001 process than had been the case in previous election years. They nevertheless expressed confidence that electoral officials at all levels would be adequately trained, saying that 255 trainers had already been trained. Political party and other contacts expressed no concern that electoral officials would be inadequately trained, and likewise said that political party poll watchers would receive sufficient training.
- **Dispute Resolution:** The first IFES pre-electoral mission team did not receive sufficient information to form a clear understanding of what the legally-established procedures should be if voting results are disputed, especially in a potential case in which small number of votes may determine who becomes President of the Republic. In particular, it was not clear under what circumstances and with what procedures the Honduran Supreme Court may hear a challenge, either instead of, or after, the TNE. While several interlocutors expressed opinions on the matter, it seemed no consensus was available on how Honduras might handle as a matter of law any dispute possibly arising out of an unprecedented "technical tie" in the presidential race. In fact, a number of contacts speculated that the Liberal and National Parties might negotiate a deal to parcel out "quotas of power" following such a possible legal impasse, without necessarily basing decisions strictly on a transparent application of previously-established law. Needless to say, such an extra-legal outcome, while perhaps useful for maintaining social calm, would represent a serious setback to the continued deepening of Honduran democracy based on the rule of law. In fact, several contacts alleged that the Honduran Supreme Court is as characterized by partisanship as the TNE. If true, this may undermine the credibility of any action that may be taken by the Supreme Court in the event of an electoral dispute. TNE representatives, on the other hand, did not express concern about the possibility for a "technical tie" scenario. They pointed out that re-counting ballots is not a feature of the Honduran system, and that any disputes about how to read any

individual ballot must be resolved at the polling station before that ballot is tallied on the polling station report (“*acta*.”) The addition of the numbers on the *actas* may then be re-counted, if need be.

- **A Level Playing Field for Small Parties and/or Independent Candidates:** Opinions among representatives of Honduras’ three relatively small political parties ranged considerably regarding whether the Government, TNE, judicial system and/or bigger parties had committed abuses in order to squeeze small parties. (The smaller parties are: Party of Innovation and Unity – PINU, Christian Democratic Party of Honduras – PDCH, and the Democratic Unification Party -- UD.) For example, PINU representatives said the official subsidy apportioned by the Government to the political parties (“*deuda politica*”) was handled fairly. UD representatives, on the other hand, alleged the Government and TNE had illegitimately tried to deny their party its fair share of the official apportionment, a course they claimed was only reversed when the UD staged demonstrations and sit-ins in protest. The UD also said local political bosses in some parts of the country had used force or intimidation to prevent campaigning by that party, that a UD mayoral candidate in Catacamas municipality, of the Olancho province, was assassinated in 1997, and that the authorities had not responded adequately. In a related issue, although it is legally permissible for candidates to run for office without a political party’s support, the practice is so rare that none of the persons the IFES team consulted knew much about the legal framework for independent candidacies. Several contacts, including some representing the large political parties, said the small political parties had played a very useful role in recent years of giving the Liberal and Nationalist parties incentives to moderate polarizing campaign rhetoric.
- **Overseas Voting:** Most contacts assumed the few Hondurans expected to vote from the United States would have no significant impact on the election result. In fact, interlocutors seemed surprised at the idea that overseas voters may have their impact magnified in the event of a very close presidential race, as happened in the State of Florida in 2000. Unfortunately, the TNE did not have available a specific figure for the number of Hondurans who had successfully registered in the United States to vote. IFES will therefore follow up to seek that official statistic.

## **LONG-TERM ISSUES TO BE EXAMINED AFTER 2001**

Issues identified which should be considered for long-term, post-electoral review include:

- **Honduran Domestic Election Observation:** IFES team members were surprised that little or no independent electoral observation will be conducted by Honduran civil society or similar organizations. Two, somewhat contradictory, explanations were offered for this unusual situation. First, contacts explained that international election observation has traditionally been stronger in Honduras than is expected this year, meaning that relatively little need was previously felt for domestic observation efforts. On the other hand, some contacts felt that the record of generally clean, orderly elections in Honduras removed the need for election observation altogether. IFES team members expressed the opinion to several contacts that while international entities such as IFES could bring valuable assistance to strengthening electoral processes, the fundamental responsibility for guaranteeing democratic accountability rests with the Honduran people, who need mechanisms through which to become more educated and engaged. The Catholic Cardinal, who by all accounts has extraordinarily high levels of public credibility, was

particularly enthusiastic about this idea, citing the example of Cardinal Sin of the Philippines and saying that the Catholic Church in Honduras could build on its current get-out-the-vote and related civic education campaigns. The Cardinal, civil society organization representatives and others stressed, however, that insufficient time remains to put together a coherent, well-trained Honduran domestic observation effort for 2001, in part because the legal status and roles of such efforts must be clarified in advance.

- **Need for Parallel Vote Tabulation:** Closely related to the question of whether Honduras needs domestic, independent election monitoring capabilities is a potential need to equip such monitoring organizations with specialized training and perhaps other assistance to conduct methodologically sound parallel vote tabulations (PVTs). A PVT is a process whereby monitors record election results at individual polling sites and compare them with official results. A PVT may record results from all polling sites in a country or use a random sample and statistics to project the outcome. PVTs have proven highly effective in many countries representing a wide variety of levels of democratic institutional development, adding independent verification to official vote tabulation, thus injecting an element of confidence to the system. Parallel vote tabulation must, however, be conducted with methodologically scrupulous accuracy, to avoid sowing confusion.
- **Partisan Structure of the TNE and RNP:** Almost all contacts expressed some degree of concern that the explicitly partisan structure of the TNE had become in recent years an obstacle to continued development of the Honduran electoral and political systems. In fact, one contact categorically stated: "The TNE is not a tribunal at all, but a misnamed political organ." A consensus seemed evident that while having the political parties control the TNE had been valuable in the early stages of restoring democracy, in order to give the parties the ability to check up on one another, the partisan structure had outlived its original usefulness. Several contacts pointed to the growing strength of several small parties as presenting an insurmountable obstacle to continuing with the current partisan system in the TNE. Most interlocutors agreed that after the 2001 elections, a serious process of examining options should be undertaken. They generally liked the idea of comparing how other countries had restructured their electoral systems in recent years, with several commenting that perhaps Honduras might draw from the Mexican model. (Mexico has a mixed system, in which political party councilors wield important influence over the administrative electoral authority, but do not control it directly. Mexico also has electoral courts which are separate from the administrative electoral authorities.) Most persons consulted, including several at the TNE, recommended that the RNP should be separated from the TNE's control and made less politicized, since the civil registry is important to national economic and social development in ways extending far beyond the national identity card's use as the voter credential. They said the RNP as currently structured reproduces the partisan orientation found in the TNE as a whole. Again, a comparison with how other countries have developed their civil registry systems in recent years was seen as desirable.
- **Updating the Electoral Law:** An issue closely related to the structure of the TNE was raised by several contacts, who commented that, in their opinion, the Honduran National Electoral Law had been amended so many times that it was no longer sufficiently coherent. They recommended a top-to-bottom overhaul of the law, as part of a broader national dialogue on deepening democratic reforms. Several contacts suggested that restructuring the TNE, RNP and/or Supreme Court to reduce partisan political influence take place as part of a broader judicial reform initiative which has been gathering

momentum in recent months with support from the United Nations, Catholic Church, civil society organizations and others.

- **Internal Party Transparency:** Many contacts expressed disgust that some candidates allegedly purchase the nomination of a political party in order to become Members of Congress or to hold other offices. This practice allegedly gives the successful office-winner a powerful incentive to undertake corrupt activities in order to make enough money to profit from the purchase of the office. One contact went so far as to say that most Members of Congress represent a corruption-forged faction within a political party, rather than a party as a whole, much less voters. In fact, he alleged that common criminals sometimes pay to become Members of Congress in order to obtain legislative immunity from prosecution.
- **Overseas Voting:** Comments ranged from “a failure” to “a disappointment” regarding the pilot program to allow Hondurans residing in the United States to vote at Honduran consulates in six cities in the presidential race. Many contacts criticized the high cost of the experiment, especially in light of the low number of voters registered as compared to the 200,000 voters whom some supporters of the experiment had estimated would sign up. Considering that almost all well-established democracies and a rapidly-increasing number of emerging democracies now allow some form of voting from overseas, however, it would seem appropriate for Honduras to take a more measured approach to designing a more workable system for elections in following years. In doing so, Hondurans may draw on the lessons from the current experiment, and make useful comparisons to the initiatives now being debated and/or implemented in several other countries which have established or returned to democracy in the last two decades.
- **Campaign Issues:** Many contacts felt that now that Honduras enjoys reasonable confidence in the probity of the voting system per se, the next logical step in democratic development needs to be achieving greater transparency in campaign and political party financing. Several interlocutors complained that laws governing campaign time periods are not respected, resulting in an expensive, protracted campaign posture which increases incentives for parties and candidates to resort to questionable sources of financial backing. In fact, the Cardinal termed the phenomenon “saturation” campaigning. (Note: IFES has several projects regarding political process financing issues.) Nationalist Party contacts also alleged that the Liberal Party presidential candidate, who is currently serving as President of the Congress, had improperly used congressional budgetary and other resources as part of his presidential campaign efforts. The Nationalist critics admitted, however, that the legal constraints on such activities need to be better clarified.
- **Communications Media and Public Opinion Polling:** Some interlocutors complained that representatives of the mass communications media were commonly bribed or otherwise influenced toward biased reporting, depriving the electorate of reliable information and undercutting popular confidence in democracy overall. Apparently without intended irony, some contacts stated that corruption of the media was not a great problem, since different members or sectors of the media had been purchased or “rented” by opposing political groups, preventing the emergence of a monopoly of slanted reporting and opinion. In like manner, most contacts expressed no confidence in the honesty of published public opinion polls, since pollsters were generally considered to be subject to the same enticements and pressure for skewed results as are journalists. As with suggestions to overhaul electoral institutions’ structure and/or the electoral law, many

contacts suggested that reforms be carried out as part of a broad national dialog, perhaps drawing on lessons learned from other emerging democracies' recent experiences.

## CONCLUSION

Honduras has made significant progress in recent years toward a more reliable electoral system. This has, on the whole, resulted in basic confidence among political actors that the voting process will be reasonably clean and fair, even if perhaps not always as well organized in every respect as might be hoped. On the other hand, a strong current of disquiet was evident about the possibility that the results of the presidential race might be so close that "irregularities" or errors in the voting system not attributable to outright fraud might call into question the validity of the final result or greatly delay announcement of the winner. A specific shortcoming which IFES will examine in greater depth is the delay in issuing a substantial, but unspecified, number of national identity cards, needed for voting. Representatives of the TNE, on the other hand, had a differing point of view, saying the possible scenario of a very close presidential race would not present major difficulties for the electoral system. The IFES delegation respectfully suggested to several contacts that the two presidential candidates may wish to consider agreeing to abstain from claiming victory until all results are final and official. The persons with whom the IFES team spoke thought the suggestion had merit, but that such an accord would be difficult to reach.

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MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

**REPORT OF THE SECOND IFES PRE-ELECTORAL  
MISSION TO HONDURAS  
NOVEMBER 6 – 10, 2001**

**Executive Summary**

IFES conducted the second pre-electoral mission to Honduras November 6-10, 2001, in preparation for deployment of an international observer delegation for the November 25 presidential, legislative, municipal and Central American parliamentary elections. The IFES team again benefited from excellent access to a variety of Honduran and international contacts knowledgeable about electoral preparations, political campaigns, and related legal and governance issues. While expanding IFES contacts with political parties and other participants, this visit concentrated primarily on preparations of the National Electoral Tribunal (TNE) and other electoral authorities. The goodwill and cooperation of these contacts was an important source for optimism that Honduras will conduct reasonably transparent, fair and correct elections in most respects. The sources of strength of the electoral system detailed in the previous visit report, stemming from improvements and reforms conducted in recent years, were strongly confirmed during this visit. Adding to this generally positive outlook, concerns about delays in distributing several thousand identity cards ("*cedulas*") to citizens were somewhat allayed.

The IFES team did, however, observe poor organization, confusion, resource insufficiencies and/or falling behind schedule in critical elements of the electoral preparations. These included:

- Delayed logistical preparations, especially producing and distributing electoral materials;
- Delayed preparations for vote results transmission, including for provisional results;
- Poor internal communication in the TNE and with departmental and municipal tribunals;
- Poor communication from the TNE with political parties and other electoral participants;
- Low levels of get-out-the-vote, civic education, and public information campaigns;
- Administrative inefficiencies stemming from having all aspects of the election system run strictly along partisan lines;
- Widespread disappointment with a perceived low quality of Honduran democracy as a whole, especially due to a view that corruption and excessive partisanship are rampant.

At this point, it appears likely that Honduras will conduct its elections without serious fraud or major organizational failures, although a variety of difficulties may occur due to poor organization. Such limited difficulties, which would probably not otherwise seriously mar the electoral process, may become magnified if the results in the vote for President are extremely close. Hondurans seem to be trusting to luck or to extra-legal negotiation to resolve any dispute over who won the presidency, rather than transparent legal procedures. Partisan rancor and the low level of public trust in the TNE, Supreme Court and Congress, call into question, however, whether the negotiated so-called "Honduran way" to dispute resolution may prove adequate. Whatever the outcome of the election, these worries show that Honduras should undertake broad electoral, judicial, legislative and other reforms to keep democratic development moving forward.

## Production and Distribution of Key Electoral Documents

TNE Electoral Technical Commission (CTE) members said the TNE is on track to comply with the legal requirements of the electoral calendar. In particular, all paper ballots ("*papeletas*") will be produced and distributed as required November 19-24. CTE members said the voters' list ("*Censo Electoral*") must, by law, be given to each political party no more than 20 days and no fewer than 24 hours before the voting day. On the other hand, TNE personnel conducting logistical preparations said that the departure of many personnel with experience from previous elections and the TNE's failure over the course of recent months to stick to the longer-term tasks calendar (which does not have force of law) has resulted in delays which will make it difficult to have all preparations completed by voting day.

Many contacts expressed satisfaction that the voters' list has already been provided to the parties well before the deadline, which is reportedly a significant improvement from how things had been done during previous elections. In fact, contacts confirmed the view reported in the first IFES pre-election report that the major effort conducted by the TNE and political parties to update the national voters' list is a major source of strength for the Honduran electoral system. For example, political party contacts reported that the requirement to include a voter's fingerprint on requests for changes of address improved security and reduced opportunities for fraud or other manipulation of voters lists, which several contacts said had been "traditional" in Honduras. The list closed with **3,437,454 registered voters** ("*electores*"), distributed among **11,075 voting centers** ("*Mesas Electorales Receptoras - MER*"), with three ballot box ("*urnas*") sets of three boxes per table. (There may be a wide variance in the number of voting tables per voting center.)

The TNE office in charge of logistics is working out of a large warehouse, reviewing and sorting the ballot papers and preparing the material that will be distributed to the voting centers. The documentation and material include:

- The list of voters corresponding to each voting center and a sample list to be posted for public review.
- The number of ballot papers corresponding to the number of voters per voting center for the three levels of elections:
  - President of the Republic and Designees to the Presidency (similar to Vice Presidents)
  - Deputies ("*Diputados*") to the National Congress and the Central American Parliament (commonly referred to as "*ParlaCen*")
  - Mayors and aldermen ("*Miembros de las Corporaciones Municipales*")
- A voting notebook containing:
  - The form for the certificate of opening ("*acta de apertura de votación*")
  - Forms to report any problems or incidents
  - The form for the certificate of closing ("*Acta de Cierre*")
- Three ballot boxes (for Presidential, Legislative, and local elections)
- Other materials, such as: indelible ink, pens, seals, signs, curtains, etc.

In addition a Tally Sheet ("*Acta de Escrutinio*") and Certificate of Results will be distributed, which will be signed by the voting officials after voting results are noted. After signature, a copy of the *Acta* will be distributed to each political party. Those copies will be printed on paper of the same color used for identification by each party. Other copies of the *Acta* will be given to the

departmental electoral tribunals (departments are analogous to states or provinces). The closing statement of polling station results ("*Acta de Cierre de Centro de Votación*") will, for the first time this year, be scanned by computer for records-keeping purposes.

The TNE has already delivered credentials for the members of each voting table to the political parties. The parties then accredit their polling station workers. The credentials are coded to correspond to the number of the tables and are printed on security paper. Political party contacts expressed confidence that the credentials are sufficiently secure to be difficult to counterfeit.

Some concern was expressed to the IFES team about quality control for printing of ballot papers. Apparently, the paper used for the ballots is not of high enough quality for the printing machines used by the printing companies contracted, causing ink spots to appear randomly on some ballot papers. IFES witnessed TNE personnel representing each of the five political parties painstakingly reviewing each of the several million ballot papers for quality control. Each political party representative has to agree before any ballot is rejected, which is consuming a large number of man-hours. This is being done despite a TNE regulation specifying that no error made in printing may affect the vote due to a concern that some local voting officials may nevertheless challenge particular ballots with stray ink marks. Reportedly, less than one percent of ballot papers are being rejected for ink marks. The ballot papers have been printed with a special watermark as a security measure. The ballot papers for the three levels of elected office are printed in different colors. (White for President, gray for legislators and lilac for mayors.) IFES observed, however, that some small number of ballot papers had not been printed on the right color paper, and were also being laboriously reviewed by TNE personnel from each political party for this problem.

The TNE has approximately 335 persons reviewing, sorting, packaging and otherwise processing voting materials and documents in eight-hour shifts, around the clock. This extraordinary level of effort is necessary because every step of every process is monitored by representatives of all five political parties. The political party workers are now evidently working together in reasonable harmony, but this has reportedly only been the case since early November. This collegiality has reportedly been achieved only with the emergence of a few informal leaders to direct and organize the process. Until this informal arrangement emerged, however, the operation was apparently confused. Several workers told IFES team members they had received no guidance from the political parties as to how to carry out their responsibilities. Despite the helpful role of informal leadership, the lack of defined lines of accountability and the ability of any political party representative at any step of any process to create a bottleneck cause concern about what might happen to preparations if a serious dispute were to emerge in the short time until election day. Furthermore, since most of the critical voting documents, such as the voters' lists broken out by voting location, had not been delivered to the logistics center as of November 7 when the IFES team visited, the 335 workers were under-utilized.

### **Transmission and Announcement of Voting Results**

TNE personnel preparing for transmission of election day results, and especially for the faster provisional results to be sent one hour after polls close at 4:00 p.m. (or at 5:00 if problems have been encountered) expressed concern that preparations only got underway November 1. On November 7, the TNE conducted a simulation exercise for transmission of results limited to some areas of Tegucigalpa. The Tribunal plans to conduct more comprehensive exercises as election day approaches to test the progress of preparations. As one example of the logistical preparations still pending, the routes to be followed by messengers collecting and delivering voting provisional results have not yet been mapped out or test-run, due to a lack of vehicles. In fact, some TNE

personnel speculated to IFES that Dominos Pizza and/or Campero chicken restaurant delivery motorcycles and riders might be contracted to collect provisional results documents. The TNE is also making contacts with church groups and other organizations, which operate networks of two-way radios possibly to support provisional results transmission for remote areas. A contact said the critical factor is the "carpentry," i.e. the basic, practical questions such as contracting taxis to transport the persons collecting provisional results and making sure that the taxi drivers get paid, rather than computers or other more sophisticated challenges.

Discussions with a variety of TNE and local electoral officials, as well as with political party and other contacts revealed confusion about legal provisions and procedures to be followed which distinguish provisional voting results transmission from transmission and certification of official results. This confusion seems to have been caused by the weakness and lateness of training.

The TNE hopes to be able to repeat its performance of previous elections to make its first announcement to the public of provisional results with 10 percent of those figures reported by 8:30-9:00 p.m. the night of the voting. The TNE hopes 75 percent of provisional results can be reported by midnight, at which point it ought to be clear who has won the presidency and most other offices. The TNE seemed not to have a plan, however, for what might happen if provisional results at midnight showed a race for the presidency that was still too close to call. The TNE expects to be able to announce final, official results at some time on Tuesday, November 27.

#### **National Identity and Voting Cards ("*Cedulas*")**

CTE members reported that the National Registry of Persons (RNP), which falls under the TNE, is no longer issuing identity cards, and is instead concentrating on distributing already-produced cards to citizens. It was reported in the news media recently that an estimated 46,000 Hondurans had correctly applied for new or replacement identity cards, but that the RNP had not yet produced the cards or the citizens had not yet picked them up. The CTE members consulted were not able, however, to provide statistics on how many identity cards applied for have not yet been produced, nor on how many have been produced but not yet picked up by citizens. In fact, the municipal Registrar of Persons for a city outside Tegucigalpa reported that while he maintains statistics on the number of identity cards received, he is not required to keep a count of applications made nor of cards actually delivered to citizens. This local official reported that a previously-used ledger system for recording such transactions was abolished recently by the TNE/RNP. Several other contacts expressed concern that changes of address and applications for new identity cards for displaced victims of Hurricane Mitch and persons displaced in recent months due to flooding had been carried out with an unusually large number of errors, such as in taking fingerprints or photos.

Despite the delay in distributing some cards and related issues documented in the previous IFES pre-electoral report, the IFES team felt that its concerns were somewhat allayed as it learned more about the identity card situation during the second visit. For example, it appears that no large number of would-be voters is likely to be disenfranchised due to administrative deficiencies. A wide variety of Honduran contacts agreed that problems with the identity card process affected all political parties equally and in no way involved fraud or manipulation. Several political party and local electoral officials reported an effort carried out by political parties is now gathering momentum to encourage citizens to pick up their identity cards and even to take the cards to citizens in remote areas. The political parties are providing almost all of the resources for this effort, however, as local electoral officials reported that vehicles, telephone lines and other support expected from a variety of governmental agencies has not yet been forthcoming. TNE/RNP contacts said the electoral/registration authorities would continue distributing cards up

to and including the day of the voting, and several contacts predicted that a great many citizens would procrastinate to the last minute but pick up their cards in time to vote

### **Training**

In an unusual feature of the Honduran electoral system, the TNE is not training polling station officials, since these are not named by the political parties until election day. Instead, the TNE provides information to the political parties' training facilitators, for them to train their polling officials and poll watchers. A variety of contacts reported, however, that the TNE has not yet adequately informed the political parties about changes to laws, regulations and procedures which are supposed to be implemented for the 2001 elections, leading to some confusion.

The Organization of American States (OAS) has helped the TNE with training, by conducting two courses (one in Tegucigalpa and the other in San Pedro Sula) of two days each. The OAS-supported training was for facilitators from each of the five political parties (50 participants per party in each event.) The training consisted of familiarization with the TNE-produced electoral instructional guide ("*Instructivo Electoral*") and the electoral law, as well as learning about the forms and documents used for the voting tables. These political party facilitators will then train the members of the voting tables from their parties. The OAS also offered two training sessions of one day each (November 9 and 12) with one in Tegucigalpa and the other in San Pedro Sula. This training was for the President and Secretary of the departmental electoral tribunals and local tribunals throughout the country. The objective of this training was familiarization with the forms and documents used for voting and transmission of results, as well as with procedures for receiving and using electoral materials.

### **Coordination Among National, Departmental and Municipal Electoral Tribunals**

Representatives of departmental and municipal electoral tribunals reported that the level of support and guidance from the TNE has declined considerably during this electoral process, as compared to previous years. They especially expressed concern that as of November 9, when they met with IFES team members, they had not yet received from the TNE statistics on the number of voters assigned to each polling place, despite having requested the information repeatedly. Other examples given of information requested from the TNE but not yet received at the departmental or municipal levels included emergency resolutions of the TNE and decisions on budgetary or other resource allocations. Generally, departmental and local electoral officials complained that they have no telephones or typewriters, much less fax machines or vehicles. In fact, they rely on tagging along with political party activities on trips to various locations within their jurisdictions. Local level officials said this absence of communications means they are unlikely to learn about any problems at village polling sites, much less be able to help resolve difficulties. They also complained that they have no reliable updates from the TNE regarding administrative, procedural or even legal changes to be followed this year as compared to previous elections. Instead, departmental and local electoral officials rely on their informal networks of political party contacts to obtain such information, and thus often receive confused versions regarding changes. Departmental electoral tribunal personnel complained that they do not even receive any identification credentials. Despite expressing their frustrations with a perceived decline in the quality of Honduran electoral preparations, departmental and municipal electoral officials with whom IFES consulted generally thought that these difficulties would not affect the basic credibility of the voting process itself, but would instead make voting more difficult for many voters, discouraging future turn-out.

## **Voting in the United States**

Approximately 11,000 Honduran citizens living in the United States have registered to vote by absentee ballot in the cities of Miami, New York, New Orleans, Houston, Washington, DC and Los Angeles. A local electoral board ("*Junta Local Electoral*") has been constituted in each of these cities, consisting of representatives of each of the five political parties, who, with the Honduran Consul, will conduct the process. The needed voting materials were sent by diplomatic pouch. Provisional results will be returned by fax, with official documents also returned by diplomatic pouch to Honduras. This level of expected turn-out is widely considered to be disappointing.

## **Domestic Electoral Observation, Verification and Role of Civil Society**

Honduran electoral law and practice include no provision for domestic electoral observation, only for international observers. No Honduran organization plans to conduct a quick count. Hondurans traditionally rely heavily on reporting from radio stations to keep them informed of results, but the exit polling conducted by those media organizations reportedly may not be methodologically sound and may result in misinformation in the event of an extremely close race. Reportedly, no study has been done on the quality of radio station reporting of results.

Some Catholic Church-supported organizations have, in the Department of Colon, conducted a pilot project for monitoring the quality of the electoral campaign, though not for actual vote observation. In other municipalities, civil society groups such as the association of municipal government officials have organized fora for mayoral candidates, and in some locations have convinced candidates to sign agreements on fulfilling campaign promises. A civil society Forum for Democratic Strengthening, supported in large part by foreign ambassadors, has issued a report commenting on the electoral campaign and the political parties' proposals for governing, but Honduran contacts thought the report was so politely worded that it was difficult to understand. Most contacts said Honduran civil society is barely beginning to get involved in electoral and campaign issues, and many political party figures are resisting this development. On balance, it seems that while civil society organizations' role in deepening electoral democracy is still incipient in Honduras, enough progress has been made to give grounds for optimism.

## **Campaign Issues**

Many contacts, including from the major political parties, said Honduras needs to conduct a major overhaul political campaign laws, in addition to reforming the electoral law. For example, the law now requires that parties choose their candidates by internal primary elections one year in advance of the actual election, which many contacts said results in a de facto campaign period of well over two years. These critics said that this protracted process is so expensive that a strong incentive is created for political parties to raise funds from private sources almost any way they can. (Note: Political parties receive 15 Honduran Lempiras, or about one U.S. dollar in campaign financing from public coffers per vote each party gained in the last election.) Such private campaign contributions are reportedly completely unregulated in Honduran law and many contacts alleged that corruption is commonplace.

As discussed in the first pre-electoral trip report, almost all contacts again expressed concern that the Honduran mass communications media tend to be deeply corrupt, badly distorting the political and electoral processes. As a corollary, most public opinion polling is considered to be subject to manipulation. Contacts pointed out that the bribes, subsidies and other sources of corruption channeled to the media come not only from the government and political parties, but

also from a variety of private interests. The current, hotly-contested, presidential election campaign was considered by several contacts to have greatly aggravated this longstanding shortcoming of Honduran democracy.

### **Participation of Women**

Several contacts pointed out that increasing the number of voting centers, known in Honduras as voting by domicile ("*voto domiciliario*") makes it easier for women to vote who might otherwise have to stay home to care for children. On the other hand, there was general agreement that political parties had largely ignored the Equal Opportunity Law passed this year requiring that at least 30 percent of candidates for office be women. Reportedly 28 percent of National Party candidates are women, as is 15 percent of Liberal party candidates. Get-out-the-vote, civic education and similar campaigns to encourage participation by women in the democratic process carried out by the TNE, other official institutions or civil society appeared very weak. The non-governmental organization Center for Women's Rights is, however, monitoring the level of women's participation in the political process and giving advice to women on how to participate effectively.

### **Dispute Resolution**

When certified, official vote tallies (as distinct from provisional results) are received at the TNE, where they are scrutinized. Only if a particular vote tally is questioned by a political party for a flaw that could change the outcome of a given race can actual ballots cast be re-counted for that voting table. Re-counts of ballots, therefore, are very rare. The validity of the electoral process as a whole may be challenged within 18 working days after voting day. The results may be challenged within five working days. In order to do so, a challenger may present a writ ("*recurso de amparo*") to the Supreme Court of Justice. Questions by IFES team members regarding exact procedures for electoral dispute resolution received contradictory or very vague responses from Honduran electoral experts consulted, apparently due to scarcity of precedent.

### **Other Issues and Notes**

Honduran law permits candidates to run for office as independents (without the support of any political party), but in practice this is extremely rare. Instead, individuals who feel uncomfortable in one of the two large parties generally seek to become a candidate for one of the three small parties. A number of contacts recommended that a future reform of the election law reduce legal procedural hurdles for independent candidacies.

Several contacts commented that this electoral campaign has included considerably more attack advertisements and similar tactics (especially coming from one of the political parties) than has ever been the case in the past. These persons tended to blame the TNE for allegedly failing to enforce rules against such direct attacks. One member of Congress pointed out that while the level of partisan rancor in this campaign is unprecedented in Honduras' 20-year modern period of democracy, such bitterness was common 50 years ago, and contributed to the breakdown of previous attempts at democracy.

Some contacts expressed concern that the distribution of voters to voting centers has not complied with the law, since the plenary of the TNE issued a resolution that is allegedly legally questionable breaking the "floor" and "ceiling" numbers of voters per center, with the ceiling now set at 517 voters, rather than the 300 established in law. Other contacts complained that the TNE

should have asked the Congress to amend the electoral law to allow polling places to stay open longer, to handle the increased number of voters expected at some locations.

UNICEF and Honduran civil society organizations had planned to conduct a “children’s election” alongside the actual elections as a civic education program. The TNE, however, passed a resolution disallowing an activity where children were going to participate in a mock election to elect a president from the five actual candidates. The Honduran organizers of this activity, which included private businesses and two of the leading newspapers, indicated that the purpose of this civic education activity would be to stimulate interest in the voting process. The President of the TNE announced that children would not have their own opinion and would only be expressing their parents’ opinions. This sort of children’s election has been carried out successfully in many countries, although specific provisions on how they are carried out vary considerably.

This year voters must mark their ballots with a specially-provided green-ink pen. Exceptions to this rule will only be permitted if no alternative exists if all the voting table officials agree and if the deviation from established procedure is duly recorded in the incidents log.

For the first time this year, voting table delegates (“*delegados de mesa*”) will not be part of the process. Instead, voting table members will elect two witnesses for the opening of the polls and for the closing. Some TNE personnel complained to IFES team members, however, that the electoral law has not been changed and still requires the presence of these voting table delegates. The same contacts also alleged that this arguably extra-legal change has not been adequately explained to polling officials.

#### **Issues for Post-Electoral Reforms**

Almost all contacts said that Honduran democracy is in need of renovation. In addition to suggestions for reducing partisanship in electoral administration (detailed in the first IFES visit report) most contacts expressed frustration with the way the national congress is elected and how legislators allegedly behave once in office. Recommendations varied considerably, but grouped around four broad areas:

- Honduras should move to a mixed system, including both direct elections and political party proportional representation, so that at least some legislators are directly accountable to a geographically defined group of constituents.
- Legislative elections should be held at a different time than presidential elections, so that legislators are tied more directly to constituents, rather than their political party’s presidential candidate and other party leadership.
- Congress’ internal rules and practices should be reformed to operate more democratically, rather than having nearly everything decided only by party leaders.
- Members of Congress should be prohibited from running for other office and their own seats simultaneously.
- Legislative immunity from legal process should be reformed and sharply reduced.

#### **Conclusion and Comment**

The IFES team continues to believe that the strengths of the Honduran electoral system (documented more extensively in the first trip report) generally outweigh the challenges explored in more depth in this report. The November 25, 2001 elections are therefore likely to take place without serious legal or administrative challenges. On the other hand, Honduran electoral



authorities' lateness in conducting certain preparations and the extreme administrative inefficiency of having five political parties directly involved in almost every minute detail of all electoral activities give cause for concern that some significant difficulties may be encountered. The IFES team is particularly concerned about logistical preparations (especially preparation and distribution of voting materials and documents) for the transmission of provisional voting results. The delayed and poorly-coordinated start-up of these critical preparations may result in some difficulties on voting day, although there is also a reasonably good chance that the TNE may make up for lost time. The TNE has recently hired experienced advisors to make preparations for transmission of results, so the process will probably take place without major difficulties, although the late start-up of these preparations also leave room for doubt. The TNE goal of matching previous elections' performance by having provisional results for 75% of the country by midnight after voting day may or may not be realistic. Initial concerns about distribution of national identity cards have been at least partially allayed.

#### **Second Pre-Electoral Team Members**

- Fernando Mark Rondon, IFES Deputy Director of Americas Programs
- Dra. Rosa Marina Zelaya, former President of Nicaraguan Supreme Electoral Tribunal
- Dr. Felix Ulloa, former Magistrate of Supreme Electoral Council of El Salvador, Director of Programs National Democratic Institute programs in Haiti
- Maureen Pearce, IFES/Honduras Program Manager
- Mirian Colindres, IFES/Honduras Assistant



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MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

**IFES INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION  
HONDURAS 2001 GENERAL ELECTIONS  
AGENDA**

**Wednesday November 21**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
12:00 – 6:00 pm	Arrival of IFES delegation	Hotel Inter-Continental
6:30 p.m.	Departure for dinner	Lobby
7:00 – 9:00 pm	Dinner for delegation members	Restaurant El Patio

**Thursday November 22**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
7:00 – 8:00 am	Breakfast for delegation members	Room Roble
8:00 – 8:30 am	Welcome address by IFES	Room Pabellón
8:30 – 9:30 am	Technical Committee (National Elections Tribunal) Lic. Daysi de Anchecta	Room Pabellón
9:30 – 10:00 am	Coffee Break	
10:00 – 11:00 am	<i>Partido de Innovacion y Unidad Social Democrata –</i> Lic. Olban Valladares, Presidential Candidate Lic. Guillermo Casco C. Candidate for Mayor Israél Lagos Valle, Campaign Director	Room Pabellón
11:00 – 12:00 pm	Adan Palacios, Former President of the TNE	Room Pabellón
12:00 – 2:00 pm	Lunch for delegation members	Pool area
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Leo Valladares, Human Rights Ombudsman	Room Pabellón
3:00 – 4:00 pm	Meeting with OAS Miriam Palomino, Training Specialist	Room Pabellón

4:00 – 4:30 pm	Coffee Break	
4:30 – 5:00 pm	Leticia Salomon, Professor of Social Science <i>Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Honduras</i>	Room Pabellón
5:00 – 6:00 pm	<i>Partido Nacional de Honduras</i> Dr. Luis Cosenza, Campaign Director Dr. Jorge Hernández Alcerro, Director of Political Marketing Advisor Lic. Porfirio Lobo, Party Vice President Ing. Roberto Argueta Director of Information Systems Abog. Marco Augusto Hernandez Director of Polling Stations	Room Pabellón
6:30 p.m.	Departure for dinner	Lobby
7:00 – 9:00 pm	Dinner for delegation members	Restaurant Casa María

**Friday November 23**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
7:00 – 8:00 am	Breakfast for delegation members	Room Roble
8:00 – 8:45 am	Magistrates for the National Elections Tribunal of the Republic of Honduras	Room Pabellón
8:45 – 9:30 am	<i>Partido Demócrata Cristiano</i> Lic. Orlando Iriarte, Presidential Candidate	Room Pabellón
9:30 am	Departure for USAID	Lobby
10:00 – 12:00 am	U.S. Ambassador to Honduras	USAID Office
12:30 – 2:00 pm	Lunch for delegation members	Pool area
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Partido Unificación Democrática Matias Fúnez, Presidential Candidate Doris Gutiérrez, Congressional Candidate Campaign Commission: Hermilo Soto, Clovis Morales,	Room Pabellón

Martin Pineda, Héctor Hernández

3:00 – 4:00 pm	Partido Liberal de Honduras Ing. Tomás Lozano Executive Campaign Director	Room Pabellón
4:00 – 4:20 pm	Coffee Break	
4:20 – 5:30 pm	Logistics for deployment	Room Pabellón
6:30 p.m.	Departure for Ambassador's Residence	Lobby
7:00 pm	Cocktail Reception: Delegation members	U.S. Ambassador's residence

**Saturday November 24**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
7:00 – 8:00 am	Breakfast for delegation members	Room Roble
8:00 – 9:00 am	Deployment of IFES observation teams from Tegucigalpa	
12:00 – 2:00 pm	Lunch for teams in Tegucigalpa	Hotel Restaurant Azulejos
5:00 – 7:00 pm	Dinner for teams in Tegucigalpa	Hotel Restaurant Azulejos
8:00- 10:00 pm	Cocktail Reception: National Election Commission Observation Missions	Hotel Clarion (Room Gran Madrid)

**Sunday November 25**

Election Observation Day

**Monday November 26**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
7:00 – 8:00 am	Breakfast for teams in Tegucigalpa	Hotel Restaurant Azulejos
8:30 – 11:00 am	Arrival to Tegucigalpa of deployed teams	
10:00 – 11:00 am	IFES Press conference	Inter-Continental Hotel

Tuesday November 27

7:00 – 8:00

Breakfast

Salon Roble

All day

Departure of delegation

Hotel Lobby





# Notes

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**IFES INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION DELEGATION  
HONDURAS 2001 GENERAL ELECTIONS  
NOVEMBER 21 – 27, 2001**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>OBSERVER</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>
Argentina	Carlos V. Corach Senator for Buenos Aires Senate of the Republic	Hipólito Yrigoyen 1849 P.B. 80 'A' (1007) Buenos Aires, Argentina
Argentina	Laura Velasquez President FEPEPNA	Esmeralda 626 – 2A (1007) Buenos Aires, Argentina
Canada	John Graham [Former Ambassador to DR and Venezuela] Chairman of Canadian Foundation for the Americas	737 Lonsdale Road Ottawa, Canada
Costa Rica	Julie Whitman Arias Foundation	Fundación Arias Calle 36 Entre Avenida 1y3 Casa No. 119 San José, Costa Rica
Ecuador	Carlos J. Aguinaga President Supreme Electoral Tribunal	Ave. 6 de diciembre 3606 y Bosmediano Quito, Ecuador
Guatemala	Erick Bolaños President Instituto Pro-Democracia y Desarrollo (IDE)	3ª. Ave. 4-64 Zona 2 Guatemala City, Guatemala
Guyana	Gocool Boodoo Chief Election Officer Guyana Elections Secretariat	41 High Street, Kingston Georgetown, Guyana
Mexico	Arturo Sanchez Gutierrez Executive Director of Political Party Prerogatives Federal Electoral Institute	Instituto Federal Electoral Viaducto Tlalpán # 100 edif. "D" 1er. piso Col. Arenal Tepepan C.P. 14610 México, D. F. Instituto Federal Electoral, México, D.F.
Nicaragua	Rosa Marina Zelaya Former President Supreme Electoral Council	Residencial Bolonia, No. 245 Mansión Teodolinda, Una cuadra al Sur, 1/2 cuadra abajo Managua, Nicaragua
Peru	Rudecindo Vega Carreazo Chief of Advisers to the Ministry of the Presidency	Paseo de la Republica No. 4297 Lima 34, Peru
USA	Kenneth Blazejewski Program Assistant Central American Project Inter-American Dialogue	1211 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 510 Washington, DC 20910

USA	Eric Brown Executive Assistant Federal Election Commission	999 E Street, NW, Suite 907 Washington, DC 20463
USA	Miguel Diaz Director-South America Project Americas Division Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)	1800 K Street, NW Washington D.C
USA	Thomas Dodd Former U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica and Uruguay	2345 King Pl. NW Washington DC, 20007
USA	Eric P. Farnsworth Senior Advisor Manatt, Phelps & Phillips	1501 M St., NW, Suite 700 Washington, DC 20005
USA	Myles R. Frechette Former US Ambassador to Colombia	1800 Massachusetts Ave. NW, 6 <sup>th</sup> floor Washington, DC 20036
USA	Patricio F. Gajardo Director – The Americas IFES	1101 15 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Washington, DC 20001
USA	Michael Galloway Professional Staff Member Office of Rep. Sonny Callahan	2372 Rayburn House Office Building Washington DC 20515
USA	Ken Insley Senior Program Officer The American Council for Young Political Leaders	1612 K Street, NW Suite 300 Washington D.C. 20006
USA	Tim Kraft President Avanti Limited	490 Applewood Corrales, NM, 87048
USA	Noelle Lusane Foreign Affairs Advisor Office of Rep. Donald Payne	2209 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515
USA	Marisa Rivera-Albert President National Hispanic Leadership Institute	1901 N. Moore St., Suite 206 Arlington, VA 22209
USA	Fernando Mark Rondon Deputy Director–The Americas IFES	1101 15 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Washington, DC 20001
USA	Mark P. Sullivan Congressional Research Service Latin American Specialist The Library of Congress	The Library of Congress Washington, DC 20540-7460

USA	Jennifer Tufts Development Section Delegation of the European Commission European Union	2300 M Street Washington D.C, 20037-1434
USA	Jack H. Vaughn Former US Ambassador to Panama and Colombia	1843 N. Kramer Avenue Tucson, AZ 85719
USA	Sandra Flores Assistant Instructor University of Texas	504 East 49 <sup>th</sup> Street Austin, TX 78705
USA	Maureen Pearce Program Manager IFES/Honduras	Hotel Inter-Continental Tegucigalpa, Honduras Office 303
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USA	Diana Rutstein Program Assistant IFES/Washington	1101 15 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Washington, DC 20001
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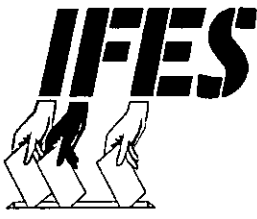


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# Press Release

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTION SYSTEMS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October 18, 2001

## IFES international pre-electoral delegation visits Honduras

*International pre-electoral delegation examines the electoral process,  
political context and role of civil society*

WASHINGTON, DC – On October 15, 2001, the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) sent to Honduras a pre-electoral delegation to examine the electoral process in that country in preparation for IFES' international election observation mission scheduled for the November 25 general elections. The pre-electoral team was composed of Fernando Mark Rondon, IFES Deputy Director of Americas programs; Myles Frechette, former U.S. Ambassador to Colombia; Rosa Marina Zelaya, former President of the Nicaraguan Supreme Electoral Council; and Rafael Roncagliolo, Secretary General of Transparencia, a Peruvian civil society organization.

The IFES delegation stayed in Honduras until October 18, holding meetings with members of the National Electoral Tribunal (TNE), political party representatives, government officials, leaders of civil society organizations, representatives of the international community and other key actors in the country.

The international election observation mission, scheduled for the upcoming November 25 general elections, will include approximately 30 prominent members from the United States and different Latin American countries. The delegation will arrive in Tegucigalpa around November 21 and will remain in the country until November 27, 2001.

Since 1987, IFES has provided technical assistance to more than 20 Spanish, English, Portuguese, Dutch and French-speaking nations throughout the Americas. IFES' democratic strengthening projects throughout the region have been supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), private foundations, the United Nations, and bilateral agreements.

# # #

*IFES provides technical assistance in the promotion of democracy worldwide and serves as a clearinghouse for information about democratic development and elections. Since its inception in 1987, the Foundation has worked in more than 100 countries worldwide. For more information, please visit the IFES web site at [www.ifes.org](http://www.ifes.org).*



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### International Delegation Prepares for Election Observation in Honduras

WASHINGTON, D.C. – November 6, 2001 – Members of the International Foundation for Election Systems' (IFES) pre-election mission arrived in Honduras today to continue their examination of the country's electoral process. Fernando Mark Rondon, Deputy Director of IFES' Americas Programs; Rosa Marina Zelaya, former President of Nicaragua's Supreme Electoral Council; and Felix Ulloa, former Magistrate of El Salvador's Supreme Electoral Tribunal, comprise the team. IFES conducted the first of two pre-election missions to Honduras October 15 – 18, 2001, in preparation for the international election observation mission of the November 25 general elections.

In the first mission, the IFES team met with representatives of the political parties, the National Electoral Tribunal (TNE), national and capital city governments, the Cardinal of the Archdiocese of Tegucigalpa, civil society organizations, the U.S. Ambassador, and other informed participants. The team was impressed by the progress Honduras has made in recent years in the continuing development of democracy.

This second international pre-election mission will remain in the country until November 10, 2001, to follow up on meetings with members of the National Electoral Tribunal (TNE), political party representatives, government officials, leaders of civil society organizations, representatives of the international community and other key actors in the country.

# # #

*IFES provides professional advice and technical assistance in the promotion of democracy worldwide and serves as a clearinghouse of information on governance, rule of law, civil society, and elections.*





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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### IFES Issues Official Statement on Sixth General Elections in Honduras

**TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras – November 26, 2001** – A delegation from the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) observed the sixth peaceful general elections in Honduras on Sunday, November 25, 2001. IFES, the Organization of American States (OAS), and the United Nations (UN) paralleled their efforts for the observation mission. IFES congratulates President-Elect Ricardo Maduro on his win and recognizes candidate Professor Rafael Pineda for accepting the election results as the will of the people. The IFES delegation appreciates the challenges of the electoral process and agrees with the recommendations set forth in the September 2001 *Manifiesto de los Partidos Políticos al Pueblo Hondureño*, particularly the reforms to the electoral law, the professionalization of electoral commissions, and the modernizing of the electoral system in Honduras. IFES also recommends, improving the organization of polling stations, the training of poll workers, and access for disabled voters.

The 30-member IFES delegation was led by Myles Frechette, Former U.S. Ambassador to Colombia and included Thomas Dodd, Former U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica and Uruguay; Carlos Corach, Senator for Buenos Aires in the Republic of Argentina; Rosa Marina Zelaya, Former President of the Supreme Electoral Council of Nicaragua; and Arturo Sanchez Gutierrez, Executive Director of Political Party Prerogatives for the Federal Electoral Institute. Team members met with election officials and representatives of each of the major political parties prior to observing the election. Two-member observation teams visited polling stations throughout several municipalities, including Cortes, Francisco Morazán, Intibucá, Comayagua, Choluteca, Atlántida, El Paraíso, Yoro, and Colón.

IFES conducted two pre-election assessments in Honduras before yesterday's observation mission. During those visits, the IFES team met with political party representatives, the National Electoral Tribunal (TNE), national and capital city governments, the Cardinal of the Archdiocese of Tegucigalpa, civil society organizations, the U.S. Ambassador, and other informed participants. Since 1987, IFES has provided technical assistance to more than 20 Spanish, English, Portuguese, Dutch, and French-speaking nations throughout the Americas. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), private foundations, the United Nations, and bilateral agreements have supported IFES' democracy-strengthening projects throughout the region.

# # #

*IFES provides professional advice and technical assistance in the promotion of democracy worldwide and serves as a clearinghouse of information on governance, rule of law, civil society, and elections.*



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24 Nov. 2001

# **POLITICA**



## **Elecciones 2001**

### **Flores recibe a 32 nuevos observadores internacionales**

TEGUCIGALPA. El presidente Carlos Flores recibió ayer una misión de 32 personas de la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales (IFES) que vienen a observar el proceso electoral en Honduras, y anunciaron que harán lo mismo con el voto en el exterior.

El grupo está encabezada por Patricio Gajardo y el embajador Jack Vaughn, y se van a incorporar al proceso de observación que ya inició la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA).

Gajardo dijo que "nos vamos a estar distribuyendo en seis departamentos del país y coordinando con los demás observadores internacionales de la OEA que están en el país".

Dijo que en la mañana de ayer se reunió con tres de los cinco candidatos presidenciales y en la tarde y noche esperaban reunirse con los otros dos para conocer sus impresiones sobre el proceso electoral.

"Estamos conscientes de que el proceso va a salir muy bien el próximo domingo. No se nos ha hecho ninguna denuncia formal, así que nuestro grupo está viendo el proceso que va a ser pacífico, y se espera una gran concurrencia de votantes el día domingo", expresó.

Después de las elecciones la IFES presentará un informe general sobre lo que ellos vieron en el proceso y será entregado a todos los candidatos, al Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones y a todas las personas que estén interesadas.

EBF



Según observadores internacionales:

# Elecciones son un tributo al fortalecimiento de la democracia

Aseguran que los resultados serán confiables porque son pocas las denuncias de irregularidades que han recibido

Los representantes de la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales (IFES), hicieron un recorrido por las principales ciudades del país para observar los procedimientos y la participación ciudadana, en el marco del proceso electoral desarrollado ayer.

La misión encabezada por el ex embajador de Estados Unidos ante



La doctora Elizabeth Spehar, de la OEA, aseguró que el proceso electoral de Honduras representa una etapa importante de la consolidación democrática.

Colombia Myles P. Frechette, llegó al país con el fin de fortalecer la democracia por medio de la libertad de expresión de las personas en la escogencia de sus autoridades.

Frechette manifestó que "las elecciones en Honduras son un tributo al fortalecimiento democrático en la región".

La delegación de observadores también estuvo conformada por Jack Hood Vaughn, Thomas Dodd, Carlos V. Corach, Rosa Marina Zelaya, Carlos Aguinaga y Patricio F. Gajardo, entre otros.

Según el director para América Latina y el Caribe de la IFES, Patricio Gajardo "el proceso se ha desarrollado bastante ordenado, las mesas se instalaron rápido, el pueblo respondió con bastante afluencia en comparación con otros países".

"El avance del proceso democrático hondureño es bastante significativo, sobre todo porque esta es la séptima elección consecutiva que realizan y por esa razón queremos acompañarlos para ver como iba a ser en esta oportunidad", indicó.

Igualmente, dijo que la misión del IFES concluye una vez que se obtenga el resultado final del sumario electoral.

La labor del IFES en cada una de las urnas de los centros de votación asignados se centró básicamente en constatar que la gente tuviera libertad política de voto, que lo



El observador de la IFES, Patricio F. Gajardo, observa el desarrollo de las elecciones en la Escuela "Cerro Grande" de la colonia del mismo nombre.

hicieran con tranquilidad y que las mesas portaran todos los elementos necesarios para ejercer el sufragio.

El equipo de 32 observadores fueron distribuidos en Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, La Ceiba, Choluteca, Comayagua, Danlí y La Esperanza.

La IFES, desde 1989 ha mantenido una activa presencia en América Latina y el Caribe, cuando inició su primer proyecto en Paraguay.

En los últimos doce años ha organizado más de 30 misiones de observación y en 1993 y 1997 brindó asistencia técnica al Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones (TNE) y condujo evaluaciones y observaciones electorales.

## MADUREZ POLÍTICA

Otras de las misiones internacionales que dijo presente en las elecciones Honduras 2001, fue la Misión de Observación Electoral (MOE) de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA).

Bajo la dirección de la doctora Elizabeth Spehar, coordinadora Ejecutiva de la Unidad para la Promoción de la Democracia de la OEA, los observadores del MOE empezaron su trabajo desde el momento que se abrieron las urnas.

La doctora Spehar se hizo presente en la entrega del material electoral en la Escuela Simón Bolívar de la colonia Las Mercedes de Comayagüela, posteriormente se trasladó a varios centros de votación de la capital.

La coordinadora del MOE aseguró que "el desarrollo del proceso electoral fue bastante positivo, sobre todo este día de votación se ha iniciado bastante bien en todo el país".

"Nos reportaron muy pocos incidentes los demás observadores, irregularidades de forma normal, pero nada de tendencia masiva por lo que el resultado arrojará un resultado muy positivo", expresó la

señora Spehar.

Asimismo, enfatizó que "las elecciones en Honduras en términos generales, son un proceso ejemplar de civismo democrático que ha demostrado el pueblo hondureño, así como el respeto de los candidatos en contienda, lo que da un clima de tranquilidad y convivencia democrática".

"Las elecciones son una muestra de una gran madurez democrática y política, y creo que augura bien para el futuro y ojalá que las primeras elecciones del siglo XXI, van a ser el inicio de una etapa importante de consolidación democrática y de mayor desarrollo para este país", indicó.

La MOE, como herramienta central de la OEA para el fortalecimiento y promoción de la democracia en los hemisferios del istmo, desplegó a sus más de 80 colaboradores en 15 de los 18 departamentos de Honduras para dar fe de la transparencia del proceso democrático.

Las misiones varían según las circunstancias de cada uno de los países donde se les invita, pero su fin siempre es el mismo, promocionar la democracia.

En este sentido, las autoridades del MOE consideran que su participación en las elecciones generales de Honduras son una responsabilidad, ya que sus testimonios son valorados tanto por los actores del proceso electoral como por la ciudadanía en general.



El embajador Frank Almaguer dialoga con los observadores de la OEA durante su recorrido por los centros de votación instalados en el Paní.

Según misión de observadores

# Hondureños vivieron verdadera democracia

Texto: Ninfa Arias  
Fotos: Víctor Collindres

Los hondureños vivieron una verdadera fiesta electoral en la que triunfó la democracia, expresó ayer el embajador de los Estados Unidos, Frank Almaguer, después de haber participado como observador internacional en las elecciones generales del 2001.

El diplomático, junto a una delegación de 32 expertos internacionales, de la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales (IFES), se desplazaron por varias mesas en la capital y otros departamentos.

«Es un triunfo de la

democracia», dijo complacido, junto a los ex embajadores, James Vouhg y Todd Dale Saloan, quienes estuvieron presentes en la apertura de las urnas, ubicadas en la Escuela República de Chile, de la colonia El Reparto, a eso de las 5:45 de la mañana.

«Estuvimos temprano para ver como se abrieron las urnas y el proceso fue normal como lo indican las reglas», atestiguó.

Manifiestó que en todas las democracias del mundo -que gracias a Dios hay muchas- se tiene la firme convicción que el mejor futuro depende de que la voz del pueblo se escuche.

Y es eso precisamente lo que se vivió en las elecciones generales, donde fue electo el nuevo

■ La IFES estuvo integrada hasta por ex embajadores

■ Relaciones entre Honduras y Estados Unidos seguirán fuertes

presidente de la República, que sustituirá al presidente, Carlos Roberto Flores.

«Anticipamos que este proceso de hoy ayudará a fortalecer la democracia aún más, y esta es la sexta vez que los hondureños irán consecutivamente a elegir a su presidente, en forma abierta y democrática». Frank Almaguer afirmó que las relaciones entre los Estados Unidos y Honduras seguirán fuertes como lo han sido en el pasado, y reportó que todo estuvo normal, de acuerdo a lo que les tocó observar.

### OBSERVADORES

El equipo de observadores de IFES está conformado por los ex embajadores Myles P. Frechette; Jack Hood Vouhgn, Thomas Dodd y John Graham, así como por el ex senador titular de Argentina, Carlos Corach, la expresidenta del Consejo Supremo Electoral de Nicaragua, Rosa Marina Zelaya; el presidente del Tribunal Supremo de Ecuador, Carlos J. Aguinaga, y el director para América Latina y el Caribe de IFES, Patricip F. Gajardo, entre otros miembros.

«Esperamos con entusiasmo observar las sextas elecciones democráticas en Honduras», expresó el jefe de la misión, Myles Frechette, quien aseveró que las elecciones en Honduras son un tributo al fortalecimiento democrático de la región.

El equipo de la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales se reunió con las autoridades de los cinco partidos políticos y con los del Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones (TNE), así como con otros líderes de la sociedad civil para conocer los preparativos previos a las elecciones.

La misión estuvo presente antes del proceso electoral, durante el mismo y en el conteo de votos, después que hicieron un recorrido por el centro de información del TNE, ubicado en el hotel Plaza San Martín, ya cuando había iniciado el escrutinio de votos y transmisión preliminar de los resultados.

IFES mantiene una activa presencia en América Latina y el Caribe, cuando inició su primer proyecto en Paraguay. En los últimos doce años, la Fundación ha organizado más de 30 misiones de observación en América Latina y el Caribe. Entre 1993 y 1997, IFES dio asistencia al Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones, y condujo observaciones y evaluaciones electorales.



Los responsables de las mesas electorales informando sobre el desarrollo del evento.



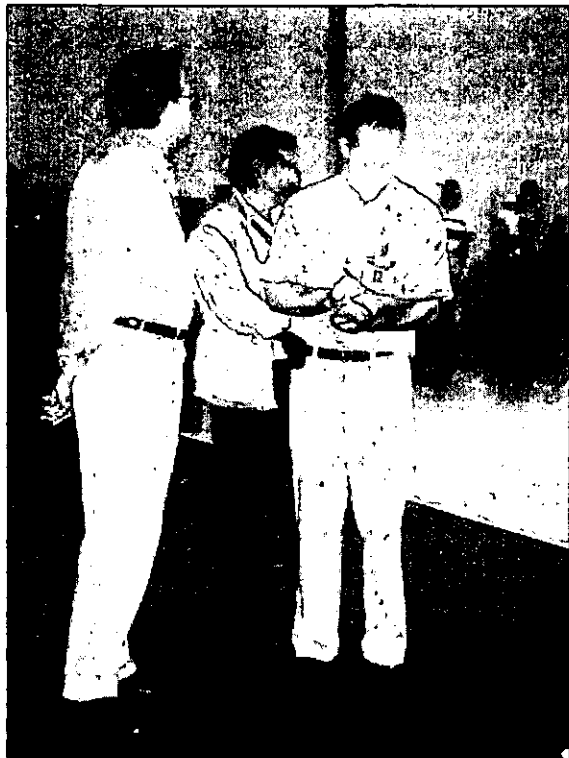
Los observadores supervisaron hasta los centros de información electoral, que habían en las calles.



El candidato presidencial de la UD, Matías Funes, acompañado por el embajador de los Estados Unidos.



Los delegados internacionales presenciando el proceso de voto de los electores hondureños.



Los observadores internacionales anotando algunos detalles. En la gráfica Todd Dale Sloan.

# Observadores internacionales dicen que todo es normal en Choluteca



El cónsul general de EE UU recomendó que estas elecciones se deben desarrollar con transparencia y abiertas.

*Elizabeth Zúñiga/ El Heraldó*

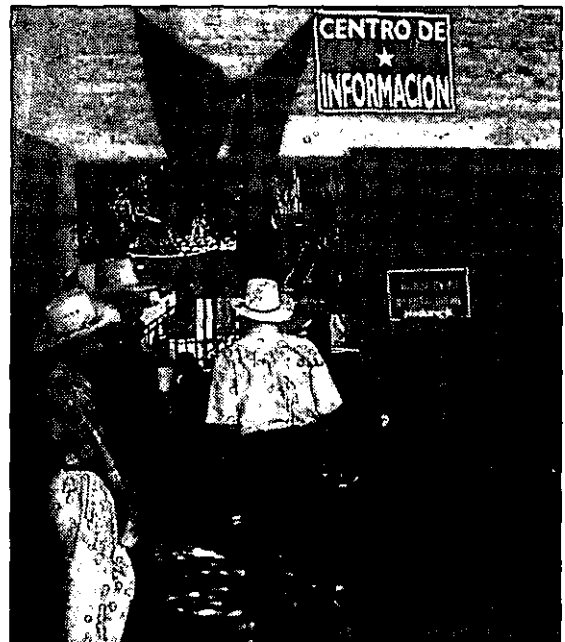
**CHOLUTECA.** El cónsul general de la Embajada de Estados Unidos, John M. Jones, junto a otros observadores internacionales recorrieron la tarde de ayer varios centros de votación de esta ciudad para supervisar al azar los diferentes centros de votación a fin de asegurarse de que todo esté listo y en orden para el desarrollo de las elecciones generales de hoy domingo. Entre los observadores también llegaron Ronald V. Curtis, director del Proyecto Recap de la Embajada de Estados Unidos; Diana Rutstein y Mark Sullivan, ambos representantes de la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales (IFES).

El señor Jones garantizó que están aquí para observar y no para interferir y en el recorrido han visto que "todo está normal, los oficiales están bien preparados, todo está en orden en las mesas en donde van a votar los hondureños".

El diplomático dijo que ayer sólo estaban interesados en verificar las preparaciones de este proceso, pero ahora van a recorrer todo el departamento para observar a qué hora van a abrir el proceso, a qué hora cierran y si todo está disponible para que la población vote sin ningún contratiempo.

"Ojalá que ustedes puedan tener una votación abierta y transparente porque es muy importante para la gente de Honduras", recomendó el cónsul estadounidense.

Los primeros observadores recorrieron en su orden las escuelas José Cecilio del Valle en el barrio Suyapa, la Escuela Normal en el barrio Las Colinas, Pedro Nufio de Los Mangos, Iztoca, 14 de julio y Cabañas en el mismo barrio. De acuerdo al único contratiempo que se ha dado hasta el momento se conoció en la mesa 4456 en la aldea El Quebracho de Pespire les hacía falta casi todo el material electoral pero al final se encontraron las bolsas correspondientes y completas.



Cuatro de los observadores recorrieron varios de los centros de votación de Choluteca.

# Informe de IFES destaca ambiente tranquilo en elecciones generales

Aunque el proceso electoral hondureño se realizó con toda normalidad y en un ambiente tranquilo, habrá que emprender una serie de reformas para mejorar el proceso, concluyeron ayer los observadores internacionales de la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales (IFES).

En un informe brindado a la prensa, indicaron que sus recomendaciones podrían ser tomadas en cuenta para mejorar el sistema de votación y recaudación de resultados electorales.

IFES trabajó en Honduras con un equipo de 32 observadores, quienes se desplazaron a las mesas electorales, los centros de información y el Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones (TNE), para presenciar el desarrollo electoral, del 25 de noviembre.

Entre las recomendaciones está el de mejorar la capacitación electoral a los miembros de las mesas y la creación de mecanismos que faciliten el voto de las personas con discapacidad.

Y es que a muchos de los observadores del IFES, acompañados por el embajador de los Estados Unidos, Frank Almaguer, y el portavoz, Carlos Bakota, les tocó cargar con las sillas de discapacitados que llegaron en sillas de ruedas a los centros de votación, donde habían muchas gradas que subir.

«Creemos que podría mejorarse el tema de la capacitación electoral a los miembros de la mesa, para poder dar mejores orientaciones al votante para

que no tengan mayores confusiones para encontrar su mesa electoral», expresó la presidente del tribunal electoral de Nicaragua, Rosa Marina Zelaya.

Las observaciones fueron orientadas a mejorar el tema de la transmisión de resultados, el cual es importante para optimizar la recaudación de los resultados, lo más temprano posible y la mayor cantidad de mesas electorales.

En relación al porcentaje de abstencionismo, que se presume anda arriba del 30 por ciento, recomendaron el desarrollo de una mejor campaña de educación cívica para los hondureños.

Señalaron que la actitud de los candidatos presidenciales al convocar a sus adeptos a las urnas fue buena, aunque no suficiente porque se presumía que el 80 por ciento de la población acudiría a las urnas.

«Nos parece un gran ejercicio del pueblo hondureño en fortalecer su democracia, hemos quedado muy impresionados con la tranquilidad y el sentido cívico que vimos en toda la República», manifestó Patricio Gajardo.

Felicitó a las autoridades por haber permitido una elección en libertad y paz, que conlleva a la estabilidad, «fue muy hermoso ver cómo hombres y mujeres desfilaban en las urnas electorales para manifestar su vocación democrática y elegir a sus

más altas autoridades».

Entre los avances del sistema, indicaron que la organización y distribución de las mesas electorales, el voto domiciliario y las boletas electorales separadas, son aspectos que permitieron el pluralismo político y que el pueblo hondureño pudiera elegir libremente a su presidente, a los diputados y a las autoridades edilicias.

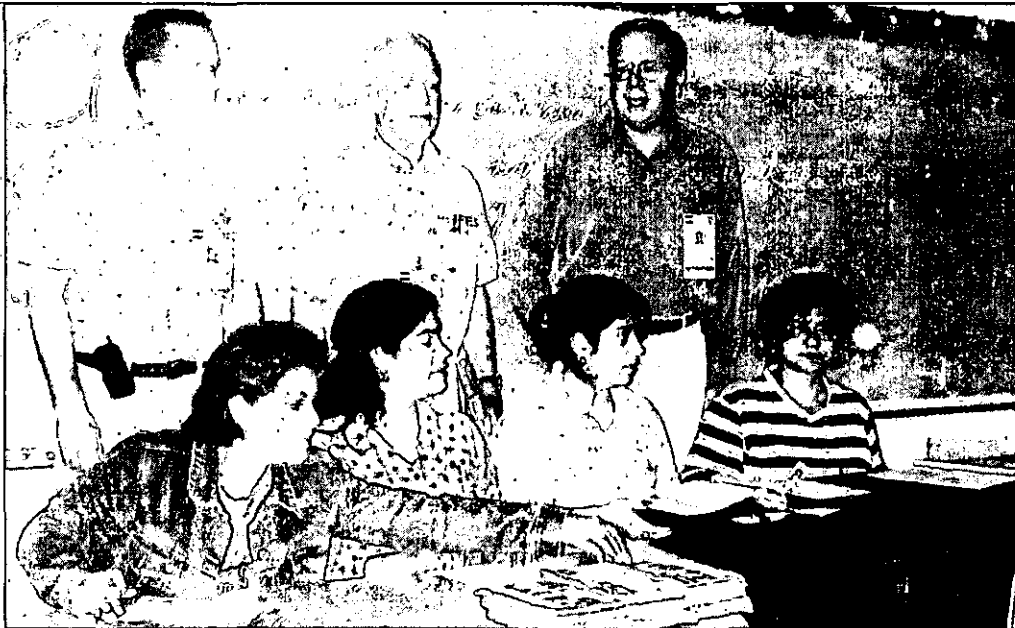
Después del primer informe, el IFES enviará una evaluación más detallada, para que la población se beneficie, al igual que los partidos políticos, que se comprometieron mediante la firma de acuerdo patriótico.

El IFES ratificó su firme convicción de acompañar y contribuir al fortalecimiento del proceso democrático de Honduras, ya que su contribución no es como observadores, sino como asistentes técnicos de las organizaciones políticas.

Los conferencistas indicaron que permanecerán en contacto con el TNE para continuar con la asistencia técnica que ofrecen, a fin de que las recomendaciones se tornen en hechos concretos para mejorar el sistema electoral.

A la conferencia asistieron los observadores internacionales, y los directivos de la fundación como Patricio Gajardo, Jack Vaughn, y otros ex funcionarios estadounidenses.

El jefe de la misión fue el ex embajador de Estados Unidos en Colombia Myles Frechette. (NA).



Entre los observadores del IFES estuvo el embajador Frank Almaguer, quien hizo algunas recomendaciones para mejorar el proceso en el futuro.

## Embajador descarta que dinero de política provenga de narcotráfico

El embajador de los Estados Unidos, Frank Almaguer, dijo que no tiene información de que hayan recursos del narcotráfico destinados al financiamiento de las campañas electorales.

«Si yo supiera de algo, se los comunicaría, pero ese no es tema que ahora nos preocupa porque no sabemos que haya nada».

Ahora que Ricardo Maduro, del Partido Nacional, resultó electo presidente de la República, expresó su pesar por la cantidad de dinero que los candidatos a elección invierten en las campañas publicitarias.

Extraoficialmente se ha informado que en la presente contienda electoral se invirtieron alrededor de 400 millones

de lempiras, cifra que es incongruente con la pobreza que abate al 83 por ciento de la población hondureña.

Respecto a las elecciones generales, reafirmó que fue un proceso democrático y que las relaciones entre Estados Unidos y Honduras se verán fortalecidas. (NA).



Sostiene misión IFES:

# Hondureños demostraron un alto nivel de tolerancia y desarrollo democrático

El sexto proceso electoral en Honduras se desarrolló en un ambiente de paz, libertad y democracia, manifestaron ayer los treinta miembros de la Misión de Observación Electoral organizada por la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales (IFES).

Las misiones de observación se realizaron en los departamentos de Atlántida, Choluteca, Colón,

Comayagua, Cortés, Tegucigalpa, El Paraíso, Intibucá, La Paz y Yoro.

La misión estuvo encabezada por Myles Frechette, ex embajador de Estados Unidos ante Colombia; Jack Hood Vaughn ex embajador de Estados Unidos ante Colombia y Panamá y Patricio Gajardo director para América Latina y el Caribe de IFES.

Los observadores felicitaron al

pueblo hondureño por demostrar con su participación un alto nivel de tolerancia y desarrollo democrático. Además felicitaron a las autoridades electorales, miembros de mesas, partidos políticos y candidatos por su madurez cívica y manifiesta vocación democrática.

Los observadores aprovecharon la conferencia de prensa para felicitar al candidato ganador del proceso electoral, Ricardo Maduro, al tiempo que reconocieron la actitud política del candidato del Partido

Liberal, Rafael Pineda Ponce, por aceptar plenamente los resultados electorales como una decisión soberana del pueblo hondureño.

Entre las recomendaciones que hicieron al gobierno hondureño en materia electoral figuran las reformas a la Ley Electoral, la profesionalización de los organismos electorales y la modernización del sistema político electoral en Honduras.

También destacaron la importancia de tomar en cuenta el

mejoramiento de las condiciones de organización de los centros de votación, la capacitación electoral a los miembros de mesa y la creación de mecanismos que faciliten el voto de las personas con discapacidad.

Desde su creación en 1987, la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales ha proporcionado asistencia no partidaria con el fin de desarrollar y apoyar sistemas electorales en más de 100 países con democracias emergentes en todo el mundo.

## Observadores internacionales elogian proceso electoral hondureño



Foto Luis Elvir/LA PRENSA

• Los observadores del Ifes estimaron que las elecciones se desarrollaron con tranquilidad y transparencia.

DAGOBERTO RODRÍGUEZ • Tegucigalpa

En términos generales las elecciones celebradas en Honduras el pasado domingo se desarrollaron con una regular concurrencia y sin irregularidades que pudieron haber manchado el proceso, elogió ayer la misión de observadores de la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales, Ifes.

En una rueda de prensa, los delegados del Ifes Patricio Gajardo, Myles Frechette, Rosa Marina Zelaya y Jack Vaujhan expusieron los resultados del trabajo de observación realizado el domingo anterior y presentaron a la vez una serie de recomendaciones para un futuro proceso.

“El Ifes felicita al pueblo hondureño por la celebración de su sexto proceso electoral consecutivo celebrado en paz y libertad, durante el cual demostró con su participación un alto nivel de tolerancia y desarrollo democrático”, afirmó el organismo en un informe preliminar.

Por lo demás, recomendó emprender cuanto antes los desafíos asumidos en el “Manifiesto de los partidos políticos al pueblo hondureño” de septiembre de este año, principalmente en lo referente a las reformas a la ley electoral, la profesionalización de los órganos electorales y la modernización del sistema político de Honduras.

También consideró importante tomar

en cuenta el mejoramiento de las condiciones de organización de los centros votación, la capacitación electoral a los miembros de las mesas y la creación de mecanismos que faciliten el voto de las personas con discapacidad.

Patricio Gajardo, director del Ifes para América Latina y el Caribe, expuso que se trató de un proceso pacífico y tranquilo que demuestra la madurez de los hondureños en materia electoral y en lo referente a las transiciones políti-

cas, que los colocan al país entre los estándares más altos de Latinoamérica.

Dijo que no contaba con los datos que pudieran determinar una menor concurrencia de votantes con relación a los anteriores procesos electorales, pero pudieron corroborar que al final de las votaciones al menos un treinta por ciento de los votos quedaron sin utilizar.

Atribuyó la relativa concurrencia a las urnas al “aburrimiento” que posi-

blemente causó entre los electores la costumbre de participar en proceso eleccionarios sucesivos cada cuatro años, similar a lo que ocurre en países como Estados Unidos.

Dijo que más adelante los partidos políticos deberán comenzar a analizar las fallas del proceso, estudiarlas y ver qué tipo de reformas pueden hacer a futuro. “Eso creo que hay que hacerlo ya y no esperar a que pasen cuatro años”.

# HONDURAS

Civismo impresionó a delegaciones

## Observadores sugieren mejorar el sistema electoral hondureño

**TEGUCIGALPA.** La organización y distribución de las mesas electorales, capacitación electoral del personal y el mejoramiento en la transmisión de resultados, son algunas de las recomendaciones que los miembros de la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales (IFES) hacen a las autoridades de Honduras.

Los planteamientos fueron hechos por la misión de observadores de IFES encabezada por los estadounidenses Myles Frechette y Jack Hood Vaughn, el director para América Latina y el Caribe de IFES, Patricio Gajardo, y la nicaragüense Rosa Marina Zelaya.

Los observadores presenciaron las votaciones en los departamentos de Choluteca, Atlántida, Colón, Comayagua, Cortés, Tegucigalpa, El Paraíso, Intibucá, La Paz y Yoro.

Aseguraron haber quedado impresionados con la tranquilidad y el sentido cívico de los hondureños al concurrir a ejercer el sufragio.

"Debemos de felicitar al pueblo hondureño, fue muy hermoso ver cómo hombres y mujeres desfilaban en las urnas electorales



Los observadores Myles Frechette, Jack Hood Vaughn, Patricio Gajardo y Rosa Marina Zelaya, calificaron de hermoso el proceso electoral de Honduras.

para manifestar su vocación democrática y elegir a sus más altas autoridades", sostuvo Zelaya.

Explicó que también es admirable el desafío que se proponen los dirigentes de los partidos políticos al haber firmado el manifiesto en el que expresan su compromiso de reformar la Ley Electoral y de las Organizaciones Políticas. Detalló que este compromiso es fundamental porque también se contempla la profesionalización

de los partidos políticos y del sistema político electoral.

Estimó que además del voto domiciliario y de la papeleta separada se debe considerar la capacitación electoral a los miembros de las mesas para que den mayores orientaciones a los votantes. Indicó que van a plantear a los miembros del Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones (TNE) una serie de detalles

para una futura reforma electoral.

La funcionaria aseguró que también se requiere agilidad en la transmisión de resultados electorales con el propósito de que temprano se conozcan las tendencias a favor de determinados aspirantes.

"Ahí están orientadas la recomendaciones que IFES está dando a las autoridades electorales con el firme convencimiento que fue una gran fiesta cívica", dijo.

Patricio Gajardo elogió la actitud del ex aspirante presidencial liberal, Rafael Pineda Ponce, de reconocer la derrota.



de los organismos electorales, la para que los tomen en conside-

LA PRENSA  
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27 de noviembre del 2001

## Estados Unidos felicita a Ricardo Maduro por resultados en las urnas

Tegucigalpa

En términos generales las elecciones celebradas en Honduras el pasado domingo se desarrollaron con una regular concurrencia y sin irregularidades que pudieron haber manchado el proceso, elogió ayer la misión de observadores de la Fundación Internacional para Sistemas Electorales, Ifes. En una rueda de prensa, los delegados del Ifes Patricio Gajardo, Myles Frechette, Rosa Marina Zelaya y Jack Vaujhn expusieron los resultados del trabajo de observación realizado el domingo anterior y presentaron a la vez una serie de recomendaciones para un futuro proceso.

"El Ifes felicita al pueblo hondureño por la celebración de su sexto proceso electoral consecutivo celebrado en paz y libertad, durante el cual demostró con su participación un alto nivel de tolerancia y desarrollo democrático", afirmó el organismo en un informe preliminar.

Por lo demás, recomendó emprender cuanto antes los desafíos asumidos en el "Manifiesto de los partidos políticos al pueblo hondureño" de septiembre de este año, principalmente en lo referente a las reformas a la ley electoral, la profesionalización de los órganos electorales y la modernización del sistema político de Honduras.

También consideró importante tomar en cuenta el mejoramiento de las condiciones de organización de los centros votación, la capacitación electoral a los miembros de las mesas y la creación de mecanismos que faciliten el voto de las personas con discapacidad.

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Dijo que más adelante los partidos políticos deberán comenzar a analizar las fallas del proceso, estudiarlas y ver qué tipo de reformas pueden hacer a futuro. "Eso creo que hay que hacerlo ya y no esperar a que pasen cuatro años".



***¿Sabes que llamar por cobrar***

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MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

**HONDURAS GENERAL ELECTIONS**  
**NOVEMBER 25, 2001**  
**ELECTION OBSERVATION FORM**

OBSERVER \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_  
VOTING CENTER \_\_\_\_\_  
PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_ MUNICIPALITY \_\_\_\_\_  
POLLING TABLE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

**POLLING TABLE**

Did the polls open on time? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

When the polling table opened, were all its members present? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Are all the voting materials available? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Does the location and organization of the polling table allows for an orderly voting process? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Are the poll workers organized and efficient? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Is the voters registry in order?  
If not, describe \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Is the principle of "secret vote" being respected? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Are there other observers present? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Domestic \_\_\_\_\_ International \_\_\_\_\_ Political Parties \_\_\_\_\_

**VOTING CENTER**

Is there any type of security present?  
Police \_\_\_\_\_ Military \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any indications of intimidation or coercion toward voters?  
If yes, please describe \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any electoral proselytism or propaganda?  
If yes, please describe \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER OBSERVATIONS** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





FORTALECIENDO LA DEMOCRACIA

**HONDURAS GENERAL ELECTIONS  
NOVEMBER 25, 2001**

**TABULATION FORM**

OBSERVER \_\_\_\_\_

VOTING CENTER \_\_\_\_\_ CLOSING TIME \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_ MUNICIPALITY \_\_\_\_\_

POLLING TABLE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER THAT VOTED \_\_\_\_\_

	POLITICAL PARTY	CANDIDATE	VOTES
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
			NULL VOTES
			BLANK VOTES
			VALID VOTES
			TOTAL VOTES

OTHER OBSERVATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_







MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

**IFES International Observation Mission**

**November 21 – 27, 2001**

**Tabulation Results**

Observer	Department	Table Number	PL	PDCH	PINU	UD	PN
Noelle Lusane Michael Galloway	Atlantida		94	2	7	1	116
Diana Rutstein	Choluteca	3934-7	101	3	1	4	95
Mark P. Sullivan	Choluteca	3935	97	3	4	0	94
Kenneth Blazejewski	Colon	806	83	2	0	3	65
Kenneth Blazejewski	Colon	807	67	7	0	6	57
Eric Brown	Colon	808	72	0	1	5	78
Kenneth Blazejewski	Colon	809	83	0	0	6	66
Tim Kraft/Ken Insley	Comayagua	975	103	0	3	1	75
Fernando Mark Rondon	Cortes						
Arturo Sanchez Gutierrez	Cortes	3229	120	1	3	1	157
Jennifer Tufts	Cortes	3230	108	4	2	6	173
Erick Bolaños	Cortes	3292	106	0	3	0	146
Eric P. Farnsworth	Cortes	3293-8	104	0	4	3	162
Erick Bolaños	Cortes	3346	70	0	5	0	91
Erick Bolaños	Cortes	3347	71	1	2	0	123
Erick Bolaños	Cortes	808	72	0	1	5	78
Miguel Diaz	El Paraiso	4637	106	2	2	5	100
Marisa Rivera-Albert	El Paraiso	4638	100	2	1	5	104
Miguel Diaz	El Paraiso	4640	118	0	3	2	86
Jack H. Vaughn	Francisco Morazan		130	0	0	0	160
Patricio F. Gajardo	Francisco Morazan	5241	67	2	4	1	110
Myles R. Frechette	Francisco Morazan	5254	76	0	5	2	98
Thomas Dodd	Francisco Morazan	5430	98	3	9	0	190
Laura Velasquez	Francisco Morazan	5438	98	1	3	2	174
Carlos J. Aguinaga	Francisco Morazan	5485	78	2	6	1	107
Maureen Pearce	Francisco Morazan	5493	81	3	8	5	118
Rosa Marina Zelaya	Francisco Morazan	5842	146	4	5	3	172
Carlos V. Corach	Francisco Morazan	5945	141	2	7	5	160
Rudecindo Vega	Francisco Morazan	6041	66	1	3	2	108
Julie Whitman	Francisco Morazan	6043	70	3	4	3	111
Rudecindo Vega	Francisco Morazan	6049	54	1	3	3	108
Mario A. Henriquez	Intibuca	7334	88	0	0	2	144
Sandra Flores	Intibuca	7417	88	4	0	1	98
John Graham	Yoro	10596	68	4	1	0	76
Gocool Boodoo	Yoro	10598	54	3	4	3	99
<b>Total</b>			<b>3,372</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>3,899</b>
<b>Percentage</b>			<b>44.9%</b>	<b>.8%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>51.9%</b>







MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

**HONDURAS 2001 GENERAL ELECTIONS  
SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL FINAL RESULTS  
(Presidential Final Results)**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Liberal Party (PL)</b>	<b>964,590</b>	<b>44.26%</b>
<b>Christian Democratic Party of Honduras (PDCH)</b>	<b>21,089</b>	<b>0.97%</b>
<b>Innovation and Unity Party (PINU)</b>	<b>31,666</b>	<b>1.45%</b>
<b>Democratic Unification Party (UD)</b>	<b>24,102</b>	<b>1.11%</b>
<b>National Party (PN)</b>	<b>1,137,734</b>	<b>52.21%</b>

<b>Null Votes</b>	<b>81,959</b>	<b>3.59%</b>
<b>Blank Votes</b>	<b>23,927</b>	<b>1.05%</b>
<b>Total Valid Votes</b>	<b>2,179,181</b>	<b>95.37%</b>
<b>Total Votes</b>	<b>2,285,067</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Registered Voters</b>	<b>3,448,280</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Electoral Abstention</b>	<b>1,163,213</b>	<b>33.73%</b>

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