



MISIÓN DE OBSERVACIÓN ELECTORAL DE LA UNIÓN EUROPEA



GUATEMALA
Elecciones generales, 25 junio 2023

A well-organised election day, in a process marked by the exclusion of candidates and the invalid vote

Guatemala City, 27 June 2023 - *"Guatemalans have demonstrated their unwavering commitment to democracy and civic values by going to the polls to express their will in an election day well organised by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal", said Jordi Cañas, head of the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) in Guatemala, this morning. At a press conference held to deliver the EU EOM preliminary statement, Cañas added that "this should not make us forget that the 2023 general elections have taken place in a context of a serious deterioration of the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, together with severe restrictions on freedoms of expression and of the press".*

"There have been decisions by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, the judiciary and the Constitutional Court on the registration of candidates that have limited the right to be elected of some participants," said the head of mission, who added that the high number of invalid votes "should serve as a reflection for the political and judicial bodies of the country to deepen democracy and the rule of law.

Jordi Cañas stressed that these TSE decisions *"in no way tarnish the work done by its staff at the departmental and municipal boards, as well as at the polling stations. They have all demonstrated their commitment to these elections, despite difficult working conditions in some cases"*.

Leopoldo López Gil, head of the European Parliament Delegation that joined the EU EOM, praised *"the large influx of citizens that we have seen throughout the day at the polling stations, particularly young people and women. Guatemalans have turned out to vote in a climate of great serenity and civility "*. López added that *"Guatemala faces important challenges, it is true, but it is also true that Guatemalans have an unquestionable democratic spirit"*.

During Election Day, the European Union Election Observation Mission deployed 126 observers from all EU countries, Norway and Canada, and visited 599 polling stations in the country's 22 departments and the capital. The mission will remain in the country to observe the presidential run-off. Two months after the conclusion of the process, it will present a final report with recommendations on possible reforms for future electoral processes.

In response to an invitation by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, the EU has deployed an Election Observation Mission to observe the 25 June general elections. The mission methodology is based on the principles of independence, comprehensiveness, non-interference, transparency and assessment of the elections in accordance with the international principles of political participation and elections of which Guatemala is signatory.

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