
Bolivia Gov't Invites OAS to Audit Final Electoral Count

22/10/2019



The request came hours after The OAS raised concerns after an official preliminary count of votes gave Morales a 10-point lead over rival Carlos Mesa.

The government of Bolivia invited Tuesday the Organization of American States (OAS) to carry out an audit of the final count after the preliminary results of Sunday's election were showing a victory in the first round of President Evo Morales.

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Foreign Minister Diego Pary said his government would accept the final result of the elections and that he invited the OAS, who acted as an official observer in the elections, in the United States, among other countries, to "accompany" the final count that is currently in process and shows Morales winner, although with the possibility of having to face a runoff.

The request came hours after The OAS raised concerns after an official preliminary count of votes gave Morales a 10-point lead over rival Carlos Mesa.

However, a number of international observers that are in La Paz monitoring Bolivia's general elections praised the legitimacy and transparency of the process which comes in contrast to proclamations by opposition leaders who have already made declarations questioning the results.

"The vote count is open to all who want to see it... we could see the noting down of each of the votes from each ballot paper," Rixi Moncada who is the president of the electoral court in Honduras, said.

Monday night saw right-wing protesters have launched numerous violent attacks across Bolivia as preliminary results indicated that leftist President Evo Morales is on course for a first-round victory.

Attacks included the burning down of vote counting centers and assaulting Indigenous supporters of Morales. In response, social movements have called for a state of emergency, and a mobilization of workers in the streets to defend the vote.

In reaction to the protests and violence, CONALCAM, a coalition of Indigenous groups and workers unions that are affiliated to Morales' 'Movement Towards Socialism' held a press conference where they declared a state of emergency, calling for mobilizations in the streets to defend democracy.
