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Elecciones
Generales

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Transparent and peaceful election leads to second round with pending challenges

11 February 2025 - The General Elections in Ecuador were held on February 9. *“I want to congratulate the people of Ecuador for their civic spirit and their responsibility in exercising their right to vote. These have been transparent, well-organized, and peaceful elections, with pending challenges and a second round on the horizon”*, said Gabriel Mato, Chief Observer of the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) in Ecuador, during the press conference held today in Quito to present the mission’s Preliminary Statement.

“We have received full cooperation from the CNE. They organized the electoral process with transparency and professionalism. The vote count and publication of results were carried out quickly and transparently, dispelling fears of blackouts or other risks,” he added.

The electoral preparations proceeded smoothly and in accordance with the electoral calendar, including the updating of the voter register. The CNE’s electronic results management system incorporated best practices in terms of transparency and security. However, public trust in the election administration remained low.

During the electoral process, the freedoms of assembly, expression, and press were respected. Despite the insecurity in some areas of the country, the level of political violence during the campaign was limited.

Nacho Sánchez Amor, head of the European Parliament Delegation that joined the mission in the days leading up to election day, stated: *“Despite being conducted in a context of insecurity, institutional fragility, polarization, and crisis, the electoral process was carried out with remarkable normality.”*

While the overall balance was positive, the EU EOM identified some pending challenges. President Noboa’s decision not to request a leave of absence during the campaign generated controversy and accusations of political bias against the electoral bodies. Additionally, disinformation was rife, with particularly virulent narratives of fraud towards the end of the campaign. Although there are strict regulations on political advertising in traditional and digital media, social media lacks sufficient regulation in this regard. Furthermore, campaign financing requires more oversight mechanisms, control measures, and greater transparency.

This preliminary statement is delivered before the completion of the entire electoral process, and contains the observation undertaken to date. Critical stages remain, including the tabulation of official results and the adjudication of petitions. The mission will also observe the second round of the Presidential Election. After the completion of the process, the EU EOM will publish a final report, including full analysis and possible recommendations for electoral reform.

About the EU EOM Ecuador

The EU EOM arrived to Ecuador on 28 December 2024 following an invitation from the Consejo Nacional Electoral and the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. The mission deployed 106 observers from 25 EU Member States, Norway and Canada across the country to assess the entire electoral process against international obligations and commitments for democratic elections, as well as the laws of Ecuador. On 9 February, the EU EOM observed in 480 polling stations in 23 provinces. A delegation from the European Parliament, headed by Nacho Sánchez Amor, MEP, also joined the mission and endorses this Statement. The EU EOM is independent in its findings and conclusions and adheres to the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation endorsed at the United Nations in October 2005.

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