

# *Political crisis persists in Guatemala*

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By María Josefina Arce

Tension has escalated again in Guatemala, after new actions of the questioned Public Prosecutor's Office that raided in the last few days the headquarters of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, hiding behind alleged

complaints about the general elections, in which Bernardo Arévalo won in the second round with 60% of the votes.

With an ample police deployment, the Attorney General's Office seized thousands of minutes containing the results of the first round, carried out last June 25, in which more than four thousand public positions were elected at the polls.

This new action seeks to question the already official election results and to prevent Arevalo, from taking office next January, from the Seed Movement, object of persecution for his clear anti-corruption message and far from the economic and political elite of the Central American nation.

This is the fourth raid on the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, which filed an injunction before the Constitutional Court to stop the actions of the Prosecutor's Office.

The new onslaught of the judicial body against the electoral process, which has also included arrest warrants and a request to lift the immunity of the electoral magistrates, has led to a national strike for an indefinite period of time in defense of the results of the elections, starting this Monday.

Several highways have been blocked by the demonstrators, who are demanding the resignation of the controversial Attorney General Consuelo Porras, head of the Public Prosecutor's Office and accused of criminalizing judges and prosecutors and protecting corrupt politicians.

The protest was called by the leaders of the 48 cantons of Totonicapán, and has been joined by 10 other Guatemalan departments.

Actions against the Seed Movement have intensified since its candidate Bernardo Arévalo surprisingly managed to pass to the ballot of last August 20, after winning in the first round together with Sandra Torres, of the right-wing National Unity of Hope Party.

Attempts had already been made to disqualify Semilla and his headquarters in Guatemala City had been raided.

The elected president has denounced an attempted coup d'état to neutralize his party in Congress and prevent him from assuming the presidency.

The political crisis persists in Guatemala, where power circles are concerned about the arrival of Arevalo to the presidency and are trying by all means to ignore the popular will expressed at the polls and which is a reflection of the desire for change in the Central American country.

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