

Conservative ARENA Party Wins Congress in El Salvador



San Salvador, March 28 (teleSUR-RHC) El Salvador's electoral authority released official election results on Friday, with the right-wing ARENA party narrowly winning most of seats in the legislative elections held earlier this month.

Although the election was carried out without any major incidents, the tabulation of the results was bungled by electoral authority after several changes were made to the voting process and technical failures forced authorities to conduct a manual count.

Legislative results showed that the conservative Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) won 32 seats while the ruling Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) party claimed 31. The Grand Alliance for National Unity party, a break-away from the ARENA party, came third with 11 members of the legislative body.

The results mean President Salvador Sanchez Ceren of the leftist FMLN will now be forced to negotiate with an opposition-controlled congress. The FMLN was hoping to win control of the congress to advance its progressive agenda.

The FMLN party previously held a 4-seat plurality in the 84-member body. ARENA also won the majority of the mayoral races, taking 129 out of 262. The FMLN won in 85 municipalities, including the capital, San Salvador, depriving the right-wing opposition of a political post with national prominence.

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