

Haiti Sets Date for Delayed Presidential Elections



Mexico City, October 15 (RHC-Xinhua), -- Haiti will hold long-delayed presidential elections on Nov. 20, the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) announced on Friday.

Initially postponed by political turmoil, elections were pushed back yet again by last week's Hurricane Matthew, which devastated southern Haiti, leading officials to call off an Oct. 9 poll.

The Provisional Electoral Council said it needed at least five weeks to prepare for the elections, "because a significant number of voting centers were partially damaged or partially destroyed," and "in some cases, voting centers are not accessible because of ... impassable roads in many locations," the daily Haiti Libre said.

In addition, thousands of Haitians displaced by flooding are without their national identity cards, and will require time to retrieve or replace them, the CEP said.

Haiti has consistently failed to meet its electoral timetable and is officially without a head of state.

The Provisional Electoral Council called off a scheduled presidential runoff two days before voters were to go to the polls on Jan. 24, citing rising violence and threats against the election process.

In the meantime, the president of the National Assembly, Jocelerme Privert, has served as Haiti's provisional president.

Political instability has roiled Haiti since its first democratically-elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was ousted by a U.S.-backed coup in 2004.

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