

Bolivia's electoral body bars more than 350 candidates



La Paz, February 12 (RHC)-- The president of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) of Bolivia, Salvador Romero, has announced that the electoral body had barred 365 candidates for the next presidential and legislative elections, allegedly for failing to comply with legal requirements.

"They [the candidates] did not present any document, which led to their disqualification, and it is no longer possible to present complementary documents," Romero said. "Candidates who have been turned away or those who are still being observed and will be discarded may be replaced by their political organizations, which can also replace candidates who resigned," he added.

According to the TSE, the Front for Victory party (FPV) has the highest number of disqualifications, with 205 candidates declared unfit to run. It is followed by the Movement for Socialism party (MAS) with 57, the right-wing Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN) with 44 and the National Action Party of Bolivia (PAN-BOL) with 36.

The We Believe (Creemos) coalition, with which former regional civic leader Luis Fernando Camacho -- a major figure in the coup against former president Evo Morales -- is running for president, is the least affected with only five refused candidates.

Meanwhile, the Civic Community alliance, whose presidential candidate is Carlos Mesa, is the only political front with no rejected candidacies.

According to the TSE, the candidacies of Evo Morales to the Senate, of former Minister of Economy Luis Arce to the presidency and of Diego Pary to the Senate, are still "under observation" by the electoral body.

The TSE said that Morales and his two companions ?????did comply with the submission of required documents, such as the authenticity of the military service book or the permanent residency.

Morales had denounced at the end of January the "seizing" of his documents when his legal representative, Patricia Hermosa, was arrested in Bolivia.

The TSE will issue its observations on Monday, February 17th. On February 21st, the body will publish the list of the candidates to become president, senators and members of Parliament.

As for the disqualifications, political organizations have until March 20th to present their replacements. The general election is scheduled for next May 3rd.

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