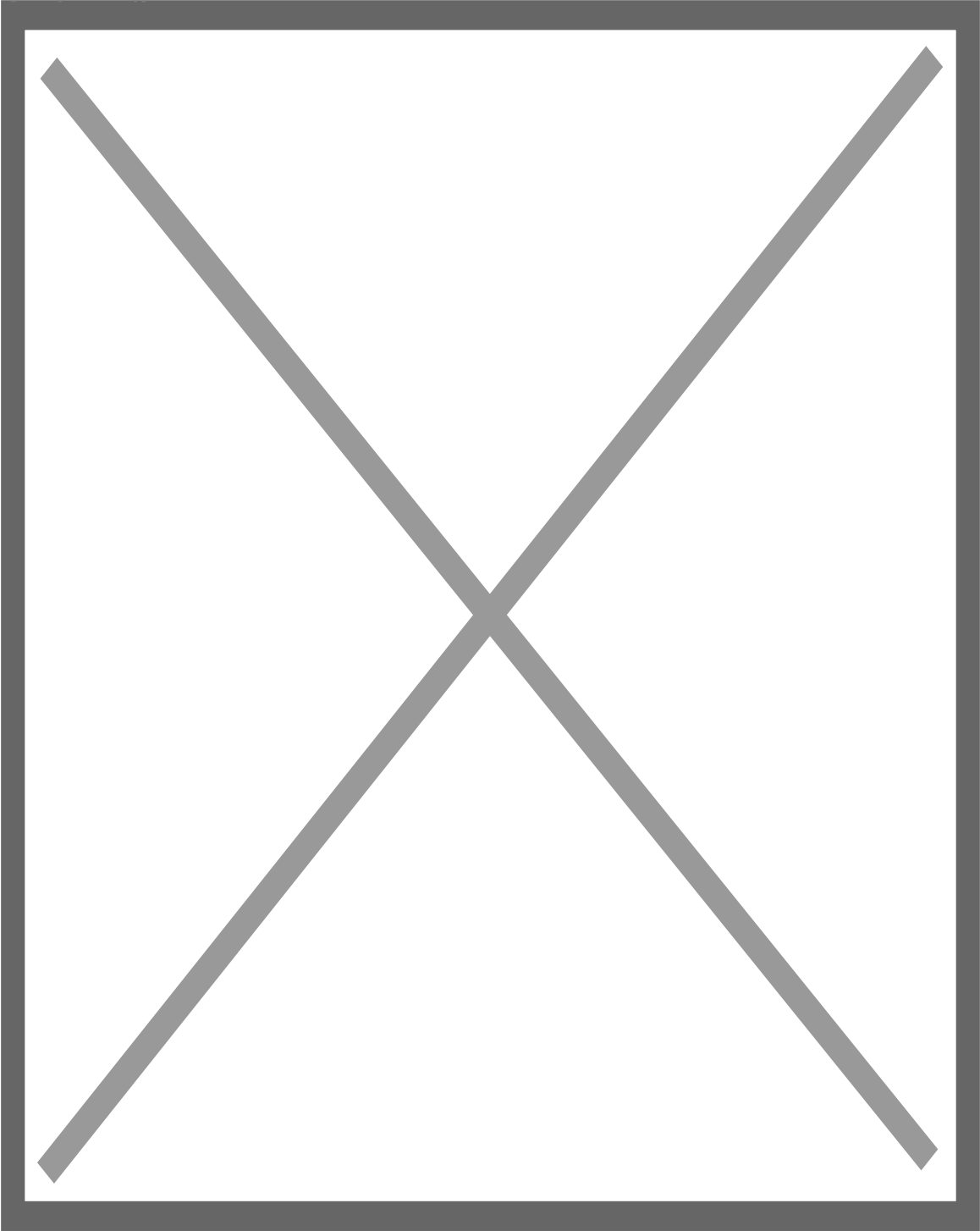


# *Bolivia: Election clouds gather*

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With only a few days before Bolivia's presidential and legislative elections, to be held on Sunday, October 18th, there are constant doubts and fears about a massive fraud in progress, aimed at preventing the triumph of the candidates of the Movement for Socialism, MAS.

The elections are taking place after last year's coup d'état against then President Evo Morales, orchestrated from the United States, with the support of the Bolivian oligarchy, army and police, and sponsored by the Organization of American States, OAS.

It is exactly the presence of the OAS -- rightly-called Washington's Ministry of Colonies -- that causes so much suspicion, since everyone recalls that a false report on the 2019 elections was the pretext used to end the administration headed by Evo Morales.

Up to now, Salvador Romero, the president of the Supreme Electoral Court, the TSE, and an ally of the coup plotters, has refused to hand over the list of observers, although there's been an information leak, stating that they will be the same as last year.

In addition, Romero announced that the results of the quick count will not include photographs of the election records, which will prevent citizens from verifying the data as they are being released.

Other worrisome issues are the recent visit to the United States by Bolivian Government Minister Arturo Murillo, where he met with Luis Almagro, OAS Secretary General.

Moreover, the TSE announced the implementation of a state of emergency in the country days before and after the vote, which could hide the intention to stifle by force any manifestation of discontent in the face of possible irregularities.

About 7,333,000 Bolivians are authorized to participate in the elections, where the president and vice president will be elected and the members of the Plurinational Legislative Assembly will be voted on.

The most recent poll gives the MAS candidate for president, Luis Arce, 42.2 percent of the vote, and Carlos Mesa, of Comunidad Ciudadana, 33.1 percent.

According to the current legislation of Bolivia, a candidate wins in the first round with more than 50 percent of the votes, or if he or she reaches 40 points, with a difference of ten percent over his or her immediate rival.

Otherwise, it would go to a second round, where all the forces of the right would unite against Arce to prevent the return of MAS and progressive democracy, which made that country become a benchmark within and beyond the Americas.

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