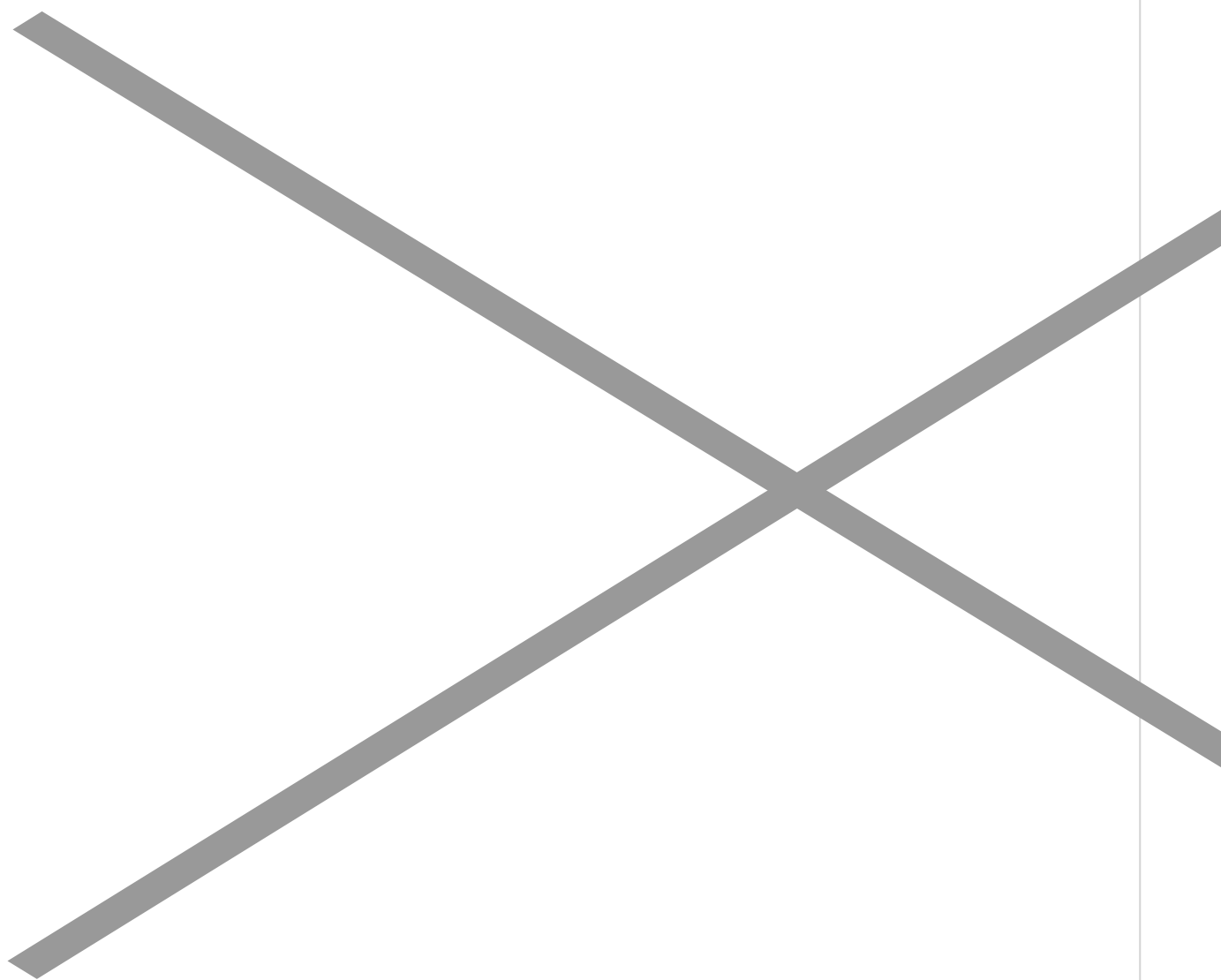


No surprises in the composition of El Salvador's new legislative assembly

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By María Josefina Arce

Two weeks after the presidential and legislative elections in El Salvador, the composition of the new Legislative Assembly, which will have 60 members, is now known.

It should be remembered that in June last year, eight months before the elections, the Assembly approved a proposal by Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele to reduce the number of seats from 84 to 60, which became effective after the elections on the 4th of June.

In the opinion of experts, the proposal responded to an electoral calculation by the president and his Nuevas Ideas party to control the legislative body and be able to adopt laws and other measures, such as the state of emergency, without opposition.

And it was precisely the ruling party that won the majority of seats, according to the results released by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal in the last few hours.

According to the information provided, the next Assembly will be dominated by 57 pro-government deputies, 54 from Nuevas Ideas and three from parties allied to the government. The remaining three seats will be in the hands of the opposition.

The right-wing ARENA, Alianza Republicana Nacionalista, won two seats and Vamos one. Both political movements have stated that they will ask for the annulment of the elections due to anomalies, but it seems that the demands and criticisms will not prosper.

Last Saturday, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal confirmed Bukele's re-election as president, and a few hours after the polls had closed, he had already proclaimed himself the winner.

It has been a controversial process from the outset, with a succession of complaints from opposition parties about various irregularities. In fact, a week before the elections, the electoral body reset the computer system to zero due to failures, and 300 tables were set up for the final count of the votes cast on 4 February, whose actions were not exempt from questioning either.

The election results were not surprising, they were expected. The ruling party, according to experts, managed to shape the electoral rules in its favour. From 1 May, when the new legislature will take office, Bukele will govern without facing opposition to his proposals.

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