



Honduran News Update: General Election

December 2017

You may have heard about Honduras in the news over the past few days/weeks, and about the controversy and unrest surrounding the country's recent elections. AJS has been closely involved in advocating for transparent and just election results, and we wanted to share an update with you about the situation.

General elections were held on November 26th, but two and half weeks later the winner has yet to be declared. The election was already unusual for several reasons – a President was running for reelection for the first time, and his major challenger, a political outsider, was representing not a single party but an alliance of parties. Nonetheless, the voting itself took place peacefully, under the watch of hundreds of national and international observers.

The first results, announced at 2am the following day with 57% of the votes counted, showed opposition candidate Salvador Nasralla with a five-point lead against incumbent President Juan Orlando Hernández. But as more votes came in, this lead reversed, and a few days later, Hernández finished with a 1.6% lead – just a 52,477 difference. The reversal was sudden and dramatic enough to prompt claims of fraud by opposition parties and demands for a recount from international observers.

The vote-counting and re-counting stretched on for days, and tensions have been high. Both parties declared victory and held celebratory rallies. When after days there was still no announcement of a winner, the rallies turned into protests with roadblocks across the country's major cities, and some unfortunate incidences of looting and vandalism. The government responded by instituting a dusk-to-dawn curfew enforced by the armed forces (this has since been lifted).

Throughout this election process and its aftermath, AJS has called for transparency. When the results of the election were called into question, we asked for a recount of results from every polling station. A partial recount was carried out, but not with the completeness or transparency we had hoped for. We are now calling on the government to respond to allegations of fraud in a prompt, public way that can assuage doubts and assure that Honduras' next president truly is the man that Hondurans chose.

[You can find our public statement about the election here.](#)

As a nonpartisan organization, AJS has no position on who should assume the presidency. We have staff from all political parties, but our individual political opinions don't affect our commitment to hold the Honduran government accountable and to support leaders as they implement policies that are more just for the Honduran people. We will continue to do this work if Hernández wins. We will continue to do this work if Nasralla wins.

One encouraging note is how active civil society has been throughout this process. AJS staff have been in constant motion, meeting with representatives from the Organization of American States, the European Union, the US Embassy, and dozens of other organizations working to ensure electoral



transparency and the guaranteeing of human rights. We've been actively involved in proposing solutions, seeking consensus, and pushing for necessary reforms that will last far beyond this election cycle.

The results of this election will greatly influence the details of AJS's work with the Honduran government over the next four years, but they will not alter our mission. Thank you for your support and attention as we await final results, and begin planning advocacy and action with whoever assumes the presidency this January.

Please continue to remember Honduras in your prayers:

- Pray for the wisdom of AJS leaders as we participate in delicate conversations about how to move forward from this contested election
- Pray for the electoral tribunal to act in a transparent and effective way, presenting clear and unadulterated results
- Pray for Hondurans during the current uncertainty in their country

In Christ,

AJS Staff