



COPA Electoral Observation Mission in El Salvador

PARLIAMENTARIANS CONGRATULATE THE PEOPLE OF EL SALVADOR FOR THE SUCCESSFUL CONDUCT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

San Salvador, March 16, 2009 – A delegation of seven parliamentarians of the **Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA)**, headed by Edda Acuña, first Vice-President of COPA and senator for the province of Buenos Aires in Argentina, observed the presidential election of March 15, 2009 in El Salvador. The COPA delegation, composed of parliamentarians from Columbia's Senate, Québec's National Assembly, Venezuela's National Assembly and Venezuela's Andean Parliament, noted that the ballot took place in a peaceful and enthusiastic environment, fully respectful of the electoral laws in force.

On election day, the members of the delegation went to the capital, San Salvador, and the La Libertad and La Paz departments to observe voting in close to 50 polling stations.

The members of the delegation did not note any delay in opening time or any significant irregularities at the polling stations observed. They were very impressed by the sense of civic duty and the conscientiousness demonstrated by the voters and the electoral staff during the election. "The members of the delegation wish to highlight the rigour, maturity and mutual respect shown by the electoral staff and the representatives of the political parties in the performance of their duties," declared Senator Acuña.

In addition to observing the balloting in the polling stations, the members of the COPA delegation began holding meetings upon their arrival on March 10 with representatives of the political parties, authorities from the Legislative Assembly and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, and representatives from public bodies and civil society and other international observers in order to gather information on the electoral process and the state of affairs in El Salvador on the eve of the election.

This is the 8th such mission for COPA. By taking an increasingly active role in election monitoring throughout the Americas, COPA has established its strategic importance in the consolidation of democracy. Founded in Québec City in 1997, the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas brings together over 300 parliamentary assemblies of unitary, federal and federated states, as well as the regional parliaments and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas.

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