



MEXICAN PRESIDENTIAL AND LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

JULY 2, 2006

REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION



Parliamentary Confederation
of the Americas



**PARLIAMENTARY CONFEDERATION OF THE AMERICAS (COPA)
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION**

PRESIDENTIAL AND LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS IN MEXICO

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REPORT

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FOREWORD

This second electoral observation mission conducted under the auspices of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA) was made possible by the invaluable assistance of a number of people.

To begin, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the parliamentarians who participated in the mission. They fulfilled their mandate as international observers with professionalism, thoroughness, and impartiality, especially in collecting the information used to draft this report. I would like to thank Jhannett Madriz Sotillo, vice president of the Andean Parliament and former president of COPA, Luis Díaz Laplace and Víctor Hugo Morales, members of the Andean Parliament, Fabiola Morales, member of the Congress of the Republic of Peru, Martín Pérez, the leader of the second team of observers on the mission and member of the Congress of the Republic of Peru, and Juan Bartolomé Ramírez, member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Paraguay.

I would like to say a special thank you to Guillermo Landázuri Carrillo, the previous COPA president and a member of the National Congress of Ecuador, who supported the work of the Committee on Democracy and Peace throughout his term in office, especially the development of the COPA electoral observation mission program. Thanks also to Carlos Jiménez Macías, current COPA president and member of the Congress of the United States of Mexico, who has pursued his predecessor's work and played a key role in making the electoral observation mission to Mexico a reality.

I would be remiss if I did not draw attention to the invaluable collaboration of the entire staff at the Secretariat of the Committee on Democracy and Peace, especially administrative secretary Jacques Paquet, who supervised the organization of the mission and provided excellent support to the parliamentary observers in the performance of their duties. In addition, I would like to thank Denis Fontaine, secretary general of Le Directeur général des élections du Québec, who facilitated the work of the delegation with his advice and informed observations on electoral issues.

Lastly, I am deeply grateful to the staff at the COPA Mexico Secretariat, and particularly to Leticia Gutiérrez Corona, deputy in the Mexican Congress of the Union and COPA treasurer, for her indefatigable support in organizing and conducting the electoral observation mission.



ÉRIC R. MERCIER

Mission Leader,

Chair

COPA Committee on Democracy and Peace

Member of the National Assembly of Québec

INTRODUCTION

Created in 1997, COPA brings together the congresses and parliamentary assemblies of unitary, federal, federated, and associated states, regional parliaments, and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas.

Its goals include strengthening parliamentary democracy and building a community of the Americas founded on the respect for dignity and human rights, peace, democracy, solidarity between peoples, social justice, and gender equality.

In order to support democracy, COPA seeks to play an increasingly active role in the area of electoral observation in the hemisphere.

A delegation of COPA parliamentarians therefore visited the City of Mexico (Mexico), from June 28 to July 4, 2006, to observe and report on the presidential and legislative elections held on July 2.

This was the second electoral mission conducted by COPA since it adopted a framework for organizing such missions. The first electoral observation mission during the Bolivian general election in December 2005 provided an opportunity to develop know-how that contributed to the success of this second mission.

The goal of this report is to summarize the activities of the COPA mission during its visit to Mexico from June 28 to July 4, 2006, and present its observations. The report is divided into eight parts: **1) terms of reference of the mission; 2) makeup of the delegation; 3) the pre-election political context; 4) the legal and institutional framework in which the July 2, 2005 elections were held; 5) mission activities prior to election day; 6) mission activities on election day; 7) findings of mission members; and 8) mission conclusions and recommendations.**

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE MISSION

During their March 2, 2006 meeting in Mexico City, Mexico, the members of the COPA Executive Committee agreed to conduct two electoral observation missions in 2006. At the time, the members chose the elections in Colombia (May 28) and Nicaragua (November 27).

It proved impossible to send a mission to Colombia because it coincided with the 7th COPA General Assembly in Ecuador. Therefore, another country had to be chosen for the electoral observation mission.

On May 3, 2006, COPA's Mexico Secretariat approached the COPA president and the Committee on Democracy and Peace to inquire about the possibility of organizing a COPA mission to Mexico for the presidential and legislative elections of July 2, 2006.

The Mexico Secretariat also sent documentation to the chair of the Committee on Democracy and Peace, Éric R. Mercier, to facilitate the participation of a delegation of COPA observers. The documents indicated that organizations interested in observing the Mexican electoral process had to apply to the General Council of the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) for accreditation.

On May 15, 2006, COPA president Guillermo Landázuri Carillo was again informed about the possibility of a mission by the chair of the Committee on Democracy and Peace. In a letter to the chair dated May 22, 2006 (see Appendix 1), the president agreed to send a COPA electoral observation mission to Mexico.

In letters respectively dated May 22 and 24, the COPA president informed the authorities of the Mexican congress and IFE that COPA was available and interested in organizing a delegation of parliamentarians to travel to Mexico for an electoral observation mission.

The decision to send a mission to Mexico was confirmed by the COPA Executive Committee at the 7th COPA General Assembly held in Quito, Ecuador, from May 29 to June 3, 2006.

In a letter dated June 9, 2006 (see Appendix II), the coordinator of international affairs at IFE informed the COPA president that COPA-designated parliamentarians who were not Mexican nationals could, if they wished, observe the electoral process by taking the required steps to be accredited as foreign visitors.

On June 17, 2006, the new COPA president Carlos Jiménez Macías wrote to the members of the COPA Executive Committee inviting them to participate in the electoral observation mission to Mexico, and informing them at the same time that the mission would be led by Éric R. Mercier, chair of the Committee on Democracy and Peace and member of the Québec National Assembly.

On June 29 and 30, and July 1, 2006, the members of the mission attended information sessions in Mexico given by representatives of institutions and organizations active in the electoral process in order to understand the organization of the Mexican elections.

On election day, the mission visited close to 25 polling stations in Mexico City to observe the electoral process.

2. MAKEUP OF THE DELEGATION

The COPA delegation was led by **Éric R. Mercier**, member of National Assembly of Québec and chair of the COPA Committee on Democracy and Peace.

The other members were **Jhannett Madriz Sotillo**, former COPA president and vice president of the Andean Parliament, **Luis Díaz Laplace** and **Víctor Hugo Morales**, members of the Andean Parliament, **Fabiola Morales** and **Martín Pérez**, members of the Congress of the Republic of Peru, and **Juan Bartolomé Ramírez**, member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Paraguay.

The parliamentarians were assisted by **Jacques Paquet**, secretary of the Committee on Democracy and Peace, and **Denis Fontaine**, electoral specialist and secretary general of Le Directeur général des élections du Québec.

3. THE PRE-ELECTION POLITICAL CONTEXT

The presidential election of July 2, 2000, marked a historic change in Mexico. The victory of Vicente Fox, candidate for the National Action Party (PAN), put an end to 71 years of rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). In general, this democratic transition went smoothly and helped strengthen parliamentary power.

In the mid-term legislative elections of July 6, 2003, PAN won only 153 of the 500 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, and 46 of the 128 Senate seats. PRI elected the largest number of deputies and senators, but did not obtain a majority (224 seats in Congress, and 60 in the Senate).

Without a majority, PAN was unable to form the political alliances it needed to pass promised reforms, leading to a certain institutional paralysis.

The presidential and legislative elections of July 2, 2006, thus represented another decisive moment in Mexican politics, as Mexicans went to the polls to elect a new president and a whole new slate of deputies and senators.

In addition to the federal elections, elections were also held the same day in certain Mexican states and in the Federal District (DF). In the DF, voters chose the head of government (*Jefe de Gobierno*) and the deputies of the Legislative Assembly (*Diputados de la Asamblea Legislativa*). Governors (*Gobernadores*) were elected in the states of Guanajuato, Jalisco, and Morelos, whereas legislative and municipal elections were held in nine other states.

The arrival of Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador at the head of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), the third biggest party in the Mexican Congress, set the tone of the campaign. Obrador consistently led presidential election polls until May 2006. Then PAN candidate and successor to Vicente Fox, Felipe Calderón, took the lead again, as the two candidates jockeyed almost neck and neck in voter intentions.

Several issues came to the forefront during the campaign. In the social and economic arena, debate focused on the role of the government and how to reduce poverty. The candidates also turned their attention to education, infrastructure, employment, and economic growth. On the legal front, the campaign centered on reducing crime and corruption through legal reform. And at the international level, immigration policy and relations with the U.S. and Latin America dominated the agenda.

Observers unanimously agreed that the election would be extremely close and very difficult to call. The political climate throughout the campaign was tense, as candidates launched personal verbal attacks on each other. Nonetheless, they all signed an agreement (*Acuerdo Democrático por la Equidad, la Legalidad y la Gobernabilidad*) on June 13, 2006, in which they agreed to respect the electoral authority of election officials and abide by the outcome.

The main political parties and coalitions in the 2006 elections were as follows:

- ***Partido Acción Nacional (PAN)*** (National Action Party).
Presidential candidate: ***Felipe Calderón Hinojosa***
- ***Alianza Por México*** (Alliance for Mexico) – A coalition of the **PRI** (Institutional Revolutionary Party - *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*) and the **PVEM** (Green Ecological Party of Mexico - *Partido Verde Ecologista de México*).
Presidential candidate: ***Roberto Madrazo Pintado***
- ***Alianza Por el Bien de Todos*** (Alliance for the Good of All) – A coalition of the **PRD** (Party of the Democratic Revolution - *Partido de la Revolución Democrática*), the **PT** (Labor Party - *Partido del Trabajo*) and **Convergencia** (Convergence).
Presidential candidate: ***Andrés Manuel López Obrador***
- ***Partido Alternativa Socialdemócrata y Campesina*** (Social Democratic and Peasant Alternative Party).
Presidential candidate: ***Patricia Mercado Castro***
- ***Nueva Alianza*** (New Alliance Party).
Presidential candidate: ***Roberto Campa Cifrián***

4. THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE JULY 2, 2006 ELECTIONS

4.1 The electoral system

Presidential and federal legislative elections were held on July 2, 2006.

Gubernatorial elections were also held at the same time in the states of Guanajuato, Jalisco, and Morelos, along with the election of the Federal District head of government.

Voters in the states of Campeche, Colima, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Morelos, Nuevo León, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, and Sonora elected local deputies.

Executive authority:

The president holds executive power. The candidate who obtains a **relative majority** by direct popular vote is elected for a six-year term. Fixed-date elections are held on the first Sunday in July. Outgoing presidents cannot seek reelection.

Legislative authority:

Mexico is divided into:

300 districts

32 federal entities

5 regional constituencies

Legislative power is vested in the **Congress of the Union** (*Congreso de la Unión*), which is divided into two houses: the **House of Deputies** (*Cámara de Diputados*) and the **Senate** (*Cámara de Senadores*). Fixed-date elections are held every three years for the House of Deputies, and every six years for the Senate on the first Sunday in July. Outgoing deputies and senators cannot seek reelection for the same position in consecutive elections (Section 59 of the Constitution).

The **Chamber of Deputies** has 500 members:

- 300 members are elected by the single member plurality method in each of the 300 Mexican electoral districts (*distritos*).
- 200 deputies are elected through a proportional regional party list system with 40 seats allocated within each of the five regional constituencies.

Two constitutional measures should be mentioned:

1. No party or coalition can hold more than 300 seats, regardless of the percentage of votes obtained. If a party exceeds 300 deputies, proportional seats will be deducted to bring its total within the allowable limit, with the excess seats being proportionately distributed to the other parties.

2. No party or coalition can obtain a number of seats that exceeds its popular vote by over 8%. For example, if a party obtains 40% of the total vote, it cannot hold more than 48% of the seats, i.e., 240 seats out of 500.

The **Senate** has 128 senators:

- In each of the 32 federal entities (Mexico's 31 states and the Federal District), three senators are elected. The majority party obtains two seats, and the second place party one.
- The 32 remaining senators are elected under a proportional list system in a single national constituency.

Legislative elections of July 2, 2006		
	Chamber of Deputies (Cámara de Diputados)	Senate (Cámara de Senadores)
Members	500 (direct election)	128 (direct election)
Constituencies	a. 300 single-member districts	a. 32 multi-member constituencies (32 federal entities, including 31 states and the Federal District)
	b. 5 multi-member regional constituencies	b. 1 multi-member constituency
Voting method	a. Single member plurality – 300 deputies	a. Direct majority: - Majority party: 2 seats - Second place party: 1 seat
	b. Direct from party list with 40 seats allocated in each regional constituency on a proportional basis for a total of 200 deputies	b. Direct from party list with 32 seats allocated on a proportional basis for the entire country

4.2 The Electoral Code

Under the Mexican Electoral Code introduced in 1994 and last amended in 2005, voting is universal, direct, free, and secret (Art. 4, paragraph 2).

The Electoral Code allows Mexican citizens who so desire, and who are unaffiliated with any political organization, to act as electoral observers during the preparation and course of the electoral process (Art. 5, paragraph 3).

Elections are held on the first Sunday in July every six years for presidential and senatorial elections, and every three years for deputies. Election day is a statutory holiday throughout Mexico (Art. 19).

The electoral process

The electoral process is divided into four stages:

- The first stage consists of election preparation and begins the first week of October in the year prior to elections (Art. 174, paragraph 3).
- The second stage is election day.
- The third stage consists of tallying the results and certifying election validity (Art. 174, paragraph 4). It is at this stage that complaints about election day may be formulated and submitted.
- The final stage is the confirmation of the validity of the election and the president-elect.

According to the Electoral Code, the election campaign begins the day after candidate registration is complete and ends three days before election day (Art. 190, paragraph 1). Public campaign events by political parties are prohibited on election day and for three days prior to the vote. It is also forbidden to publish or distribute opinion poll results on voter preferences during the eight days leading up to vote (Art. 190, paragraph 4).

Election day

Election day gets underway at 8 a.m. on the first Sunday in July. The presiding officer, secretary, and scrutineers from each polling station board (*mesas directivas de casillas*) set up the polling station under the supervision of political party representatives (Art. 212, paragraph 2). Once setup is complete and the poll book (*acta de la jornada electoral*) has been signed by polling station officials, the presiding officer opens the polling station for voting (Art. 216, paragraph 1).

It should be noted that for voters unable to cast ballots in their electoral district on polling day, the Elections Act provides for special polling stations. For the 2006 election, for example, there were 822 special polling stations out of a total of 130,477. Like all polling stations in the country, each of these 822 special polling stations had a supply of only 750 ballots, as stipulated in Article 192, paragraph 2 of the Electoral Act.

Voters cast their ballots on a first come, first served basis after presenting their voter registration cards (*Credencial para Votar*) and having their names checked on the voters list by the polling station secretary (Art. 218, paragraph 1). Once they have voted, the secretary checks them off the list, punches their voter registration cards, and stamps their thumbs with indelible ink (Art. 218, paragraph 4).

Polls close at 6 p.m. (Art. 224, paragraph 1). The polling station president declares the polls closed (Art. 225, paragraph 1).

After the polls close, the polling station officials count the ballots (Art. 226, paragraph 1):

- The secretary marks any remaining unused ballots so that they cannot be used.
- The first scrutineer tallies the number of citizens who voted with the help of the voters list.
- The returning officer opens the ballot boxes, removes the ballots, and shows those present that the boxes are completely empty.
- The second scrutineer counts the number of ballots removed from the box.
- The two scrutineers, under the presiding officer's supervision, then count the number of votes cast for the various political parties and candidates, as well as the number of spoiled ballots.
- The secretary records the results on the final tally report (*acta final de escrutino*).

All polling station officials must then sign the final tally report (Art. 233, paragraph 1).

An electoral package is then put together containing a copy of the poll book, the final tally report, and any complaints made (Art. 235, paragraph 1). The package is sent to the president of the district electoral council (Art. 235, paragraph 2).

There is no advance poll. However, since the 2005 electoral reform, Mexicans abroad have had the right to vote in the presidential election (Art. 273, paragraph 1). Beginning October 1 of the year preceding the election to January 15 of the election year, the authorities in charge of the National Electoral Roll (*Dirección Ejecutiva del Registro Federal de Electores*) make a form available to Mexicans living abroad who wish to register on a special list of out-of-country voters. The General Executive Board of the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE – *Instituto Federal Electoral*) is responsible for sending voter documentation and material to Mexican citizens living abroad no later than May 20 of the election year. Out-of-country ballots must be returned to IFE no later than 24 hours prior to election day in order to be counted.

4.3 Election officials and organizations

Voting in Mexico is universal, free, secret, and direct. The two main Mexican bodies involved in running elections are the **Federal Electoral Institute (IFE)** and the **Federal Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Branch** (TEPJF – *Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación*).

Federal Electoral Institute

The **Federal Electoral Institute (IFE)** is responsible for **preparing, organizing, running, and supervising** Mexican federal elections. IFE was created in 1990 subsequent to constitutional reforms and the adoption of a new electoral law, the *Federal Code of Electoral Institutions and Procedures (Código Federal de Instituciones y Procedimientos Electorales)*. It holds electoral authority (Electoral Code, Art. 68, paragraph 1) and must be public, autonomous, and independent.

The main components of IFE are as follows:

- The **General Council** (*Consejo General*) is the IFE central management body and is responsible for ensuring that all election-related matters meet constitutional and legal standards.
 - The General Council is made up of the president councilor (*consejo Presidente*), eight electoral councilors (*consejos electorales*), legislative branch councilors (*consejos del Poder Legislativo*), political party representatives, and an executive secretary.
 - The president councilor is elected for a seven-year term by two-thirds of the members present in the Chamber of Deputies from nominees proposed by parliamentary groups.
 - Legislative branch councilors are appointed in the Chamber of Deputies, but cannot vote at the General Council. Each parliamentary group is entitled to one councilor.
 - Electoral councilors are elected for a seven-year term by two-thirds of the members present in the Chamber of Deputies from nominees proposed by parliamentary groups.
 - The executive secretary is nominated by the president and appointed by a two-thirds majority of General Council members. He is not entitled to vote.
 - Each political party also appoints one representative to the General Council.
- The **Office of the President Councilor** (*la Presidencia del Consejo General*) coordinates all IFE operations.

- The **General Executive Board** (*Junta General Ejecutiva*) drafts IFE policy and programs and oversees technical and administrative operations.
 - The Board is chaired by the General Council president with the assistance of the executive secretary.
 - It is divided into a number of executive directorates (*Direcciones Ejecutivas*) with various administrative and technical responsibilities.
- The **Executive Secretariat** (*Secretario Ejecutivo*) coordinates the General Executive Board, runs operations, and ensures appropriate development of IFE executive and technical branch activities.

IFE delegations are also present in each of the 31 states and in the Federal District, and are made up as follows:

- The **Local Executive Board** (*Junta Local Ejecutiva*) oversees technical and administrative tasks in preparing, organizing, and running elections.
- The **Executive Member** (*El Vocal Ejecutivo*) chairs the Local Executive Board and Local Council and coordinates the work of the delegation.
- The **Local Council** (*El Consejo Local*) is active during the election period and is responsible for enforcing the Electoral Code.

IFE also has 300 subdelegations, one for each single-member electoral district. These subdelegations are made up of a District Executive Board (*Junta Distrital Ejecutiva*), an Executive Member (*Vocal Ejecutivo*), and a District Council (*Consejo Distrital*), and operate according to the same principles as the delegations.

It is also important to mention the role of the polling boards (*mesas directivas de casillas*), which are composed of citizens responsible for running individual polling stations and tallying votes in each electoral district.

IFE responsibilities:

IFE's main responsibilities are as follows:

- Draw up the Federal Registry of Voters, which combines information from the General Catalog of Voters (*Catálogo General de Electores*, which lists all citizens aged 18 and over) and the Electoral Register (*Padrón Electoral*, which lists citizens who have registered to vote). This information is used to prepare the voters list
- Contribute to the development of democracy
- Ensure that citizens exercise their electoral rights and do so in accordance with the law
- Guarantee regular and peaceful presidential and legislative elections
- Preserve and strengthen the political party system

- Regulate electoral observation and opinion surveys and polling
- Tally election results
- Declare and certify the validity of presidential and legislative election results
- Develop and implement civic education programs

IFE is responsible for registering political parties and ensuring that they abide by the law (Art. 22, paragraph 2). New political parties must register with IFE between January 1 and July 31 in the year preceding an election (Art. 28, paragraph 1).

In addition, IFE is responsible, through the Executive Directorate of the Federal Registry of Voters, for updating the registry of voters every year between October 10 and January 15 (Electoral Code, Art. 146, paragraph 1).

The Executive Directorate of the Federal Registry of Voters is also responsible for drawing up voters lists by dividing electoral districts into polls of between 50 and 1,500 voters (Electoral Code, Art. 155, paragraph 2). These lists are updated annually. Political parties have access to them and can request changes.

In addition, Surveillance Commissions (*Comisiones de Vigilancia*) are created to ensure that voter registration is performed in compliance with the Electoral Code (Electoral Code, Art. 166, paragraph 1).¹

Federal Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Branch

The **Federal Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Branch** is an independent judicial body created in 1990 as a result of constitutional reform. It has jurisdiction over electoral matters and is entrusted with ensuring the constitutionality and legality of all election-related acts and resolutions.

Its main duty is to provide definitive rulings, according to the laws and Constitution of Mexico, with regard to the following:

- Irregularities and complaints during legislative elections
- Disputes and irregularities respecting presidential elections
- Disputes and irregularities with respect to acts and decisions by election officials and other competent authorities
- Acts and decisions that violate citizens' political and electoral rights
- Legal disputes concerning IFE
- Determination and imposition of penalties

¹ Surveillance Commissions are made up of the executive director of the Federal Registry of Voters, political party representatives, and a secretary.

5. MISSION ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO ELECTION

5.1 Arrival of the delegation and accreditation of members

Upon their arrival in Mexico on June 28, 2006, the members of the delegation issued a press release (Appendix IV) announcing the makeup of the delegation and its objectives, and briefly introducing COPA.

Under the **Agreement of the Federal Electoral Institute General Council establishing bases and criteria to receive and inform international visitors interested in attending the 2005-2006 Mexican federal electoral process**, individuals and organizations interested in observing the Mexican elections were required to apply to the Office of the President of the IFE for accreditation by Wednesday, June 21, 2006. Obtaining accreditation was therefore a mere formality.

5.2 Working meetings with representatives of institutions and organizations involved in the electoral process

To gain a better understanding of the Mexican electoral process, members of the delegation attended the Information and Discussion Forum organized for foreign observers by IFE in the days leading up to the election.

This event also gave delegation members an opportunity to meet with electoral officials, candidates, and the representatives of the main political parties. Their main remarks are summarized below:²

A) Electoral officials

Thursday, June 29

The opening ceremony of the Discussion Forum in Mexico City was held on June 29, with speeches by IFE president council **Luis Carlos Ugalde** and the president of the Federal Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Branch (TEPJF), **Leonel Castillo**.

² Members of the mission only report the comments made by institutional and organizational representatives and do not pass any judgment.

The first forum workshop was on federal election organization and logistics in Mexico.

- **Arturo Sánchez**, an electoral councilor at IFE, provided a general overview of the Mexican electoral system and IFE organization.
- **Hugo Concha**, Executive Director of Election Training and Civic Education at IFE, gave a presentation on the integration of polling boards.
- **Miguel Ángel Solís**, Director of Electoral Organization at IFE, looked at the organization and operation of polling boards.
- **Gerardo Martínez**, Director of Statistics and Election Documentation at IFE, addressed the question of documentation and logistics.

The second workshop of the day dealt with electoral geography and the electoral roll. Two presenters explained IFE's role in this area.

- **Rodrigo Morales**, an electoral councilor at IFE, explained how electoral boundaries are drawn.
- **Alberto Alonso**, Executive Director of the Federal Registry of Voters at IFE, gave a presentation on electoral roll maintenance and updates.

During their first day of work, the members of the COPA delegation learned the following:

- There would be 130,477 polling stations across the country on election day, with citizens overseeing voting at each one.
- A total of 7,000 candidates were vying for 1,431 positions (Presidency, Chamber of Deputies, and Senate).
- There were no mobile polling stations for voters unable to travel to the polls.
- Mexicans had to be registered on the voters list and show their voter registration cards to vote on July 2. No exceptions would be tolerated.
- January 15 was the deadline for voter registration, and March 31 the deadline for finalizing voter information.
- Applications to replace lost voter registration cards were not accepted after January 15. However, 80 requests for new cards had been filed with the tribunal after this date, all of which were granted.
- Seven citizens were appointed to staff each polling station, for a total of 935,000 people.
- A total of 20,000 Mexican citizens were registered as national observers.
- The vast majority of polling stations would be in schools and public places, with 3,220 in private homes.
- Distribution of election materials had begun on June 26.
- Preliminary results would be posted on the Internet beginning at 8 p.m. on Sunday, July 2. IFE authorities estimated that 80% of results would be posted by 8 p.m. on Monday, July 3.
- Voting by Mexicans living abroad was a major new feature of the 2006 elections. Of the 11 million Mexicans living abroad, only 50,000 had registered to vote.
- IFE is not responsible for organizing local elections.

Friday, June 30

Four activities were held on Friday, June 30, at the forum. The first was a workshop on conditions of equity and transparency:

- **Andrés Albo**, an electoral councilor at IFE, gave a presentation on political party financing and oversight.
- **Fernando Aggis**, Executive Director of Prerogatives and Political Parties at IFE, looked at issues in mass media monitoring.

The workshop was followed by the launch of the Spanish-language version of the *Electoral Knowledge Network* (ACE) and a special panel discussion on the ACE project and challenges for strengthening democracy. ACE was created in 1998 to provide comprehensive and reliable election information, encourage networking between electoral specialists, and help build capacity.

The day ended with a special session examining international perspectives on the process of democratic change in Mexico.

- **Roberto Cuéllar**, Executive Director, Inter-American Institute of Human Rights
- **Rafael López Pintor**, International Consultant
- **Horacio Boneo**, International Consultant
- **Robert Pastor**, International Consultant

By the end of the second day, members of the COPA delegation had learned the following facts:

- IFE analyzed coverage in the press and electronic media during the entire election period to ensure that it was fair and balanced.
- A total of over 240,000 media items were analyzed with the help of transcription terminals set up in every district.
- Political party representatives were members of the Surveillance Committee set up by IFE for this purpose.
- Party financing in Mexico is largely public.
- Political parties received 4 billion pesos for election expenses (approximately \$400 million U.S.).
- IFE has 15,000 regular staff and an operating budget of \$130 million U.S.

Saturday, July 1

On July 1, international observers visited the office of the Federal Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Branch (TEPJF) to attend three workshops organized by IFE.

The first, a political and electoral overview of Mexico, was given by columnist and political analyst **Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa**. His presentation included a chronology of the changing duties and responsibilities of Mexican electoral authorities, whose role was once limited solely to enforcing the law. In the past, electoral institutions had no authority to arbitrate; IFE members were appointed by the president and followed procedures and directives decided upon by the executive branch. It was only in 1996 that IFE became independent and the executive branch lost its authority to intervene in IFE operations.

The second workshop on opinion polls and elections was given by two specialists in the field, **María de las Heras** and **Roy Campos**.

The last workshop of the day was on timely delivery of election results:

- **René Miranda**, Head of the Computer and Communications Unit at IFE, presented the Preliminary Electoral Results Program (PREP).
- **Rubén Hernández**, a member of the IFE Technical Committee on Quick Counts, explained the workings of the fast count system.

The IFE activities proved highly instructive for the members of the delegation, who were able to obtain more information on polling station locations, the method used to select polling station officials (random draw), and the rights of international observers on polling day.

B) Political parties, alliances, and candidates

Working meetings with representatives of the main political parties, alliances, and presidential candidates, results of which are summarized below, were organized by IFE. Meetings with international observers were held in the order presented below.

Alliance for the Good of All (PRD, PT and Convergence) Thursday, June 29, 4 p.m.

International observers were unable to meet with Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the presidential candidate for the *Alliance for the Good of All*, but did meet with four representatives of the alliance, Porfirio Alejandro Muñoz Ledo, a Mexican politician and cofounder of PRD in May 1989; Deputy Horacio Duarte, the Alliance's representative on the IFE General Council; Saúl Escobar, head of international affairs at PRD; and José María Pérez Gay, an assistant to Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

The representatives of the Alliance presented the main planks in the party platform, including their plans to develop a new political and cultural pact to help Mexicans find a path out of crisis, end the emigration process undermining Mexican society, and renew ties with the rest of Latin America.

Asked about the possibility of vote tampering on election day, one of the representatives answered that IFE was an experienced organization with vote counting know-how. Although he questioned the political character of the IFE management body, he felt that the likelihood of manipulation was very small. However, he said there was a possibility that other unanticipated problems might arise that could not be resolved by electoral law.

The same representative said he had full confidence in the ability of the citizenry to monitor the election, because a PRD representative would be present in over 96% of polling stations. In short, he believed that the vote would go smoothly and predicted that the candidates would recognize the results.

Another representative nonetheless raised the possibility of tampering to benefit the party that currently holds power in six of Mexico's states. He also evoked certain problems in drawing up the list of party representatives, especially in the states of Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Veracruz. Finally, he mentioned that resistance struggles and social conflicts would be risk factors in certain city neighborhoods on July 2, but probably not so much in the bigger cities.

National Action Party (PAN) – Felipe Calderón
Thursday, June 29, 6:45 p.m.

The PAN presidential candidate began by making a case for Mexican democracy and the maturity of the Mexican electorate. He then described his struggle for a better and fairer Mexico that was democratic and safe.

He recalled his role alongside former president Ernesto Zedillo in creating an independent electoral authority. The IFE reform in 1996 opened the door to genuine democracy. The challenge now was to move from effective suffrage to effective democracy, which is why he wanted to propose an electoral reform that would shorten election campaigns and standardize election dates in all Mexican states. He reminded international observers that PAN representatives would be present in 98% of polling stations on election day. He also anticipated very high voter turnout.

Asked about PAN's negative advertising campaign against PRD, Mr. Calderón pointed out that IFE had sanctioned all of the political parties for the use of negative advertising. PAN had been singled out and had withdrawn the controversial ads. However, he found it unfair that PRD could continue accusing him of corruption in a bribery scandal allegedly involving one of his brothers-in-law. That said, if he had to choose between the censorship that once existed and unfettered freedom of expression that now prevails, he would choose the latter.

Alliance for Mexico (PRI and PVEM) – Roberto Madrazo Pintado
Friday, June 30, 6 p.m.

The presidential candidate for the Alliance for Mexico began by reminding international observers that this was an unusual election, the first in which PRI was seeking the presidency without already holding the most powerful office in the country. The loss of the presidency to Vicente Fox in 2000 had been very hard to accept. Nonetheless, Mr. Madrazo argued that PRI had made a comeback since 2002, noting that the party held local majorities in several states and in 55% of Mexico's municipalities. The candidate stressed that PRI continued to be a major player in Mexican politics despite the loss of the presidency in 2000.

As for his political platform, Mr. Madrazo, who described himself as a progressive centrist, highlighted three elements: the fight against insecurity, the battle against corruption, and the development of an energy policy for the future of the country. In his view, security is the foundation for every other aspect of life.

The candidate also stressed that PRI had promoted the establishment of IFE in its present form. However, he questioned the one-billion-peso fine levied against his party by the electoral organization during the 2003 mid-term elections, and the fact that no other parties had been sanctioned. PRI complaints to IFE in the wake of those elections have yet to be heard.

Despite the tight three-way race, Mr. Madrazo was confident of victory on July 2. He also mentioned that PRI representatives would be present in 98% of all polling stations.

Lastly, his party anticipated that voter turnout would be lower than in 2000, and was concerned about potential interference at polling stations in PRI strongholds, especially by PRD supporters, and the possibility of violent demonstrations in the aftermath of the election. However, Mr. Madrazo assured his audience that his party would respect electoral procedure and accept the results.

Social Democratic and Peasant Alternative Party
Saturday, July 1, 4 p.m.

The members of the COPA delegation were unable to attend the meeting with representatives of the Social Democratic and Peasant Alternative Party because they were meeting to prepare mission deployment the next day.

The New Alliance – Roberto Campa Cifrián
Saturday July 1, 5:15 p.m.

The New Alliance presidential candidate repeated several times that he had no reservations about the electoral process underway. He expressed full confidence in IFE, its employees, and the citizens selected to run the polling stations, as well as in the equipment and material used. Mr. Campa also suggested that all the candidates should agree to recognize the results.

Mr. Campa expected that voter turnout would be around 60%. He was confident that the results would be recognized and accepted, and that his party would be the first to acknowledge the outcome.

He believed his party would obtain 5% of the vote, giving it seven deputies and two Senate seats in Congress.

6. MISSION ACTIVITIES ON ELECTION DAY

6.1 Composition and deployment of the COPA observation teams

On election day, the COPA delegation was divided into two teams of observers.

1) The first team, made up of **Éric R. Mercier, Fabiola Morales, Jacques Paquet, and Denis Fontaine**, visited 11 polling stations in Mexico City:

No.	City/District	Polling Station Name	# of Tables	Arrival	Departure
4967	Mexico/ Bosques de las Lomas	“Casa privada”	1	8:05	8:40 a.m.
4932	Mexico / Lomas Virreyes	Jardín de niños La casita del Bosque	2	8:50 a.m.	9:10 a.m.
4417	Mexico / Ampliación Nápoles		2	10:47 a.m.	11 a.m.
4343	Mexico / Del Valle	Guarderia The Little Kid’s House	2	11:05 a.m.	11:18 a.m.
4372	Mexico / Del Valle	Centro Universidad Incarnate Word A.C.	2	11:30 a.m.	11:45 a.m.
4396/ Special polling station	Mexico / Del Valle	Escuela de Enfermería del ISSSTE	3	11:55 a.m.	12:15 p.m.
4477	México / Acacias	Universidad de Turismo y Ciencias Administrativas	2	12:20 p.m.	12:42 p.m.
0704	Mexico / Barrio de Santa Catarina		3	12:55 p.m.	1:10 p.m.

No.	City/District	Polling Station Name	No. of Tables	Arrival	Departure
0702 Special polling station	Mexico / Del Carmen	Instituto Juárez	3	2:10 p.m.	2:50 p.m.
4851	Mexico / Centro	Escuela Primaria Bolivia	2	5:05 p.m.	5:20 p.m.
4748 Special polling station	Mexico / Centro	Casilla Especial	4	5:37 p.m.	5:50 p.m.
4851	Mexico/ Centro	Escuela Primaria Bolivia	2	6 p.m.	7 p.m.

2) The second team, made up of **Martín Pérez, Jhannett Madriz Sotillo, Juan Bartolomé Ramírez, Victor Hugo Morales, and Luis Díaz Laplace**, visited 12 polling stations in Mexico City:

No.	City/District	Polling Station Name	# of Tables	Arrival	Departure
4349	Mexico / del Valle	Instituto Scifi	2	7:58 a.m.	8:40 a.m.
4355	Mexico / Vértiz Narvarte	Instituto Técnico y Cultural S.C.	4	8:55 a.m.	9:07 a.m.
526 Special polling station	Mexico / Campestre Churubusco	Casa Especial Terminal Camioneta	3	9:20 a.m.	9:56 a.m.
4408	Mexico / Nápoles	Fundacion ICA	2	10:15 a.m.	10:35 a.m.
4442	Mexico / Nativitas	Escuela Primaria Maria Curie Sklodowska	2	10:55 a.m.	11:15 a.m.
5011	Mexico / Popotla	Biblioteca Pública José Maria Pino Suarez	2	11:30 a.m.	11:45 a.m.
4470	Mexico / San José Insurgentes	Jardín de Niños Estefanía Castañeda	2	12:00 p.m.	12:15 p.m.
5511	Mexico / Popotla	Estación Metro Colegio Militar	2	12:20 p.m.	12:35 p.m.
5003	Mexico / Popotla	Esc. Sec. Diurna N° 254	2	12:40 p.m.	12:57 p.m.
5107	Mexico / San Diego Ocoyoacac	Mercado Gascasonica	7	13:10	13:25 p.m.
5044	Mexico / Tacuba	Clinica del ISSSTE	2	1:30 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
4748 Special polling station	Mexico / Centro	Casilla Especial	4	5:40 p.m.	5:55 p.m.

6.2 Aspects observed

To help them perform their work as observers, the parliamentarians had received an electoral observation grid prepared by the secretariat of the COPA Committee on Democracy and Peace. A copy of the grid (see Appendix V) was completed at each polling station visited. It is divided into eight parts and is based on the provisions of the Mexican Electoral Code, especially articles 205 to 238. The grid covers the following areas:

- 1) General information on the observer and polling station
- 2) The polling station
- 3) Election materials
- 4) Voters
- 5) Complaints
- 6) Other observations
- 7) Vote counting
- 8) Overall assessment

To collect this information, the observers mainly talked to polling station presiding officers.

The two teams of observers also sought to obtain a relatively representative sample of voting practices by visiting polling stations in a cross-section of Mexico City neighborhoods, i.e., working class, middle class, and wealthier areas.

7. MISSION FINDINGS

Here are the main findings, which are illustrated with the help of the five tables included in the observation grid provided to COPA delegation members. The tables cover the following aspects: **1) the polling stations; 2) election materials (2 tables); 3) complaints; and 4) general observations.** A fifth aspect—the vote count—is not illustrated by a table. A grid was completed for 22 of the 23 polling stations visited. The compiled results are as follows:³

³ These results are only a snapshot of the observations made by the members of the COPA delegation.

7.1 The polling stations

In all of the polling stations visited, officials began installing election materials at 8 a.m. as stipulated in the Mexican Electoral Code.

However, start times for voting varied depending on the time it took to set up the material (ballot boxes, tables, voting booths, etc.). In some polling stations, voters began voting at 8:15 a.m., whereas in others, they had to wait longer, and as late as 9:15 a.m. in the case of polling station 4442.

	YES	NO	No answer
Suitable polling station site and setup	20	1	1
Polling station is complete	22	0	0
Presence of security forces	11	11	0
Presence of candidate/party representatives	22	0	0
Presence of election advertising on site	2	20	0
Acts of voter intimidation	1	21	0

The physical setup of the polling stations was unusual, as voters were often short of space. However, it would appear that this is customary and the voters did not complain.

Despite the presence of a large number of voters at each voting table, voting went ahead in an orderly fashion.

Both teams noted that many polling stations did not have anyone posted at the entrance to direct voters to the proper lineup. In some cases, however, election workers took the initiative to provide information at polling station entrances (4343 and 4477).

At special polling station 4748, several hundred demonstrators had gathered. They were chanting the name of one of the presidential candidates and jostling voters, which may have intimidated some people.

The second team of observers reported the unlawful presence of party advertising in restricted areas at polling stations 5003 and 5044.

7.2 Election materials

In general, election materials were available in sufficient quantities in keeping with prescribed standards.

	YES	NO
Properly sealed ballot boxes	N/A	
Voting booths ensuring voter secrecy	22	0
Voters list	22	0
Ballots in sufficient quantity	22	0
Ballots initialed by polling station staff	22	0

The Electoral Code does not require ballot boxes to be sealed. However, at polling station 4372, the ballot boxes were sealed on the initiative of election officials.

	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor
Election materials	10	11		
Work of polling station officials	10	11		
Work of security agents	N/A			

At polling station 4932, the first team noted that one voter's thumb was not stamped with indelible ink, as prescribed by law. At polling station 4417, thumbs were stamped quickly and the ink was not very dark.

At polling station 4417, voter registration cards were punched before people voted.

In many polling stations, including 4417 and 4372, ballot boxes appeared to be left without supervision. However, at polling stations 4343 and 4477, they were well situated in clear view of voting table officials.

At polling station 4343, the members of the first team saw an election official assist an elderly voter in a manner in keeping with the law.

7.3 Complaints

Voters made a number of oral complaints to officials in charge of the various polling stations.

	YES	NO
Complaints by party or candidate representatives	0	22
Complaints by voters	4	18

In three of the four special polling stations visited (0702, 4396, and 4748), many complained about the long lineups—where wait times sometimes ranging from four to six hours—and the priority given to elderly and mobility impaired voters. Certain citizens claimed that this privilege favored certain political parties.

At polling station 4477, one voter complained to election officials that the wax crayons used by voters to mark their ballots melted in the sun, rendering them unusable.

7.4 General observations

Generally, there was compliance with Electoral Code provisions for the aspects observed.

	YES	NO	Somewhat
Respect for ballot secrecy	22	0	0
Presence of more than one voter in the voting booth	1	21	0
Electoral staff compliance with procedures	21	0	1
Voter understanding of procedures	20	1	1
Presence of unauthorized persons in polling booth	0	22	0
Visit by national observers	1	21	0
Visit by international observers	3	19	0
Orderly conduct of voting	20	2	1
Interruption in voting during the day	1	21	0

At special polling station 4396, voting was temporarily interrupted due to computer problems. The central server was apparently overloaded beyond normal capacity.

The presence of former Mexican president Miguel de la Madrid and a horde of accompanying journalists disturbed voting somewhat at polling station 0704.

At polling station 4477, a mobility impaired voter filled out her ballot right alongside political party representatives, and another voter showed everyone who she had voted for, two actions that did not guarantee ballot secrecy.

7.5 Vote count

COPA observers were on hand during vote counting in polling station 4851 in Mexico. The count was performed in a serious, calm, and open manner in compliance with the provisions of the Electoral Code.

8. MISSION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of the mission, the members of the delegation drafted and issued a press release (Appendix VI) announcing their conclusions and observations.

COPA parliamentarians and their assistants were satisfied overall with the conduct of the elections. They found that in the 25 polling stations visited, electoral rules had generally been followed and the vote had proceeded in a calm atmosphere. They were also impressed with election officials and party representatives, who performed their duties in a serious and orderly fashion.

With respect to the main risks of vote tampering or intimidation raised by certain party representatives and candidates prior to election day, the delegation did observe a demonstration outside special polling station 4748, where several hundred people were chanting the name of one presidential candidate and jostling voters. Some voters, and perhaps even election officials, may have felt intimidated by the demonstration. Nonetheless, the members of the delegation did not feel that the minor irregularities observed affected the overall integrity of the electoral process.

However, the delegation would like to draw attention to the long lineups it observed at the special polling stations it visited, and information it was given to the effect that a number of voters who had waited for several hours would be unable to vote because of the limited number of ballots available at these polling stations. Under the Electoral Code, each special polling station only receives 750 ballots. This was an issue of concern for the delegation and could ultimately have serious consequences for the electoral process, given the close presidential election results.

Other observations are also worth noting. First, as provided in the Electoral Code, officials at the polling stations visited began setting up voting equipment at 8 a.m. when people were already beginning to line up to vote.

Unfortunately, this procedure can lead to significant delays, as setup time may vary from one polling station to another. For example, at polling station 4442, voters had to wait until 9:15 before voting got underway.

The COPA delegation also noted a lack of voter information at the majority of polling stations visited. For example, many polling stations had no one posted at the entrance to provide information and direct voters to the appropriate lineups.

Also, COPA observers noted that ballot boxes were often left unsupervised. Although the Electoral Code does not require supervision, this made it difficult to verify whether voters were depositing all the ballots they had been given, especially given how busy polling stations were.

In light of these observations, the COPA observation mission recommends that Mexican electoral authorities propose the following Electoral Code amendments to lawmakers:

- Allow polling stations to be set up before 8 a.m. so that voters can actually start voting as soon as stations open, giving them more time to exercise their right to vote
- Ensure that voters have access to better information and guidance when they arrive at polling stations
- Require ballot boxes to be sealed and increase ballot box surveillance by election officials and political party representatives

Regarding special polling stations, the members of the COPA delegation suggest looking into one or several of the following recommendations:

- Provide for more special polling stations
- Significantly increase the number of ballots supplied to each special polling station
- Allow voters to cast their ballot at an advance poll if they anticipate being absent from their district on voting day

Finally, the members of the delegation were very pleased with the warm and friendly welcome they received from Mexicans at the working meetings they held prior to the elections and during their polling station visits.

The members of the delegation would also like to thank the COPA Mexico Secretariat for its invaluable assistance in helping to arrange mission logistics and accreditation from the Federal Electoral Institute. They also thank IFE for organizing information seminars for international observers and for making staff available to answer questions from the COPA delegation.

The members of the delegation congratulate Mexicans on the seriousness and sense of civic duty they showed in the course of the elections.

Further to the COPA electoral observation mission, copies of this report shall be sent to the appropriate Mexican authorities.

The report will also be presented to parliamentarians of the Americas at the next meeting of the COPA Executive Committee and the next COPA General Assembly. In addition, it will be posted on the COPA website.

9. APPENDICES

Appendix I – Authorization by the COPA president



San Francisco de Quito, Distrito Metropolitano
Mayo, 22 de 2006

Oficio No. COPA-GLC-123

Señor Diputado

Éric R. Mercier

**PRESIDENTE DE LA COMISIÓN DE DEMOCRACIA Y PAZ DE LA
CONFEDERACIÓN PARLAMENTARIA DE LAS AMÉRICAS -COPA**

Presente.-

De mi consideración:

En referencia a su comunicación de mayo 17 de 2006, sobre el envío de una misión de observación de la COPA al proceso electoral a realizarse en México, me complace comunicarle que, dando paso a la resolución del Comité Ejecutivo de nuestra Organización, de marzo 2 del presente año, en la cual se decidió la realización de dos misiones de observación electoral durante el año 2006; y, teniendo presente que uno de los objetivos fundamentales de COPA es contribuir al fortalecimiento de la democracia parlamentaria y la edificación de una comunidad de las Américas basada en el respeto de la dignidad y los derechos humanos, la paz, la democracia y la solidaridad entre los pueblos, autorizo a usted, como Presidente de la Comisión de Democracia y Paz de la COPA a iniciar el proceso correspondiente, para lo cual adjunto a usted las cartas para las autoridades mexicanas a fin de manifestar a las mismas el interés y la disponibilidad de la COPA para dar testimonio del importante proceso electoral mexicano.

Agradeciendo su muy oportuna gestión, reitero a usted mis sentimientos de distinguida consideración y estima.

Atentamente,

Guillermo Landázuri Carrillo

**PRESIDENTE DE LA CONFEDERACIÓN
PARLAMENTARIA DE LAS AMÉRICAS-COPA**

TRANSLATION



San Francisco de Quito, Metropolitan District
May 22, 2006

File No. COPA-GLC-123

Mr. Éric R. Mercier, Member of the National Assembly
***CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY AND PEACE OF THE
PARLIAMENTARY CONFEDERATION OF THE AMERICAS (COPA)***

Dear Sir:

Further to your letter of May 1, 2006 regarding the deployment of a COPA mission to observe upcoming elections in Mexico, I am pleased to inform you that in light of the March 2 resolution adopted by our Executive Committee to conduct two electoral observation missions in 2006, and given that one of COPA'S fundamental objectives is to strengthen parliamentary democracy and build a community of the Americas founded on the respect for dignity and human rights, peace, democracy, and solidarity between peoples, I hereby authorize you, as chair of the COPA Committee on Democracy and Peace, to organize such a mission to Mexico. To this end, I have enclosed letters that you may forward to the Mexican authorities expressing COPA's desire to observe this important Mexican election.

Thank you for this most timely initiative.

Yours sincerely,

Guillermo Landázuri Carrillo
***PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY
CONFEDERATION OF THE AMERICAS***

Appendix II – Invitation from the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico



INSTITUTO FEDERAL ELECTORAL

COORDINACIÓN DE ASUNTOS INTERNACIONALES

México, D. F., a 9 de junio de 2006

**DIP. CARLOS JIMÉNEZ MACÍAS
PRESIDENTE DE LA CONFEDERACIÓN
PARLAMENTARIA DE LAS AMÉRICAS
P R E S E N T E**

Como es de su conocimiento, el próximo 2 de julio los mexicanos seamos convocados a las urnas a fin de elegir al Presidente de este país, y a los 128 senadores y los 500 diputados que conforman el Congreso federal.

Dado el interés permanente por parte del Instituto Federal Electoral en brindar las mayores facilidades a los ciudadanos extranjeros interesados en conocer las diferentes actividades relacionadas con las elecciones en México, el Consejo General, máximo órgano de dirección, aprobó el ***Acuerdo por el cual se establecen las bases y criterios con que habrá de atenderse e informar a los visitantes extranjeros que acudan a conocer las modalidades del proceso electoral federal 2005-2006.*** La principal intención de esta resolución es que los miembros de la comunidad internacional, que así lo deseen, puedan estar presentes en todas y cada una de las fases y etapas del proceso electoral referido.

Por anterior, anexo me permito remitir a usted la resolución citada; con el propósito de que aquellos los miembros de la Confederación a su digno, con nacionalidad diferente a la mexicana, interesados en venir a nuestro país para presenciar el desarrollo de la elección en curso, puedan cumplir con los trámites correspondientes para acreditarse como visitante extranjero en el marco de los comicios federales mexicanos en curso.

Sobra señalar que se trata de documentación de carácter público, por lo que puede ser compartida con cualquier interesado sin problema alguno.

Esperando que esta información sea de su interés, aprovecho la ocasión para enviar a usted un cordial saludo.

ATENTAMENTE

**MANUEL CARRILLO POBLANO
COORDINADOR**

TRANSLATION

**DEPARTMENT FOR THE
COORDINATION OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

Mexico, June 9, 2006

**MR. CARLOS JIMÉNEZ MACIAS, DEPUTY
PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY
CONFEDERATION OF THE AMERICAS**

Dear Sir:

As you know, Mexicans will go the polls in July to elect a new president and the 128 senators and 500 deputies who make up the Federal Congress.

Given the Federal Electoral Institute's determination to accommodate, to the best of its ability, foreigners interested in observing activities related to the Mexican elections, the General Council of the Institute has approved the **Agreement establishing bases and criteria to receive and inform international visitors interested in attending the 2005-2006 Mexican federal electoral process**. The purpose of this agreement is to allow members of the international community who so desire to be present at each and every stage of the electoral process.

I have enclosed the above-mentioned resolution so that any non-Mexican parliamentarians designated as representatives of the Federation may, should they wish to come to Mexico to observe the federal electoral process currently underway, take the necessary steps to obtain accreditation as a foreign visitor.

Also, please note that the enclosed material is public, and can therefore be freely distributed to anyone who is interested.

I trust you will find this information useful.

Yours sincerely,

MANUEL CARRILLO POBLANO
Coordinator of International Affairs

Appendix III – Invitation and designation of mission leader



Palacio Legislativo de San Lázaro, a 17 de junio de 2006

**Estimados Colegas:
Presente**

Por este conducto, me permito hacerle llegar un saludo fraterno, asimismo deseo hacer de su conocimiento que el próximo domingo 2 de julio se celebrará en México el proceso electoral federal a través del cual se llevará a cabo la renovación tanto del Poder Ejecutivo Federal para elegir al Presidente de la República; así como a los miembros del H. Congreso de la Unión, tanto en la Cámara de Senadores como en la Cámara de Diputados.

En este sentido, la presidencia de COPA que me honro en presidir, le extiende una cordial y atenta invitación a participar como miembro de la misión electoral por parte de nuestro Confederación, misma que será encabezada por el Dip. Eric R. Mercier, en su calidad de Presidente de la Comisión de Democracia y Paz, en dicho proceso.

Solicitándole de ser afirmativa su decisión, hacerla de nuestro conocimiento a la brevedad junto con el formato que enviamos para tal efecto, y así estar en posibilidad de llevar a cabo la acreditación ante el Instituto Federal Electoral de México, dado que el plazo para el registro y acreditación correspondiente vence el día miércoles 21 del presente mes y año.

Sin duda, esta experiencia enriquecerá más el papel de nuestra Confederación en su trabajo de observación, además de que se dará a conocer su presencia como un organismo internacional autónomo e independiente que tiene como uno de sus propósitos contribuir al avance del proceso democrático en el Continente a través de una presencia oportuna en los momentos electorales más importantes de América, la cual estoy seguro en esta ocasión tendrá un exitoso desempeño.

Sin más por el momento, y esperando contar con su importante presencia, le reitero las seguridades de mi atenta y distinguida consideración.

Atentamente

**Dip. Carlos Jiménez Macías
Presidente de COPA**

TRANSLATION



San Lázaro Legislative Building, June 17, 2006

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing to inform you that Mexico will hold federal elections on Sunday, July 2, to choose a new federal government. Voters will elect a new president of the Republic and the members of the Congress of the Union, which is made up of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

As president of COPA, a position I currently have the honor to hold, I cordially invite you to join the COPA electoral observation mission to Mexico. The mission will be led by Éric R. Mercier, member of the Québec National Assembly, in his capacity as chair of the Committee on Democracy and Peace.

I urge you to accept this invitation and request that you confirm your presence at your earliest convenience using the enclosed form so as to enable us to register you and obtain your accreditation from the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico prior to the Wednesday, June 21, 2006 deadline.

There is no question that this experience will further build COPA's capacity as an observer. It will also enhance its profile as an impartial and independent international organization whose objectives include promoting democracy in the hemisphere through its observer presence at major elections, a presence I am sure will prove highly useful.

I hope we can count on your valued participation.

Yours sincerely,

**Carlos Jiménez Macías, Deputy
COPA President**

Appendix IV – Press release, June 28, 2006

A delegation of parliamentarians from the Americas to observe elections

Mexico City, June 28, 2006—Éric R. Mercier, member of the National Assembly of Québec, will lead a delegation of parliamentarians from the **Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA)** to observe the July 2 presidential and legislative elections in Mexico. The other members of the delegation are Jhannet Madriz Sotillo, former COPA president and vice president of the Andean Parliament (Venezuela), Luis Diaz la Place (Andean Parliament – Venezuela), Andres Giuseppe (Latin American Parliament – Venezuela), Fabiola Morales Castillo (Congress of the Republic of Peru), Victor Hugo Morales (Andean Parliament–Venezuela), Hector Navarro (Andean Parliament – Venezuela), and Martin Pérez Monteverde (Congress of the Republic of Peru).

Upon its arrival today, the delegation will begin a series of meetings with key actors in the electoral process in order to familiarize itself with the situation in the country on the eve of the election. On polling day, delegates will deploy in the Mexico City region to observe how the election is conducted.

This is the second COPA electoral observation mission since the organization adopted bylaws governing such missions at its 6th General Assembly in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil, in May 2005.

The parliamentarians will be assisted by Jacques Paquet, secretary of the Committee on Democracy and Peace, André Maimoni, an adviser at COPA's Brazil Secretariat, and Denis Fontaine, secretary general of Le Directeur général des élections du Québec.

Founded in Québec City in 1997, the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA) is an organization representing over 300 congresses and parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal, federated, and associated states of the Americas, as well as regional parliaments and interparliamentary organizations. It fosters discussion and dialog on issues related to inter-American cooperation and hemispheric integration, and works to strengthen parliamentary democracy and build a community of the Americas founded on the respect for dignity and human rights, peace, democracy, solidarity between peoples, social justice, and gender equality.

Appendix V – Observer's Grid

MEXICAN PRESIDENTIAL AND LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS July 2, 2006

ELECTION OBSERVER'S GRID

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of observer: _____

District: _____

Polling station: _____

Arrival time: _____

Departure time: _____

2. POLLING STATION

Opening time: _____

Reasons for delay (if any): _____

Polling station composition: _____

	YES	NO
Suitable polling station site and setup		
Polling station is complete		
Presence of security forces		
Presence of candidate/party representatives		
Presence of election advertising on site		
Acts of voter intimidation		

Details: _____

3. ELECTION MATERIALS

	YES	NO
Properly sealed ballot boxes		
Voting booths ensuring voter secrecy		
Voters list		
Ballots in sufficient quantity		

	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor
Election materials				
Work of polling station officials				
Work of security agents				

Details: _____

4. VOTERS

Number of voters registered: _____

Waiting time: _____

Average time required to vote: _____

Voters admitted with voter registration cards:

Voters admitted who were not on the voters list: _____

Details: _____

5. COMPLAINTS

	YES	NO
Complaints by party or candidate representatives		
Complaints by voters		

Details: _____

6. OTHER OBSERVATIONS

	YES	NO
Respect for ballot secrecy		
Presence of more than one voter in the voting booth		
Electoral staff compliance with procedures		
Voter understanding of procedures		
Presence of unauthorized persons in the polling station		
Visit by other national observers		
Visit by other international observers		
Orderly conduct of voting		
Interruption in voting during the day		

Details: _____

7. VOTE COUNT

Vote count start time: _____

Number of voters registered: _____

Number of people who voted: _____

Invalid ballots: _____

Blank ballots: _____

Challenges by representatives: _____

Details: _____

Signature of tallies by representatives: _____

Level of security for transport of material to the District Council

Excellent ()

Average ()

Low ()

Details: _____

8. OVERALL EVALUATION

Irregularities to report: ()

Minor irregularities: () Specify

Serious irregularities capable of affecting the integrity of the electoral process: ()
Specify _____

Remarks: _____

Appendix VI – Press release, July 4, 2006



COPA Electoral Observation Mission to Mexico

PARLIAMENTARIANS PAY TRIBUTE TO MEXICAN PEOPLE FOR SMOOTH RUNNING OF ELECTIONS

Mexico City, July 4, 2006—A delegation of parliamentarians from the **Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA)** led by Éric R. Mercier, chairman of the COPA Committee on Democracy and Peace and member of the National Assembly of Québec, was in Mexico to observe the presidential, legislative, and Federal District of Mexico elections held on July 2, 2006. The COPA delegation, which also included three Venezuelan members of the Andean Parliament, two Peruvian congressmen, and a Paraguayan deputy, noted that the elections were calm and orderly and in compliance with election rules in effect.

On election day, members of the delegation visited over 25 polling stations throughout the Federal District to monitor voting. They noted that polling stations ran smoothly and saluted the seriousness with which election officials and political party representatives carried out their duties. "I was very impressed with the enthusiasm of voters and their determination to take part in this important election," declared Mercier. However, the delegation stressed that it did observe long lineups at the special polling stations it visited and was informed that a number of voters who had waited several hours would not be able to vote because of the limited number of ballots distributed to these polling stations.

The president of COPA decided to organize the delegation after receiving an invitation to send observers. Upon their arrival, the members of the delegation took part in the program organized for foreign observers by the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE). The program, which took the form of a seminar, provided the delegation with valuable insight into the Mexican electoral process and an opportunity to meet with candidates and political party representatives.

This was the second COPA electoral observation mission since the organization adopted a regulatory framework to organize such missions. The know-how acquired during the first COPA mission to observe the December 2005 general elections in the Republic of Bolivia contributed to the success of the Mexican mission.

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Source : Mr. Éric R. Mercier
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