

Haiti: Insulza highlights the effort of the Haitian government and condemns the violent acts

Source: [Organization of American States \(OAS\)](#)

Date: 21 Apr 2009

The Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), José Miguel Insulza, praised the successful outcome of the senatorial elections in Haiti, held to elect one third of the Senate. He said that the elections were "part of an invigorated and persistent democratic exercise of the government of President René Préval, contributing to the institutional consolidation of that country."

According to the data provided by the technical Mission sent by the OAS and by the MINUSTAH (United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti), the elections verified last Sunday in Haiti were well-organized during the opening and closing of the voting centers, and in the distribution of government-issued registration cards, as well as in the presence of security forces that helped maintain the order during the senatorial elections in the entire country.

The OAS leader underscored the normality that characterized the voting process and the propriety at the polling centers, but regretted the low level of citizen participation. "Indifference is harmful for a democratic process that requires a strong interaction between political actors and governments," he stated.

The OAS, as it has done in previous elections, made available to the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP), a Tabulation Center, the main purpose of which was the transparency and systematic process of the final counting of the ballots issued by the electorate; which centralized the work done by technicians and election experts, under the direction of the OAS representative, Ricardo Seitenfus. During the voting process, this Center was visited by the First Lady Minister Michele Pierre-Louis, and the United Nations Representative in Haiti, Hédi Annabi.

Insulza also condemned the violent acts that occurred in the Central Department and in the city of Verrettes, Artibonite that caused voting to be canceled in some voting centers. He said that, although the violent incursion only affected two departments, "it is worrisome that expressions of small groups threaten the tranquility of a process that has been advanced with the decision and effort of the majority of Haitian society."

Waiting for the final election results of last Sunday, Insulza reiterated the OAS willingness to continue collaborating with the Haitian Government and people. He also called on all the countries to "continue supporting this Caribbean nation that is in urgent need of international

cooperation to advance the consolidation of its democracy and the building of a fair, inclusive and participative society."

Reference: E-140/09

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