Resolution on Guatemala: the situation after the elections, the rule of law and judicial independence

2023/2831(RSP) - 14/09/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Guatemala: the situation after the elections, the rule of law and judicial independence.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA, ECR, The Left groups and Members.

On 28 August 2023, Guatemala's Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) announced the official results of peaceful, well-organised elections and declared the clear victory of the Movimiento Semilla's Bernardo Arévalo and Karin Herrera as elected President and Vice-President of Guatemala.

President Giammattei recognised the results and publicly called for an orderly transition and power transfer on 14 January 2024. However, since 12 July 2023, the Movimiento Semilla has been subjected to selective and arbitrary legal and procedural actions by the Public Prosecutor, who, according to the EU Election Observation Mission (EOM), 'threatened the right and opportunity to participate in genuine elections and respect the will of the voters'. On 28 August 2023, the Movimiento Semilla was again provisionally suspended by the TSE's Citizen's Registry, suspension temporarily revoked by the TSE on 3 September until 31 October 2023.

While congratulating Bernardo Arévalo and Karin Herrera on their election as President and Vice President, Members called on all state institutions and sectors of society to support an orderly transition and power transfer as called for by President Giammattei. Parliament is concerned about a possible breakdown in the constitutional order in Guatemala. Regretting the continuous attempts to suspend the Movimiento Semilla, the resolution called for an end to any action, especially by the Ministerio Público, to overturn the election results, the continued steps to criminalise independent judicial operators, and the instrumentalisation of judicial and prosecutorial institutions to undermine the rule of law.

Concerned about the arbitrary detention of prosecutors, judges, independent journalists, human rights defenders, Parliament urged the immediate and unconditional release of Virginia Laparra, her lawyer Claudia González and all those arbitrarily detained.