

6D parliamentarians are an example of everything that should not happen in an election

Less than two months remain until the parliamentary elections on December 6, and each day these elections move further away from the minimum democratic standards. Since the express appointment of the National Electoral Council (CNE at its acronym in Spanish) by the Supreme Court of Justice (TSJ at its acronym in Spanish) last June, an electoral race has been promoted without obstacles in favor of the ruling party.

The duet made up of the Judicial and Electoral powers has designed a process contrary to the provisions of the 1999 Constitution and international standards in electoral matters, although undoubtedly tailored to the interests of the Maduro regime. Through sub-legal rules, the disputed arbitrator has distorted the Organic Law of Electoral Processes (LOPRE at its acronym in Spanish) of 2009, by increasing the number of seats in the legislative body by 66%, which went from 167 to 277 and has reduced the number of deputies elected nominally from 70% to 48%. These changes do not conform to the content of article 186 of the Constitution. Added to the above is the incorporation of the so-called "national list", a mechanism that is not part of Venezuelan electoral legislation, and through which 48 deputies will be elected. Likewise, the imposition of a special electoral system for indigenous peoples cannot be forgotten, which discriminates against them and treats them as second-class citizens, by not allowing them to directly elect their representatives.

For its part, the judicial intervention of opposition parties (Acción Democrática, Primero Justicia, Voluntad Popular, and Movimiento Republicano) and of some allies (Nuvipa, Tupamaro, Bandera Roja, Patria Para Todos, Compromiso País, and MIN-Unidad) seem to be destined to eliminate any kind of competition.

Thickening the list

But as if the previous inventory of irregularities was not enough, in recent weeks there have been others that increase doubts about the legitimacy of the process and that Acceso a la Justicia goes on to mention:

1. What machines will count the votes?

Since in March the former president of the CNE, Tibisay Lucena, denounced the destruction of almost 50 thousand voting machines, among other equipment, in the fire of the warehouse that the referee has in Filas de Mariche (Miranda), almost nothing had been informed on the types of equipment that will be used in the parliamentary elections to count the votes and it was only last October 9 when the rector Carlos Quintero made a presentation of a machine and the software that will be used in the parliamentarians ().

Quintero asserted that the machines were designed by Venezuelan technicians and that they were manufactured in the country, without giving any more details, except that they have a battery that allows them to operate for about ten hours and that they are invulnerable to "external manipulations." However, Acceso a la Justicia denounces the opacity in relation to the process of acquiring the devices and the computer program that they will use.

It also warns that there is little time left for the referee to inform citizens about how the machines work. Obviously, this attempts to the political rights of Venezuelans, apart from violating the authenticity, transparency, and security during the campaign period of the elections.

2. Campaign without rules

The regulation of electoral campaigns is a fundamental condition for electoral competitiveness and the correct balance between candidates. According to the electoral schedule established by the fraudulent CNE, the campaign lasts for 15 days, from November 19 to December 3.

However, one month after the start of the electoral campaign, the CNE document has not yet defined the norms, which should necessarily include the conditions that guarantee “equitable” access to the media by the different political actors. as well as the distribution of goods or resources during the campaign.

In the last two decades, Chavismo has abused presidential channels and has misused public spaces for the publication of electoral propaganda, as well as the participation of public officials in proselytizing campaigns during the exercise of their functions. The lack of normative regulation of these aspects will generate more inequality and make the electoral process less competitive.

3. Changing the rules with the game started

On October 14, the CNE official gave the green light to a modification of the General Regulations of the LOPRE, especially with regard to national electoral observation and international accompaniment. At the moment it is unknown what were the changes made. However, on the CNE website, it is reported that this “reform is based on the experience accumulated by the electoral body in this matter and by the current regulation itself, which conditions the presence of observers based on principles such as non-interference, sovereignty, and respect for the authorities”.

It should be noted that the rejection of the "electoral observation", especially the international one, by the electoral referee dates from 2006 to such an extent that this figure was replaced by the so-called "electoral accompaniment", and that until now it has been about an absolutely useless activity. Unlike electoral observation, which is an evaluative task of the electoral process to report on the weaknesses and strengths of the electoral process, both by national and international organizations.

For Acceso a la Justicia, this change neither promotes transparency nor improves voting conditions for parliamentary elections, much less does it strengthen confidence in the electoral system. Apart from violating the constitutional prohibition to modify electoral legislation six months before the election (article 297), which arouses suspicion.

4. A schedule made of plasticine

Considering the principle of inalterability and legal security of the electoral schedule, this instrument should not be modified to avoid confusion about its content. In this regard, article 42 of the LOPRE establishes that the electoral schedule will contain the stages, acts, and actions that must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

The possibility of modifying the dates or any activity in the process is exceptional, but the CNE regime has made changes with absolute arbitrariness and recurrence, making the exception the rule. Precisely, among the changes made, the date of the drill that went from October 11 to 18, and then October 18 to 25, and the modifications of at least six audits, mostly related to software and voting machines.

The CNE also modified the deadlines and closing dates of the electoral registry, and of the application phase, the latter on three occasions due to the lack of definition that existed for the candidacies of the ruling party and the opposition, a situation that in turn brought with it the replacement of the dates for the modifications of candidacies.

And you, Venezuelan, how does it affect you?

The lack of neutrality of the Electoral Administration of entry does not favor the legitimacy of the parliamentarians, especially when a political option has been privileged, that is, that of the ruling party.

With these obvious irregularities that undermine the democratic system, it is impossible for Venezuelans to respond to the call to vote in an election where the idea of fraud gains more force on December 6.