

INTERNATIONAL PANEL OF INDEPENDENT EXPERTS TO OBSERVE THE ELECTION OF COURTS IN GUATEMALA

As a contribution to the democratic process and the strengthening of the rule of law in Guatemala, several international organizations promoted the creation of the **Panel of Independent Experts (PEI-GT, as per the acronym in Spanish)** to monitor the election of judges of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Chambers of the Courts of Appeals in Guatemala. The Panel will monitor the compliance with international standards, generate information on the development of the process and issue recommendations to the competent national bodies to encourage an impartial and objective evaluation based on the merits and capabilities of the candidates. This initiative joins national and international efforts that will observe this process and seek to promote citizen participation.

The Panel is completely independent, and does not answer to any international organization or particular interest. It is composed of three specialists with extensive international experience: **Antonia Urrejola**, Chilean lawyer, former President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (2021). She was Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile (2022-2023) and is currently a United Nations expert for Colombia; **Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez**, Mexican lawyer with more than 20 years of experience in the defense of judicial independence and the rights of migrants, currently a member of the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; and **Sidney Blanco**, Salvadoran academic and former judge, who was a member of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice between 2009 and 2018.

The Panel will visit the country on several occasions to closely follow the election, and will monitor aspects such as transparency in the process, the right of access to public

information, citizen involvement, and the application of tools to evaluate the merit and capabilities of the candidates. In addition, it will point out any obstacles, biases, discriminatory elements or factors that may facilitate corruption in the process' development. In order to carry out its work, the members of the Panel will meet with representatives of civil society, academia, indigenous people and other stakeholders, as well as the authorities of the three branches of government. The Panel will issue public statements and reports with observations and recommendations during the process.

This initiative is driven by international organizations with experience in this type of processes and that follow up on the situation in Guatemala: Fundación para el Debido Proceso (DPLF), Centro por la Justicia y el Derecho Internacional (CEJIL), Impunity Watch, Oficina en Washington para Asuntos Latinoamericanos (WOLA), Programa ACTuando Juntas Jotay, Plataforma Internacional contra la Impunidad, Be Just, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, Oficina para Mesoamérica de Protección Internacional, Guatemala Human Rights Commission, American Jewish World Service (AJWS), Fundación Luis von Ahn, Fundación para la Justicia y el Estado Democrático de Derecho, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and Civicus Global Alliance

This initiative will contribute to raising national and international awareness on the importance of the court election process to strengthen the rule of law in Guatemala.

To follow the panel's work:

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