

# **Electoral Observations in Mexico 2006**

**Final Report  
July 12, 2006  
Mexico City, Mexico**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

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Global Exchange is a non-governmental organization dedicated to supporting human rights and opposing war and military interventionism. Through its educational programs the organization aims to inform the public about international issues and the role of the United States in international affairs. Since its founding in 1988, Global Exchange has supported democratic processes by facilitating electoral observation teams in more than 12 nations, including El Salvador, Nicaragua, South Africa, Indonesia, Haiti, Mexico, and the United States.

In 1994 and 2000, Global Exchange organized the largest teams of international observers in Mexico. For the 2006 Mexican election cycle there were two electoral observation delegations: a pre-election team of nine members visited Mexico from June 3–12, and an election team of twenty-five members visited the country from June 27–July 7. These 2006 delegations are the ninth Global Exchange observation team to visit Mexico since 1994. This team worked with *Alianza Cívica*, the Mexican partner Global Exchange delegations have worked closely with since 1994.

The 2006 team is composed of observers from Canada, Japan, Mexico, and the United States. Its members have had extensive and wide-ranging experience in electoral observation, including observing elections in Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America and Asia. Their experience also includes reporting on Mexico since 1988, serving with official election observer teams since 1994, teaching university courses on Mexico, and writing academic studies on the country. Members of the Global Exchange Electoral Observer teams do not receive compensation of any kind for their participation. Their involvement is purely voluntary and is based on each individual's interest in and concern for democratic processes.

This report summarizes the findings of the Global Exchange group that was invited by Mexico's *Alianza Cívica* to observe the Mexican elections of July 2, 2006 in Mexico City and other selected locations. Our group received accreditation by the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) to aid in evaluation of the electoral process and to determine compliance with international standards of transparency, fairness, and accountability. Team members hope this evaluation will contribute to strengthening Mexico's democracy in this critical period.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

From 1929 until 2000, a single political party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), monopolized the Mexican political system. Through a series of reforms from 1987 to 1996, Mexico accomplished a dramatic transition from that one-party rule to a political system that is now characterized by the alternation of the presidency and shared legislative power. This electoral reform process included the drafting of new electoral legislation, the Federal Code of Electoral Institutions and Procedures (COFIPE) in 1990.

Under COFIPE, the organization and oversight of federal elections were removed from the Ministry of the Interior and placed instead in the hands of a new, autonomous public institution entitled the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE). The term for IFE councilors is seven years, and

current board's term will end on October 31, 2010. The Higher Chamber of Congress will nominate the next councilors, and they will be confirmed by a two-thirds majority in the Lower Chamber of Congress. The Electoral Tribunal (TRIFE) was also established under COFIPE as the top judicial electoral authority to resolve electoral disputes at the federal level or appeals of State Electoral Tribunal rulings. The Electoral Tribunal was created in 1996 and is composed of seven justices that serve ten-year terms. The terms of six of the seven current justices will expire in fall of 2006. The third electoral body, the Special Prosecutor for Attention to Electoral Crimes (FEPADE) was created as an independent branch of the Office of the Attorney General (PGR) to prosecute electoral crimes. In addition to establishing these electoral bodies, the new legislation mandated the distribution of government funds to political parties so that all parties could organize competitive campaigns. These changes opened the way for Vicente Fox of the National Action Party (PAN) to become the first modern president of Mexico from an alternate party.

While the establishment and early successes of the IFE put Mexico at the forefront of global democratic structural reforms, there remain some problems. When the General Council of the IFE was renewed by Congress in 2003, political arrangement between PAN and PRI representatives kept nominees of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) off the portion of the nine members General Council with voting rights. The PRD *does* have a non-voting representation on the board, but unfortunately this lack of truly plural vote and voice on the General Council has cost the IFE part of the broad trust it won after the 2000 election.

## **2006**

The 2006 presidential elections took place in a climate of social and political polarization. Mexican society has long been divided between socioeconomic extremes. Historically, this had led to bouts of civil protest and social unrest, as well as the political use of well-honed mechanisms of control. In 2006, these patterns are still evident: the electoral cycle has been marked by negative media campaigns, fraudulent activity, civil protest, and highly publicized police action. These factors have had noticeable effects on the electoral process and the continued consolidation of democracy.

The extensive use of television messages ("spots") with negative and sometimes personal content has also caused concern. One concern is that the negative advertising has obscured the content of proposed political platforms. Many citizens have expressed discomfort, frustration, and fatigue in the face of the ongoing mudslinging. Disputes over advertising content were taken up by the IFE and the TRIFE. In one case, the TRIFE banned television "spots" that it ruled inaccurately manipulated images and facts to portray candidate Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador as a "Danger to Mexico", overruling the IFE, which had given the green light to the same "spots".

The electoral period has also been marred by violence. In April, there was a lethal crackdown on striking miners in Lazaro Cardenas, Michoacán, that left two workers dead and more than forty injured. In early May, a massive security operation in San Salvador Atenco, Mexico State, led to the deaths of at least two protestors and the jailing of dozens more. Since May, tens of thousands of striking teachers have occupied the center of Oaxaca's state capital and their supporters have

carried out blockades and marches. In mid-June, the state police violently attacked these strikers in a failed attempt to dislodge them. These events have revived images of social conflict and state violence that many Mexicans thought they had left behind in the move to democratize the country.

Historically, high levels of both urban and rural poverty have made many Mexicans vulnerable to vote buying and subtle forms of coercion. The effect of social inequality on the electoral process is easy to imagine but hard to document. Poor and socially marginalized people are vulnerable to manipulation by those with benefits to offer, such as persons involved in the administration of publicly funded social welfare programs. Vote buyers may violate the secrecy of the vote at the ballot boxes in order to verify the votes of welfare beneficiaries. Although neither this delegation nor representatives of *Alianza Cívica* heard credible reports of systematic violations of vote secrecy at the ballot boxes, many poor Mexicans are said to feel honor-bound to keep their promises to vote a particular way, even when the benefits of such action are offered illicitly. In addition, since vote buyers can know the results at each polling place, they can threaten to cut off benefits unless a community produces a determined number or percentage of votes for their party. This places social pressure on welfare recipients to show “appropriate” gratitude for the benefits. Citizens who are victims of manipulation generally do not report such coercion, because their personal situations are precarious and the fraudulent transactions are—in their most immediate sense—“voluntary.”

According to research conducted by *Alianza Cívica* in the 2006 electoral cycle, a significant percentage of social program beneficiaries have been approached by persons who would condition receipt of program benefits upon electoral outcomes. (This research was presented at a press conference on June 29, 2006 and is available at [www.alianzacivica.org.mx](http://www.alianzacivica.org.mx), Observación del Proceso Electoral 2006. The results of *Alianza Cívica*’s research indicate that vote conditioning is done primarily by members of municipal governments who leverage federal state-funded programs. This implies that in close elections in areas with high degrees of socioeconomic marginality, bought or conditioned votes could produce a margin of victory in favor of those parties already in control of local governments. Sergio Aguayo and associates under contract with the Secretary of Social Development (Sedesol) reached similar results in their earlier research and made several concrete recommendations for reform. Despite this timely warning, only one program implemented the reform recommendations: *Oportunidades*, a \$3.2 billion per year program serving the needs of Mexico’s poorest citizens. Hence Mexico entered the 2006 elections with a greatly reduced, but still active impediment to free and equitable voter deliberation.

### **III. ELECTORAL ACTIVITIES**

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#### **Early June pre-electoral activities**

From June 3 through June 12, nine Global Exchange delegates conducted a pre-electoral visit to prepare for the larger delegation’s arrival the week of the federal elections. During the pre-electoral visit, delegates met with representatives of the Mexican government, political parties,

non-governmental organizations, journalists and Mexican citizens. They also met with council members of the IFE at the federal and state levels, and the director of *Oportunidades*.

After an initial stay in Mexico City, the team divided into groups, which visited outlying areas of the state of Mexico, Oaxaca, and San Luis Potosi. In these locales, team members visited areas that had experienced problems or conflict during past election cycles and interviewed representatives of political parties, government social programs, various non-governmental organizations, council members of local IFE offices, and *ejido* officials. The early June delegation published their findings in the report, *The Pre-Electoral Conditions in Mexico 2006*, which is available for download at <http://www.globalexchange.org/countries/americas/mexico/>.

### **Late June activities**

Global Exchange's second delegation arrived in Mexico several days prior to the federal election that took place on July 2, 2006. This delegation met with individuals representing a wide array of organizations, perspectives, and concerns. These included representatives of political parties, government programs, and the IFE, as well as journalists, non-governmental organizations, and citizens. Many of these activities were coordinated by *Alianza Cívica* and often included additional 21 electoral observers affiliated with other international partner organizations of *Alianza Cívica*. (See Appendix.)

### **OAXACA**

Seven Global Exchange observers, including 6 United States citizens and 1 Canadian citizen, observed the election in the state of Oaxaca. The group was composed of an attorney, a writer, a union organizer, a retired health educator, a teacher, a political campaign organizer, and a researcher. One member of the team had observed several elections in Latin America and other parts of the world. Another team member had followed previous Mexican elections closely as a journalist.

The team split into two groups. One was based in the Sierra del Sur in District 10. The other group went to District 6, to communities several hours outside of Tlaxiaco. The group that went to District 10 first went to Oaxaca City to coordinate with Marcos Leyva and his team at the NGO, Servicios para una Educación Alternativa EDUCA, (known as EDUCA) which is part of *Alianza Cívica*'s coalition. The group that went to District 6 first went to Tlaxiaco to coordinate with Rolando Gonzalez of the Centro de Derechos Humanos Ñu'u Ji Kandii, a local organization with ties to EDUCA.

The observers visited polling places in the communities San Juan Mixtepec, Miahuatlán, San Cristóbal Amatlán, San Agustín Mixtepec, San Luis Amatlán, San Pedro Mixtepec, Sitio de Xitlapehua, in District 10. In District 6, they visited San Andrés Cabecera Nueva, Yutecoso Cuauhtémoc, and San Lucia Ocotlan. In total, 13 Oaxaca polling places were visited.

Oaxaca is a state southeast of Mexico City that has a large indigenous population. When delegates from the Global Exchange pre-election evaluation team visited the state in early June, Mexican citizens told them that despite the federal shift away from a one-party state, the state of

Oaxaca still was under the overwhelming control of the PRI. The Oaxaca state government's response to recent teacher strikes has provided ample opportunity to examine the strong tensions still at play in many parts of Mexican society.

Current Oaxaca governor and PRI member Ulises Ruiz came into office in 2004, after he was declared the winner in a hotly disputed gubernatorial election. In May of 2006, when teachers began a massive strike seeking higher pay and more schools, among other demands, they gained widespread media attention and sympathy from both Mexican and international observers. Ruiz's government responded by ordering the use of police force and tear gas against the strikers. The strike and Ruiz's response have undermined what authority he still held and caused many social groups across the state to demand his removal from office. These circumstances created a tense situation on Election Day.

### **Inappropriate presence of party representatives**

In at least 3 of the total polling places visited by the Oaxaca team, observers noticed several PRI members stationed near or inside the polling station. In San Andrés Cabecera Nueva in District 6, the PRI affiliated municipal president, Efrain Cruz Bruno, was present at the polling place and several of his friends were stationed at the entrance and at the ballot boxes even though they did not have accreditation to be inside the polling place. Many of these unaccredited party members carried out the same functions as accredited party representatives and actively participated in the ballot counts.

In San Agustín Mixtepec in District 10, the delegation observed a PRI party representative who stood by the voting booth and took down voters' names. Voters then would come out of the voting booth without folding their ballots, making them visible to this PRI representative.

Observers in District 10 noticed that in a portion of the communities there were many PRI poll watchers and very few accredited representatives from other parties. For example, In San Agustín Mixtepec, only PRI party representatives were present until 5:00 p.m. when PRD representatives finally arrived. In San Andrés Cabecera Nueva in District 06, a history of conflict with the PRD likely prevented PRD representatives from coming, and the PAN representatives were very passive. In contrast, in nearby Yutecoso, the PRD party representative took on a leadership role in the polling location.

### **Vote buying**

Residents of San Pedro Mixtepec, in District 10, reported to local resident and EDUCA staff person, Crispín Fabian Mendoza, that the day before, PRI activists had been offering 100 pesos in exchange for PRI votes.

### **Inability to vote**

In the special voting booth in Miahuatlán in District 10, the supply of ballots ran out before 6:00 p.m. More than 100 would-be voters who were standing in line were thus denied the opportunity

to vote. In San Andrés Cabacera Nueva in District 6, the names of several voters with recent voting credentials did not appear on the voter list.

### **Location and boundaries of the polling station**

The delegation observed that almost all of the voting took place outdoors. In some instances, party members and citizens stayed the whole day inside the polling location to observe the voting process. In San Andrés Cabacera Nueva in District 6, the polling place was the Municipal Palace, and the location was clearly linked to the PRI affiliated Municipal President, Efrain Cruz Bruno. Cruz Bruno was present at the poll all day and often invited people back into his office and was seen giving sealed envelopes to some people in line.

### **Secrecy of the vote**

In many polling stations, folding of the ballots occurred at the ballot box table, compromising the secrecy of the vote. In San Agustín Mixtepec, the delegation observed a PRI representative who was taking down names of voters outside of the voter booth, and voters routinely left the booth without folding their ballots, making them visible to him. This is especially notable given reports that in San Pedro Mixtepec, the PRI had offered 100 pesos in exchange for votes.

In several locations, a voter was accompanied into the voting booth by at least one other individual who was not an IFE functionary, allegedly because of the voter's illiteracy. On at least one occasion, a man helping a woman to vote in San Andrés Cabacera Nueva in District 6 also consulted with a PRI party representative while inside the voting booth.

### **Lack of control during the count**

After the polling location closed in San Andrés Cabacera Nueva in District 6, the area was not cleared of non-accredited functionaries and party representatives. Even though an IFE staff person was present to help with the count, up to 18 people who were not accredited to be there actively counted and handled ballots, as well as decided which votes were null. In several instances in San Andrés Cabacera Nueva, a party activist that was not accredited to be a representative, tried to pressure the IFE staff person to interpret questionable ballot votes in favor of the PRI. This individual tried to grab ballots out of the IFE employee's hand during the count in order to put questionable votes in the PRI pile.

### **Party propaganda present at polling place**

In San Pedro, the PRI representative had a PRI manual for poll watching that had propaganda for PRI candidate Roberto Madrazo on the cover. The manual was placed visibly on the table where the functionaries gave out ballots and checked off voters. In Sitio de Xitapehua directly across from the polling place there was a wall painted with Madrazo propaganda.

## **Positive elements**

Although many of the functionaries were staffing polling places for the first time, they insured the process ran smoothly. They opened the polling place, dispensed ballots, closed the polling place, counted the votes, filled out the necessary documents, and prepared the ballots and documents to be transferred to the IFE district office.

## **SAN LUIS POTOSI**

### **Introduction**

The Global Exchange/*Alianza Cívica* election observation team present in the state of San Luis Potosí included six individuals. All US citizens, the team was composed of a graduate student, an employee of a local human rights organization, two university faculty members, a businesswoman, and a theater stage employee. Two members of the team had extensive election observation experience in Mexico, the United States, and other Latin American locales.

The team arrived in Ciudad Valles, the largest city of the Huasteca region, two days prior to the vote and met with Juan José Valdespino, the local *Alianza Cívica* representative. On Election Day, the observers divided into several teams and, in some cases, joined with Mexican observers in the following towns: Ciudad Valles, Tamuín, Aquismón, and Tampate. In total, 16 *casillas*, or polling places were visited.

Local citizens organized and executed an electoral process that can be characterized as largely free and secret. However, some delegation members received reports of intentional efforts to influence voting leading up to election day. This corresponded to local media reports. Furthermore, election observers noted several unintentional irregularities that led to difficulties at various *casillas* in the region.

### **Vote Buying and Other Reports of Vote Conditioning**

In Tampate, in the municipality of Aquismón, three locals told delegation members about the delivery of cinder blocks and other construction materials to local residents in the days prior to the election, allegedly with the objective of buying votes. These observers noted the presence of large amounts of these materials in the yards of area homes. These accounts from Tampate residents implicated the municipal PAN government. The July 1 edition of the local newspaper, *El Manaña de Valles*, reached a similar conclusion, reporting that, “Tons of siding and concrete blocks as well as other construction materials meant for municipal social programs were rerouted to support the candidacy of Antonio Martínez Guerrero, PAN candidate for the municipal presidency [of Aquismón].”

Other reports from Tampate residents mentioned that food, specifically *tortas* and bread, was being distributed to voters who were supposed to have voted for PAN candidates. Also in Tampate, an observer saw a woman driving a pickup truck loaded with people, dropping off those people in front of the polling station, waiting while they voted, and then loading them back into the truck. She was observed doing this at least five separate times. When asked what she



was doing, she volunteered that she was an active PRI member and that she was transporting voters who lived far from the polling station.

Exit poll workers in Tamaúín informed observers of overhearing a PAN representative discuss with voters the payment of 500 pesos in exchange for support of PAN candidates. The PAN representative in question was identified but no one was interested in sharing any other information.

### **Unintentional Voting Irregularities**

Delegation members noted several technical practices and procedures that led to slower or less secure voting in area polling places. For instance, the three *casillas especiales*, or special polling places, for the area, all located in Ciudad Valles, were dramatically under-prepared for the number of individuals lined up to vote. As a result, by early afternoon the special polling stations had run out of ballots and people were unable to vote.

The team also observed management deficiencies at several *casillas*. Opening and closing duties as well as counting and reporting at these locations were handled in an inefficient and impromptu manner, probably due to unfamiliarity with responsibilities and a lack of training.

Furthermore, *urnas estatales*, or state voting boxes, were deemed to be of poor quality. As they filled up throughout the day the sides of the boxes, which were not securely fastened, began to pop open thus exposing deposited ballots to potential tampering.

Finally, observers noted that the IFE (federal) voting booths were of poorer quality than the Consejo Electoral (state) booths. IFE booths did not provide adequate privacy which led to a less secret vote.

The team encountered one issue where intent could not be determined. In Tamaúín observers heard a complaint from an individual who was not allowed to vote because his name did not appear on the official roll at the *casilla* designated on his electoral credential. This was despite the fact that he had voted at the same place in previous years and had not changed residence.

### **ESTADO DE MEXICO**

The observation team working in the state of Mexico included eight people from 5 countries: the U.S. (4), Mexico (1), Spain (1), Japan (1), and Canada (1). It included two graduate students, a lawyer, two university professors, and a union worker. On election day, four members of the team went to Toluca, and four to Ecatepec. Another member of the delegation observed the election process in Chimahualcán.

#### **Ecatepec**

Ecatepec is located in the north of the Mexico City metropolitan area. Those who went to Ecatepec worked with Grupo Ecologista Sierra de Guadalupe A.C., and visited 13 polling places. On Election Day, the group spent about 30–60 minutes at each polling station observing

the electoral process. (Please see Appendix for details on the polling places visited.) The following five categories of irregularities and concerns, in order of priority, were the most frequently observed: (a) intrusiveness of political party representatives; (b) long waits at special polling places (*casillas especiales*); (c) disorganization of polling places; (d) presence of party banners and posters too close to polling places; (e) incorrect assembly and placement of ballot boxes.

### Chimahualcán

Four polling places were observed in Chimahualcán; events at two of those polling places will be described here. (At the two other polling stations representatives of several parties were present and no incident was observed.) At District 26, Seccion 1242 (básica), Chimahualcán, the Global Exchange observer, accompanied by two *Alianza Cívica* observers and a reporter for *El Proceso*, were told by Teresa García Gutierrez, an IFE employee, that she had been threatened by a local town councilor (*regidor*) named Héctor Javier Hernández Hernández. Teresa claimed that he had been proselytizing for the PRI in close proximity to the polling place. The observers noted that Hernández Hernández was accompanied by approximately 10 other people who all wore red shirts and identified themselves as PRI members. When asked, Hector denied being involved in *acarreo* or proselytizing improperly. Nevertheless, it was a very tense situation that caused the IFE authority to call for help. There was a verbal confrontation between the PRI members and the PRD members (of whom there were about seven), in which one of the *Alianza* observers intervened. While the observers were there, more IFE representatives arrived. Tension was considerably lessened before the observers left.

At District 25, Polling Station 1177, Chimahualcán, Estado de México, Sandra Patricia Mendoza, who identified herself as *representativa general* of Ruta 17 of the PRD, claimed to have personally witnessed party representatives from PRI buying votes in the morning for \$100 pesos in cash and a t-shirt. She indicated that Zoyla Martinez, who identified herself as a member of the PRI and promoter of social programs, denied having distributed money, saying that she was a public servant and she would not have done something like that. Martin Contreras, who identified himself as a teacher, was indicated as someone who had been organizing *acarreo* (the transport of large numbers of voters to a polling station in an effort to stuff ballot boxes), which he also denied. The Global Exchange Observer, however, witnessed that Señor Contreras received at least three sets of car keys from other party members who approached Martin as the observer was talking to him around 5:30 p.m. When Roberto de la Madrid (a representative for TeleMundo) arrived to interview the observation team, Martin Contreras began to film the observation group. When Martin was in turn filmed by the Telemundo crew he made a cell phone call describing the situation “Se está poniendo muy cabrón acá.” (“It is getting very rough here.”) Less than 10 minutes later two police patrol pick-up trucks full of officers arrived on the scene and asked the observers what was going on. Simultaneously a red helicopter (without other markings), which local people identified as a state government helicopter, began to circle the polling station at low altitude. After it circled four times it made a low pass above the polling place. The observers interpreted the filming, the arrival of the police, and the helicopter as intended to intimidate them.

## Toluca

The four observers who went to Toluca visited nine polling places in Districts 26, 27, and 34, which were located in Metepec, Mexicalzingo, Calimaya, and Toluca City. Among these different polling places two in Toluca City were “Casillas Especiales”, or Special Polling Places. The first ran out of ballots at 11 a.m., at which point poll officials sent voters to the second. At the second, ballots ran out at 5:55 p.m. while at least one hundred and fifty people were still waiting in line to vote. Those waiting to vote quickly became an angry mob, demanding their right to vote, and that the responsible person or institution be held accountable. The polling station president called the police, and prevented observers from fulfilling their duties until the crowds settled. Eventually, the crowds dispersed and poll activities were carried out as required.

The PRI was accused of buying votes by constituents of Mexicalzingo, where PAN and PRD supporters are minorities. At least one official of one *casilla* reported that a voter showed up with a different photograph than was shown on the voter list and was turned away. Another person said that a PRI member who is in charge of a welfare program took her voter registration card away from her prior to Election Day; she also said that this same official asked for five pesos every time she went to pick up her welfare rations. Polling places were changed without enough notice in Toluca City and Mexicalzingo. One newly placed polling place was pushed back in a crowded market corner without visibility and people were leaving without having their fingers inked on some occasions.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

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On the whole, the Global Exchange electoral observers were impressed with the hard work, good humor, patriotism, and commitment to democracy that we saw among polling-place officials, party representatives, police, the military, the IFE and Mexican citizens.

While progress has been made in developing and strengthening Mexican electoral institutions, it is evident that the country is still in the process of consolidating democratic practices. Electoral fraud in the form of coercion and vote buying continues to be a problem in many areas of Mexico. Structural weaknesses continue to impede the full transparency and accountability necessary for functional democracy. These also hinder the efficiency and efficacy of programs to educate and involve citizens in the electoral process.

We found that in 2006, as in past elections, the number of special polling places for citizens away from home was inadequate. It is beyond our capabilities to estimate the number of people effectively disenfranchised by this. However, it is hard not to be impressed by the patience and fortitude of the hundreds of people waiting in the hot sun for hours, or the anger of those then turned away for lack of ballots.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

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Considering the above observations of the 2006 electoral cycle in Mexico, the Global Exchange team of international observers recommends the following for the continuing improvement and consolidation of democracy in Mexico.

- Ensure sufficient ballots at existing special polling places, increase the number of special polling places and or lengthen the hours of operation.
- Ensure that only polling staff and authorized political party representatives take an active roll in the operation of polling places during the election and vote count.
- Clarify the electoral laws regarding vote-buying and voter coercion, the use of public resources, the jurisdiction of electoral authorities and other election issues.
- Strengthen the safeguards in federal social assistance programs to ensure that they are not used to influence voters inappropriately.
- Respond to citizen concerns regarding the high level of campaign spending counter-factual attack advertising, and the involvement of the current president of Mexico in campaigning for his party's candidates.
- Guarantee all parties with a major presence in the federal legislature a voting representative on the IFE General Council so as to ensure that the composition of the Council reflects the impartiality, nonpartisanship and prestige of the institute.
- Ensure that federal and state election authorities have the resources and obligation to investigate and respond to official election complaints in a timely and effective manner.
- Remove the FEPADE from the PGR to ensure its independence.
- Improve civic education programs regarding the process for filing complaints about election crimes and irregularities.
- Study the possibility of changing federal law to include runoff elections in the event that no candidate wins a majority in the first round of elections.
- Provide signage to indicate where polling places are located and where individuals should vote; these notices should be posted within sufficient time for voters to make arrangements to arrive at the polling stations.
- Guarantee workers time off from their jobs to vote.