

# Mexico parties to curb campaign hostilities

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**MEXICO CITY** - Mexico's political parties agreed Tuesday to respect the results of the July 2 presidential election and curb mudslinging to ease tensions ahead of the vote.

Seven of the country's eight political parties signed the agreement, which also asked President Vicente Fox, who has been accused of campaign interference, to refrain from commenting until after the Federal Electoral Institute has announced preliminary results.

This year's presidential race is one of the closest ever with Felipe Calderon of Fox's ruling National Action Party running neck-and-neck with leftist Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador of the Democratic Revolution.

Democratic Revolution representative Leonel Cota said the agreement "is one additional element that will give peace of mind to Mexicans so they can vote without fear."

"We will accept and defend the results," said Manuel Espino, representative of the National Action Party.

Candidates have stepped up their attacks as election day nears. Federal election officials recently ordered the top two candidates to pull campaign advertising that they deemed lodged unfair accusations.

Fox's 2000 victory ended 71 years of rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party, which was known for rigging the vote to keep control of the presidency.