

# Leftist Predicts Unrest Without Complete Recount of Mexican Election



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Andrés Manuel López Obrador at a rally of his supporters yesterday in the Zócalo, a square in Mexico City.

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MEXICO CITY, July 8 — While the announced winner of last Sunday's presidential election, [Felipe Calderón](#), kept a low profile on Saturday, his leftist rival led a rally of at least 150,000 people, charged the polling had been marred by fraud and suggested there would be civil unrest without a vote-by-vote recount.

"If there is not democracy, there will be instability," said the rival, [Andrés Manuel López Obrador](#), at a news conference just hours before he addressed his angry and defiant supporters in Mexico City's central plaza.

At 5:50 p.m., he took the stage in the Zócalo, the historic central square in front of the National Palace, to fire a broadside at what he described as an oligarchy of top-level politicians and businessmen.

"We are aware we are confronting a powerful group, economically and politically, that are accustomed to winning at all costs, without moral scruples," he told the crowd. He maintained that this group had "conspired against democracy" and that "they are the ones who now want to put a servant in the presidency."

Mr. López Obrador called on his supporters to march Wednesday from every electoral district in the country to the capital, an echo of his 1994 march from Tabasco to the capital to protest his defeat in the governor's race.

"Let it be clear, " he said. "This is a peaceful movement, and we will never fall for the provocations of our adversaries."

Mr. Calderón, of the conservative National Action Party, effectively ceded the day's spotlight to Mr. López Obrador. After he was announced the victor on Thursday by a narrow margin of 243,000 votes, he had begun to give hints about how he would approach issues like trade, globalization and dealings with the United States on [immigration](#). And on Friday he kept a whirlwind schedule of meetings and appearances.

But on Saturday, Mr. Calderón, the former energy minister, stayed out of the public eye.

Mr. López Obrador, the former Mexico City mayor and firebrand leader of the leftist Democratic Revolutionary Party, spent the day laying out his arguments for a recount and revving up his followers.

He said his opponent's supporters had resorted to fraud and vote-buying in northern states where the conservative party is dominant, like Jalisco and Guanajuato. He also said he had been the victim of a smear campaign on television and radio that far exceeded campaign spending limits.

He said that the Federal Electoral Institute should have recounted Sunday's ballots during the official tally. He pointed out that mistakes favoring Mr. Calderón were found in about 2,600 cases where officials did recount votes, when tally sheets were missing or contained errors.

He said he would present a case for recounting the votes to the Federal Electoral Tribunal on Sunday, and that he would also challenge the validity of the election before the Supreme Court, arguing that President Vicente Fox had interfered with it.

Later, he took his case to the people. Tens of thousands of angry and defiant people wearing his party's yellow colors and carrying banners and flags gathered in the Zócalo throughout the afternoon. They were young and old, unemployed and professional, dark-skinned and light-skinned, and they had traveled from places as far as the states of Michoacán and Tabasco.

Mr. López Obrador spoke for about 40 minutes, calling his adversaries traitors to democracy. The crowd chanted, "You are not alone."

Gloria Aceves, 63, had been waiting next to the stage since 9 a.m. Her husband died trying to cross the Rio Grande into the United States, she said, and she depends on a monthly grant from the city established by Mr. López Obrador, who championed the poor in his campaign. "If I have to die here," she said, "here I will die supporting him."

At his Saturday news conference, Mr. López Obrador declined to answer several times when asked what he would do if the courts refused a recount, saying he had faith the judges would order one. "Peace is the fruit of justice," he said.

"What are they afraid of?" he asked. "What is it they don't want to open the packets and count them again?" He added: "Why the hurry if we are talking about such a fundamental issue?"

On Friday afternoon, Mr. Calderón seemed confident that no legal challenge would stand up in court.

"My triumph is clear and definitive," he told a meeting of foreign reporters. "There are no legal elements that sustain the possibility of a complaint. In this election, the votes have already been counted, vote by vote, at the time they should have been counted, at the closing of the polls, as happens in all the world."

Mr. Calderón's campaign cited the volatile protests Mr. López Obrador led after his 1994 loss in arguing that he could be a danger to Mexico. And several political analysts have said that Mr. López Obrador's behavior since Thursday has proven Mr. Calderón right.

"What marks López Obrador's attitude is not the construction of democracy, nor the consolidation of his own political force, but an evident ambition for personal power," wrote Jorge Fernández Menéndez, an investigative journalist and political commentator. "If it was said that López Obrador was messianic, he is confirming it with each one of his acts since Sunday."

At the same time, in the daily newspaper *Excelsior*, José Antonio Crespo wrote in favor of a recount.

"If I were Felipe Calderón, I would try to legitimize my electoral victory," he wrote, to rob Mr. López Obrador's party of "its arguments for questioning my victory, narrow, but genuine."

After the results were announced on Thursday, Mr. Calderón and some of his aides began publicly addressing some policy issues. Arturo Sarukhan, a foreign policy adviser to Mr. Calderón, said Mr. Calderón intended to put Mexico at the center of the region's debate over globalization.

"We will lead the debate on how Latin America will keep competitive in the world, how to keep it from losing ground to Asia," Mr. Sarukhan said. "We have to figure out how to demonstrate to our societies that free markets, transparency and democracy really can deliver the goods for all."

Mr. Calderón would seem a certain ally for the United States, and political analysts have suggested that a Calderón presidency could signal an end to the advance of left-wing politics across Latin America, as neoliberal economic policies from Washington have fallen from favor.

On Friday, he said he would not seek to renegotiate agricultural clauses of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and that he would urge the United States and Canada to join with Mexico to create a fund for the construction of infrastructure and other development projects to generate jobs in high-migration states in Mexico.

"The solution to migration is not walls," Mr. Calderón said. "The only real solution to stop or slow the migration phenomenon is the generation of good-paying jobs."

Mr. López Obrador said that Mr. Calderón was wrong to begin assuming the role of president-elect before the results of last Sunday's contests had been upheld in court. And he objected to the congratulatory messages that had been sent to Mr. Calderón from the United States, Spain and Canada.

He said it was all part of a strategy by Mr. Calderón to end a process that was not yet over.

"They want to turn the page, but things are not that way," Mr. López Obrador said. "This is just started."

### Ex-President Wins Genocide Ruling

MEXICO CITY, July 8 (AP) — Genocide charges were dropped against former President Luis Echeverría on Saturday when a judge ruled that the statute of limitations had expired, his lawyer said.

The lawyer, Juan Velazquez, said that the federal judge had overturned a June 30 house arrest order on the charges, which stemmed from a 1968 student massacre.

The decision was the latest blow to prosecutors' efforts to charge the Mr. Echeverría, 84, with the deaths and disappearances of dozens of students and leftist dissidents in the late 1960's and early 1970's, a period known here as the dirty war.