

# Calderon already working on new gov't

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**MEXICO CITY** - The top vote getter in Mexico's presidential election said Monday he has begun working on his new government, even though the country's electoral court has yet to declare a winner in the disputed race.

Conservative Felipe Calderon, of President Vicente Fox's ruling National Action Party, led official returns from the July 2 election by about 244,000 votes - just 0.6 percentage points. However, under Mexican law he cannot be declared president-elect until an electoral court deals with challenges to the vote.

The party of the runner-up, leftist former Mexico City Mayor Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, has filed an 836-page appeal alleging ballot stuffing, illicit government and corporate intervention and other irregularities.

The National Action Party has filed its own challenges, seeking to stretch Calderon's advantage.

But Calderon, who briefly served as Fox's energy secretary, said Monday the country can't sit dormant pending a decision from the court, which must rule on the election by Aug. 31 and declare a president-elect by Sept. 6.

"Mexico doesn't have time to waste and that's why I'm working intensely to initiate my government, the government the people wanted," Calderon said during a meeting with religious leaders in Mexico City.

He said he began naming a transition team and is planning a nationwide tour of Mexico to prepare for his presidency. Mexico's constitution limits presidents to a single six-year term, and Fox leaves office Dec. 1.

Calderon's comments came a day after more than 300,000 Lopez Obrador supporters jammed the capital's central plaza, spilling down a nearby avenue for at least 1.5 miles. Chanting "Vote by vote!" they backed the former mayor's calls for a manual re-count of an election he says was stolen from him by fraud.

It was the second massive Mexico City rally in support of Lopez Obrador in two weeks, and the former mayor promised to convene another demonstration later this month.

Calderon repeated promises to build a coalition government that could unify a nation divided by the closest election in its history. Calderon received about only 37 percent of the vote in the five-way race, according to official tallies.