

# Mexican leftists push for vote recount

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**MEXICO CITY** - A top adviser to the leftist candidate in Mexico's presidential vote said Monday the election should be annulled unless there is a full recount, arguing that conservative Felipe Calderon won't have a mandate strong enough to govern otherwise.

Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador sent a letter to Calderon urging him to support a re-count while his supporters continued their increasingly combative protests, blockading the entrance of the Mexican stock exchange before marching to the residence of President Vicente Fox. Stock trading was not affected.

The protests aim to pressure Mexico's Federal Electoral Tribunal to order a re-count of all 41 million ballots cast on July 2, and thereby resolve allegations of fraud involving the ballot box tally sheets. Those sheets - and not the votes inside the boxes - were tallied up in the official but still uncertified count that put Calderon ahead by less than 0.6 of a percentage point.

"I think that an illegitimate president won't be able to govern. It's better to correct this by declaring the elections invalid," said Arturo Nunez, one of those representing Lopez Obrador's Democratic Revolution Party in court appeals.

Lopez Obrador's advisers said Monday they won't be responsible if protesters turn violent.

"On our part, we have asked that the civil resistance be peaceful, but this group of citizens are organizing on their own and doing their own activities," said Lopez Obrador adviser Claudia Scheinbaum.

Over the weekend, Democratic Revolution spokesman Gerardo Fernandez warned of "radical actions" and "very hard confrontations" ahead.

The protesters have been targeting Mexican businesses to pressure business-friendly Calderon to endorse a re-count.

Mexican stocks opened higher Monday and rose every day last week after a string of six losses based on lingering uncertainty about the July 2 election.

Calderon has said the vote was fair and that there is no legal basis for a recount.

Mexico's Federal Electoral Tribunal alone decides whether to recount, annul or confirm the vote. The court has until Aug. 31 to make a decision.

Lopez Obrador has claimed that the federal elections agency openly supported Calderon and miscounted votes to help him win.

The president of the Election Tribunal, Luis Carlos Ugalde, said the charges were unfounded and could weaken "the central institution of Mexico's democracy."

Fox's spokesman, Ruben Aguilar, said that politicians should leave the tribunal alone and let it rule in the case. "Laws can never be negotiated; they are applied."