

Mexican Candidate Says Civil Disobedience Will Continue

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MEXICO CITY, Aug. 6 — The leftist candidate for president vowed Sunday to take the daily mass demonstrations supporting his demand for a full recount of the results in last month's presidential race to the courthouse where a special electoral court had denied his request.

Speaking to thousands of supporters in the capital's central square, the candidate, [Andrés Manuel López Obrador](#), shied away from calling for more belligerent acts of civil disobedience — like seizing the city's international airport or shutting down major highways — as some of his supporters had expected.

Instead, he told his supporters to prepare themselves for a long, drawn-out battle with the government, a fight “to defend democracy.” He suggested that he would carry on his protest even after the electoral tribunal — which on Saturday turned down the demand for the recount — makes its final decision and certifies the president-elect in September.

Besides taking their protest to the courthouse, in the southern part of the city, on Monday, he and other members of the left-wing Party of the Democratic Revolution were planning to form a human chain along miles of the capital city's central avenue, Paseo de la Reforma.

An official tally last month showed that Mr. López Obrador, who champions the cause of the poor, had narrowly lost the race, by 243,000 votes of 41 million cast, to the conservative candidate, [Felipe Calderón](#), who has the backing of business leaders.

Mr. López Obrador, 52, has charged that there were enough irregularities and, in some instances, fraud, to warrant a complete

recount. But on Saturday, the seven-member electoral court that must ratify the results said he had not proved widespread fraud. The court rejected his request and instead ordered a partial recount in about 12,000 polling places, fewer than 10 percent of the total, where there were irregularities.

On Sunday, Mr. López Obrador, the former Mexico City mayor, called on his supporters to press the seven-member tribunal to “rectify their decision.”

“I am not a vulgar opportunist,” he told the crowd, “nor am I obsessed with power, but we cannot stand by with crossed arms in front of this attack on the citizens.”

With the help of allies in the city government, Mr. López Obrador and his allies have already closed Paseo de la Reforma for several miles, covering it with tents and protest camps. The people staffing those camps say that Mr. López Obrador has convinced them that the government orchestrated a huge fraud to keep him out of office.

Isabel Lozano, a 46-year-old homemaker from Naucalpan, just north of the capital, is typical of many of the protesters in the camps, who have created a cult of personality around the figure of Mr. López Obrador.

“My husband doesn’t want me to be here,” she said. “He says Andrés Manuel is crazy, but I don’t believe it, and what I think is that this is a fraud in which everyone is involved, even the magistrates of the tribunal that robbed us yesterday. I’m going to be here for as long as Andrés Manuel tells me to, even if my husband divorces me.”

Mr. López Obrador has also taken pains to discredit the news media, painting reporters as part of the conspiracy against him. One reporter, Heliodoro Cárdenas of the newspaper Milenio, was roughed up by bodyguards when he tried to ask the candidate a question on Sunday. Mr. López Obrador saw the incident but did not acknowledge or stop it.

Later Mr. López Obrador told the crowd that the media had decided to anoint Mr. Calderón. “Don’t worry about the lynching going on in the media, in which they talk badly about me and our movement,” he said.