

A final ruling

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MEXICO CITY - (AP) -- Mexico at last will have a final decision today on its disputed July 2 presidential race, with the nation's top electoral court expected to declare ruling party candidate Felipe Calderón president-elect.

But the long-awaited ruling by the Federal Electoral Tribunal -- which comes two months, three days, and tens of thousands of pages of legal challenges after voters cast their ballots -- is unlikely to end potentially explosive uncertainty gripping the country.

Most court rulings so far have favored Calderón, who has a 240,000-vote advantage over leftist rival Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

"We are very calm, very sure," Juan Camilo Mourino, who heads Calderón's transition team, said on Monday. "Tomorrow, Felipe Calderón will be president-elect."

During an early morning session today, the seven magistrates of the Federal Electoral Tribunal will give their final count in the election and decide whether it was valid. While they have the power to annul the election, nothing indicates they plan to do so. The court's decision cannot be appealed.

López Obrador, who stepped down as Mexico City mayor to run for president, already has said he won't accept a ruling against him and is moving forward with plans to establish a parallel government.

"The court is going to say 'The election was valid and Calderón is the president and that's the end of it,'" said political analyst Oscar Aguilar. "But that won't turn the page. That won't end anything."