

Misión de Observación Electoral/Electoral Observation Mission

MOE Colombia

Second report on 2026 National Congress and Presidential Primary Elections

- *The electoral day proceeded normally. A total of seven voting stations in five municipalities across three departments were relocated during the day due to weather conditions.*
- *MOE reiterates its strong call to political organizations regarding their ethical responsibility in granting party endorsements and urges them to strengthen their candidate selection processes.*
- *Since the beginning of the electoral day, MOE has received 449 citizen reports of electoral irregularities from 151 municipalities across 22 departments. Citizens are reminded that any electoral irregularities can be reported through www.pilasconelvoto.com or via WhatsApp at +57 315 266 1969.*

Bogotá D. C., March 8th, 2026. The Electoral Observation Mission (MOE) presents its second report on the 2026 National Congress and Presidential Primary Elections, with information updated as of 3:30 p.m. on election day.

Following the detention of 71 individuals in 38 cases involving the seizure of cash, MOE calls on political organizations to strengthen their candidate selection processes and to uphold their ethical responsibility when granting party endorsements, noting that such practices are unacceptable in a democratic system.

The organization also notes that, although Colombia traditionally publishes electoral results quickly through the preliminary count, additional oversight and control measures were implemented for these elections, which may result in a longer timeframe for the publication of results than usual. In this context, MOE calls on the National Registry Office of Colombia to maintain the transparency demonstrated throughout the process and encourages citizens to remain calm while awaiting the release of the preliminary results.

Observation indicates that the electoral day has proceeded normally, with only a few isolated incidents reported across the national territory.

Key insights are:

1. Impacts on the Electoral Day due to weather conditions

Due to the rainy season affecting the country, 27 voting stations have been relocated. Seven of these were relocated earlier today: five in the department of Cauca, in the municipalities of Caldono, López de Micay, and Corinto, and one in Antioquia, in the municipality of San Andrés de Cuerquía. During the afternoon, an additional voting station was relocated in the municipality of San José del Palmar, in the department of Chocó.

These relocations affected at least 77,559 registered voters.

2. Public order incidents

The rural voting station of Santa Cruz, in San Antero (Córdoba) was eventually opened around 2:00 p.m., after morning protests prevented its normal opening.

Additionally, in the municipality of Turbaco (Bolívar) citizen blockades have prevented voters from entering. MOE requested the presence of delegates from the Public Ministry to address the situation and allow the normal operation and closing of the voting station, as well as the vote counting process.

3. Candidates detentions

The Attorney General Office (Fiscalía General de la Nación) reported the arrest of two candidates during election day. One arrest is linked to alleged irregularities associated with electoral crimes, while the other relates to an ongoing legal case involving corruption allegations.

4. Political parties reports

Closing the electoral day, new reports were submitted by political parties such as MIRA and Pacto Histórico regarding difficulties for electoral witnesses to access voting stations due to failures in the platform of the National Electoral Council. In some cases, witnesses appeared registered in voting stations or municipalities different from those for which they had been accredited.

In this context, MOE calls on the authorities at voting stations —particularly delegates from the National Registry Office— to verify the identity of electoral witnesses and facilitate their entry, guaranteeing the oversight exercise they perform, especially during the closing of the voting stations.

Meanwhile, political organizations such as Centro Democrático and the Significant Group of Citizens Imparables reported that misinformation persisted throughout the day regarding the ballot for the Presidential Primary Elections. It should be noted that similar situations have occurred in previous processes; therefore, clearer and more timely guidelines should be issued in future

consultation processes to juries regarding the delivery of information and electoral materials to voters.

5. Pilas con el Voto

The Electoral Observation Mission has made available the website www.pilasconelvoto.com and the WhatsApp line +57 315 266 1969 as channels for citizens to report possible irregularities during the electoral day.

As of 3:00 p.m., 449 citizen reports of possible electoral irregularities and offenses have been received from 151 municipalities across 22 departments and Bogotá, as well as eight reports from elections abroad.

Operation of voting stations, juries, witnesses, and observers

In 39% of reports, citizens identify failures in procedures by some voting juries, such as the incorrect delivery of electoral ballots, the use of cell phones during the electoral process, or their absence at certain stations.

Cases were also reported in which some citizens refused to undergo biometric identification. These situations occurred mainly in Bogotá, Ibagué, Cartagena, Tumaco, Santa Rosa de Viterbo, and Medellín.

Electoral propaganda irregularities

30% of the reports correspond to cases related to the distribution of campaign materials during the electoral day, the presence of political advertising near voting stations, acts of political campaigning accompanied by symbols associated with candidacies, and the installation of campaign headquarters near voting stations.

Complaints were also recorded regarding the misuse of personal data and campaign messages via text messages. These reports are mainly concentrated in Bogotá, Pereira, Morales, Popayán, Ibagué, Medellín, and Valledupar.

Irregularities affecting voting freedom

Finally, 26% of the cases correspond to possible violations of voting freedom. Reported situations include alleged pressure on voters, or attempts to influence voting choices.

Some reports mention cases in which citizens—or even electoral witnesses—accompany voters into the voting booth to mark or verify their vote. Other situations involve voting juries encouraging voters to support a particular candidate or delivering more than one ballot per person.

There are also reports of possible cash distribution near voting stations, as well as cases in which voters take photographs of their ballots, a practice that could be used to verify voting choices for payment purposes.

The places with the highest number of reports in this category are Cartagena, Bogotá, Cali, Ibagué, Barranquilla, and Manizales.

6. Electoral observation with differential approaches

According to information collected by the observation team focused on trans people and people with disabilities, as well as reports submitted through Pilas con el Voto, the following situations were identified:

- MOE received reports from trans persons who faced difficulties while exercising their right to vote in Tunja, Barranquilla, Cartagena, Soledad, Medellín, and Cali. These difficulties were mainly related to the identity verification process in biometric authentication systems, where system information corresponded to a previous identity.
- Through Pilas con el Voto, 19 reports were received concerning physical and architectural barriers that made it difficult for persons with disabilities to vote, as well as the absence of voting booths with accessibility measures.

These situations indicate shortcomings in the implementation of the Trans Voting Protocol and the Protocol for the Assistance of Persons with Disabilities, that must guarantee the right to vote under conditions of equality, accessibility, and non-discrimination.

MOE therefore calls to strengthen, in future elections, the training of electoral authorities, as well as the effective implementation of these protocols.

With voting stations now closed, MOE calls on authorities, electoral witnesses, and voting juries to carry out their duties in accordance with established protocols and with the rigor required to safeguard our democracy.

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