

Senate candidacy of Evo Morales in peril as electoral tribunal considers ineligibility



La Paz, February 19 (RHC)-- Bolivia's Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) reported Wednesday that it has not yet made a final decision on any of the 13 candidates that have cases against them for disqualification.

"The TSE must state in a public way that it continues in the process of analysis and evaluation of all the disqualification demands that have been presented in court," the President of the TSE Salvador Romero said at a press conference, adding that "no decision has yet been made on any candidacy."

This comes as several local and international news outlets reported that the electoral body disabled the candidacies of former President Evo Morales and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Diego Pary. The Indigenous leader has been nominated as the senator for Cochabamba and Pary to the same seat but for Potosi.

The Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), however, anticipated the "defense" of its candidates, so it will meet the following hours to analyze the situation, as it would "be a political decision and that it is a sign of the beginning of a planned fraud."

While Morales' attorneys, Raul Gustavo Ferreyra, Eugenio Raul Zaffaroni and Baltasar Garzon suggested that if declared ineligible they would take the case to the Inter-American Human Rights System (SIDH).

"The Court's decision has a clear political bias since all polls indicate that Morales would be the senator with the highest votes and probably the next president of the Senate," the MAS party said.

Last week, the TSE barred 365 candidates for the next presidential and legislative elections, allegedly for failing to comply with legal requirements. According to the electoral body, the Front for Victory party (FPV) has the highest number of disqualifications, with 205 candidates declared unfit to run; followed by MAS with 57, the right-wing Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN) with 44 and the National Action Party of Bolivia (PAN-BOL) with 36.

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