

For a judicial system that is close to the people



By María Josefina Arce

Mexico experienced a special day. In an unprecedented event, citizens voted directly for some district judges, regional magistrates, and Supreme Court of Justice ministers — the highest court in the country. The rest will be elected in 2027.

These elections are the result of the judicial reform approved last September, which aimed to create an honest and people-oriented system.

They are an essential element of the legacy of former president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who led the nation from 2018 to 2024.

This has been maintained by the current president, Claudia Sheinbaum. In her inaugural speech when she took office last October, she expressed her desire to put an end to corruption in the judiciary.

A recent opinion poll revealed that 72% of respondents considered the judicial election necessary in the face of a corrupt system, where justice is accessible only to those who can afford it, and where many judges have been corrupted by criminal groups.

According to official data quoted by the Prensa Latina news agency, there have been almost 200 decisions by judicial bodies favouring or attempting to benefit criminals through transfers, releases and definitive discharges between last year and this year.

Another phenomenon affecting Mexico's judiciary is nepotism. Many reached their positions because of family ties and not because they had participated in a judicial career.

Of course, the process has not been free of campaigns against them. The president herself rejected the false versions that have sought to impose a negative opinion among the citizenry.

Sheinbaum denied that these were rigged elections, organized so that a political party could take over the Supreme Court of Justice.

The day passed in tranquility, described as historic by Sheinbaum, who emphasized that the people decided, exercising one of their fundamental constitutional rights, that of participating in their destiny.

From now on, new challenges open up, but a great step has been taken to bring justice closer to the people and stop being elitist.

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