

## HONDURAS

**Date of Elections:** 24 November 1985

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament on the normal expiry of the members' term of office.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The unicameral Parliament of Honduras, the National Congress, consists of 134 Deputies elected for 4 years. This total was raised from 82 prior to the 1985 elections.

### **Electoral System**

All 18-year-old Honduran citizens except prisoners, persons convicted of crime, the incompetent and members of the armed forces are entitled to vote. Qualified electors at least 21 years of age may be elected as Deputies. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with a number of public posts, high-ranking positions in State institutions and the status of government contractor within six months of the elections.

Deputies are elected in the proportion of one Deputy and one substitute for every 35,000 inhabitants, or fraction over 15,000. Alternate Deputies fill vacancies which arise between general elections.

### **General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

The election date was set on 20 May 1985. The legislative polling was held simultaneously with that for President of the Republic and the country's 284 mayors and municipal councils.

The campaign started in August 1985 and closed on 18 November. Leading candidates in the presidential race were Mr. Leonardo Rafael Callejas of the opposition National Party (PN) and Mr. Jose Azcona del Hoyo of the Honduran Liberal Party (PLH). Both groups were divided into rival factions that fielded separate candidates for President. The main issues concerned the country's ailing economy, corruption in public life and, in foreign affairs, relations with neighbouring Nicaragua. On these questions, there was little policy difference between the two main candidates, both regarded as conservatives.

Polling day proceedings were witnessed by teams of international observers, and were marked by a generally peaceful and massive voter turnout. Under new and somewhat controversial election rules, the winner in the presidential race would be the leading candidate of the party that received the most popular votes rather than the individual personally obtaining the most. Thus, Mr. Azcona was declared the winner (the four PLH candidates

capturing a combined total of 51% of the vote to the three PN's 45%) even though Mr. Callejas himself won 42.6% to Mr. Azcona's 27.5%. In the legislative contests, 63 seats of the newly-enlarged Congress' 134 were won by Mr. Callejas' supporters, 46 by Mr. Azcona's **PLH** faction and 21 by other PLH groups.

On 27 January 1986, Mr. Azcona was sworn in for the four-year presidential term; his Cabinet, also entering into function the same day, included two PN members.

**Statistics**

*1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats  
in the National Congress*

Number of registered electors. . . . .	1,900,000	(approx.)
Voters. . . . .	1,597,841	
Blank or void ballot papers. . . . .	55,963	
Valid votes. . . . .	1,541,878	

Political Group	Number of Seats
Honduran Liberal Party (PLH) . . . . .	67*
National Party (PN). . . . .	63**
Innovation and Unity Party (PINU)	2
Christian Democrat Party (PDC) . . . . .	<u>2</u>
	134

\* Of which 46 to Mr. Azcona's faction and 21 to two rival factions.

\*\* Seats won by supporters of Mr. Callejas.