

Political and Electoral Dynamics: Honduras 2025



Executive Summary

The 2025 general elections in Honduras, scheduled for November 30, 2025, represent a pivotal moment for the nation's political stability. This white paper examines the electoral dynamics, focusing on the March 2025 primaries and the upcoming general elections. Widespread distrust in the political class prevails, with many Hondurans expressing a preference for entirely new leadership and reluctance to vote for existing candidates. The primaries exposed logistical failures and allegations of bias within the Consejo Nacional Electoral (CNE), fueling protests and accusations of manipulation favoring the ruling Libertad y Refundación (Libre) party. The influence of partisan collectives, historical electoral controversies, and ideological polarization heighten the risk of post-election unrest, potentially extending into 2026. Despite Nasry Asfura leading in polls, followed closely by Salvador Nasralla and Rixi Moncada, the tight race and public disillusionment underscore the need for transparency and peace to ensure a stable democratic transition.

1. The Importance of Engaging Hondurans Abroad

Hondurans living abroad, particularly in the United States, are a critical voting bloc due to their economic contributions through remittances, which accounted for 27% of Honduras' GDP in 2022, the highest rate in Latin America and the Caribbean. The impending termination of Temporary Protected Status (TPS), affecting approximately 72,000 Hondurans, is expected to lead to increased deportations by September 2025, potentially reducing remittance flows that constitute 85.3% of total remittances from the U.S. Candidates must propose policies to ensure prosperity from remittances and support the reintegration of returning migrants through initiatives like job creation and social programs, as outlined in the government's 2022-2026 plan, which emphasizes economic reactivation for returning women migrants. Failure to address these issues risks alienating the diaspora, whose networks and financial contributions can significantly influence electoral outcomes.

2. Electoral Dynamics and the Role of the CNE

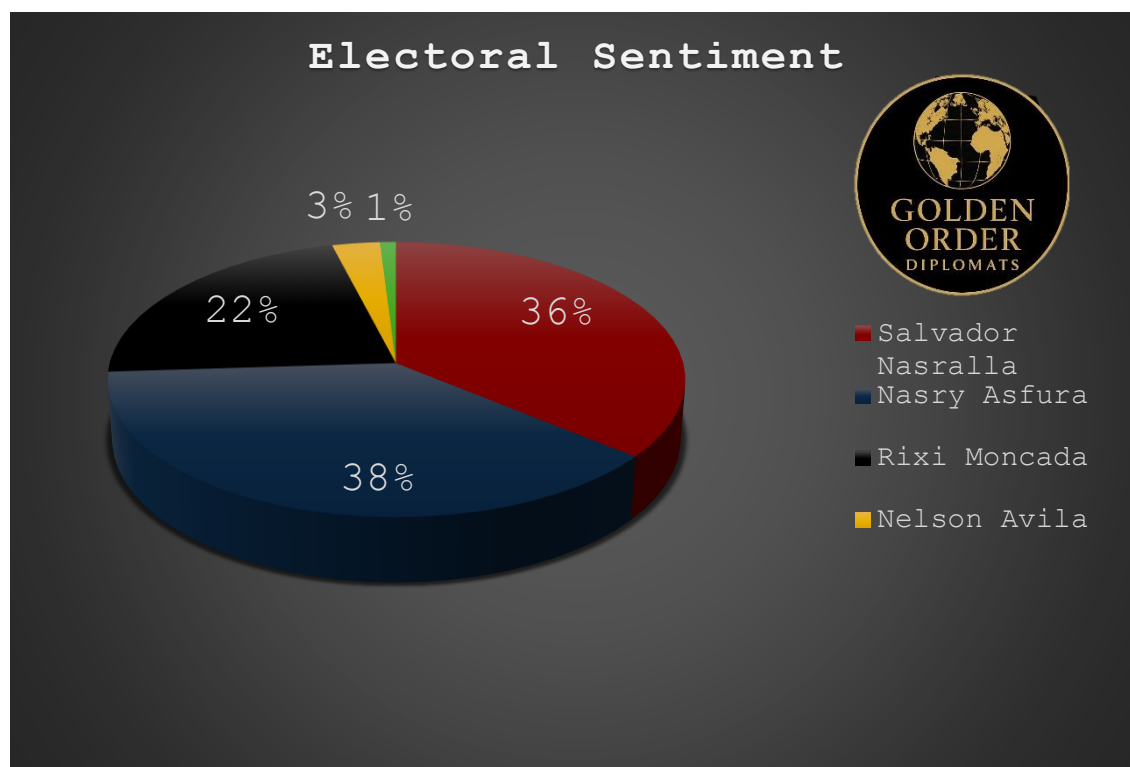
The Consejo Nacional Electoral (CNE) faced significant scrutiny during the 2025 primary elections, held on March 9, 2025. Delays in delivering electoral materials, attributed to logistical failures by the Armed Forces and the CNE, sparked protests and accusations of bias toward the ruling Libertad y Refundación (Libre) party. Critics, including National Party leader Tomás Zambrano and Liberal candidate Jorge Cálix, alleged a “boicot” to favor Libre's candidate, Rixi Moncada, who also serves as Minister of Defense, raising concerns about her influence over the military and electoral processes.

The CNE's decision to modify the Transmisión de Resultados Electorales Preliminares (TREP) system, eliminating human verification of inconsistent ballots, was controversial but approved by consensus. Actions by Libre-affiliated collectives, such as blocking access to CNE facilities during the TREP bidding process in July 2025, were condemned as attempts to manipulate the electoral process, with CNE president Cossette López labeling them “an attack on the

electoral process." These incidents echo the 2017 elections, where delays and irregularities led to widespread protests, highlighting the CNE's ongoing challenges in ensuring transparent and efficient elections.

3. Candidate Standings and Electoral Sentiment

Public distrust in politicians is pervasive in Honduras. Many citizens feel that the current political class has failed them, with a significant portion of the population expressing a preference for entirely new leadership. Polls indicate that the majority would prefer not to vote for any of the existing candidates. Despite this sentiment, Nasry Asfura (National Party) leads as the frontrunner, followed closely by Salvador Nasralla (Liberal Party), with Rixi Moncada (Libre) in third. Nelson Ávila (PINU-SD) and Mario Rivera (Democracia Cristiana) trail in fourth and fifth, respectively, with minimal chances of victory. The tight race between Asfura and Nasralla underscores the importance of the independent vote, estimated at 40% of the electorate, which could sway the outcome.



Do to others as you would have them do to you.



4. Potential for Post-Election Protests and Ideological Polarization

The 2025 elections carry a high risk of post-election unrest due to ideological polarization and historical precedents. The ruling Libre party, led by Xiomara Castro and aligned with progressive ideologies, has faced accusations of emulating authoritarian regimes like Venezuela and Cuba, particularly due to concerns over electoral manipulation and the influence of collectives. The July 2025 blockade of CNE facilities by Libre-affiliated groups heightened tensions, with critics arguing that such actions undermine electoral integrity.

The 2017 elections, marred by allegations of fraud, led to violent protests, and similar dynamics could emerge in 2025, particularly if results are contested. Libre's strong organizational capacity and mobilization of collectives raise concerns about potentially violent protests that could extend into 2026, especially if Moncada loses. The opposition, particularly the National and Liberal parties, has also contributed to polarization through aggressive rhetoric, with 109 documented incidents of political violence, including threats and assaults, reported between September 2024 and June 2025.

5. Lessons from Past Elections and the Role of Collectives

The 2025 primaries highlighted logistical and political challenges that could resurface in the general elections. Protests during the primaries, including tire burnings and road blockades in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, were driven by delays in electoral material distribution. Libre-affiliated collectives played a significant role, with actions like the July 2025 CNE blockade drawing condemnation for intimidating opposition parties and undermining electoral integrity. These groups, while claiming to defend democratic processes, have been criticized for exacerbating polarization and disrupting electoral operations.

The influence of collectives reflects a broader trend of ideological division, with Libre's progressive agenda drawing comparisons to

Venezuela's Chavismo. The opposition's accusations of a "Plan Venezuela" to manipulate elections further fuel tensions, increasing the likelihood of post-election unrest. These dynamics underscore the need for robust electoral oversight and de-escalation strategies to prevent a repeat of past violence.

6. Recommendations for a Peaceful Electoral Process

To mitigate the risk of protests and ensure a peaceful transition, candidates and institutions must prioritize:

Transparency and Accountability: The CNE must strengthen electoral oversight, addressing logistical failures from the primaries and ensuring robust verification processes. International observers, such as the OEA, should play a proactive role in monitoring compliance to enhance credibility.

Engaging the Diaspora: Candidates should propose concrete policies to support returning migrants and leverage remittances for economic growth, addressing the concerns of Hondurans abroad to secure their votes and influence.

De-escalating Polarization: Candidates should focus on substantive policy proposals rather than personal attacks, as urged by analysts like Padre Melo. Media outlets must foster respectful debate and counter disinformation to reduce tensions.

Strengthening Security Measures: Authorities must prepare for potential protests while respecting human rights, avoiding heavy-handed tactics seen under past states of emergency to prevent escalation of violence.

7. Conclusion

The 2025 Honduran elections, encompassing the March primaries and the November general elections, are a critical test for the nation's democracy. Widespread distrust in the political class, with many Hondurans favoring new leadership and expressing reluctance to vote for current candidates, underscores the challenges facing the electoral process. Nasry Asfura leads narrowly over Salvador Nasralla, with Rixi Moncada trailing, but the tight race and historical controversies heighten the risk of post-election protests, potentially violent, that could extend into 2026. The CNE's logistical failures and the influence of Libre-affiliated collectives, combined with ideological polarization, threaten electoral integrity. Candidates and institutions must prioritize transparency, diaspora engagement, and de-escalation to ensure a peaceful democratic transition that rebuilds public trust and stabilizes Honduras.

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