

## Elections, but no democracy in Guatemala, ... again

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/elections-but-no-democracy-in-guatemala-again>

- Below: Common Dreams article

Over the next months, Rights Action will cover the “elections” in Guatemala, that will, once again, legitimize a repressive, military-backed, ‘open for global business’ regime as a “democratic allie” of the U.S. and Canadian-led “international community”, including the World Bank and many global businesses, banks and investors.

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### **Guatemalan Tribunal Bars Leftist Presidential Ticket From Ballot One expert said the decision to disqualify Indigenous human rights defender Thelma Cabrera is an “electoral coup.”**

By Jake Johnson, COMMONDREAMS, February 5, 2023

<https://truthout.org/articles/guatemalan-tribunal-bars-leftist-presidential-ticket-from-ballot/>



Guatemalan candidate for Movimiento para la Liberación de los Pueblos party

Guatemala's Supreme Electoral Tribunal ruled earlier this week that a leftist presidential ticket headed by Indigenous human rights defender Thelma Cabrera should be barred from the June ballot, prompting fury and vows of mass protests from Cabrera's supporters.

Thursday's ruling — which Cabrera's young political party, the Movement for the Liberation of the Peoples (MLP), is vowing to appeal to the Supreme Court of Justice — stems from Guatemala electoral authorities' refusal to certify the candidacy of Cabrera's running mate, former human rights ombudsman Jordán Rodas.

Reporting [indicates](#) that election officials have justified stonewalling Rodas — a [longtime target](#) of Guatemala's right-wing political establishment — by citing supposed “anomalies during the collection of compensation” upon his departure from the ombudsman post last year.

### **Electoral tribunal approves candidacy of daughter of former U.S.-backed genocidal General Efraín Ríos Montt**

But Cabrera and Rodas contend that the electoral tribunal's decision is a politically motivated attempt to keep a left-wing party — whose base is largely rural — off the ballot, which is set to include the daughter of Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt, the former [U.S.-backed](#) Guatemalan dictator who was [convicted](#) of genocide and crimes against humanity in 2013. Montt's victims were [largely Indigenous peasants](#).

MUNDUA :

## Guatemala veta a la candidata indígena y avala a la hija de un dictador

El Tribunal Supremo Electoral ha rechazado la candidatura del MLP, integrada por la líder indígena Thelma Cabrera y el exprocurador de los Derechos Humanos Jordán Rodas, argumentando «duda con alguna documentación» del segundo, mientras da luz verde a Zury Ríos, hija del dictador. Se anuncia recurso ante un «evidente fraude».

Asier VERA | CIUDAD DE GUATEMALA

«Nosotros somos los empobrecidos, los sufridos y estamos aquí en defensa del futuro de nuestros hijos», clama un hombre indígena frente al Tribunal Supremo Electoral (TSE) de Guatemala. Junto a él, cientos de personas llegadas de distintos territorios del país marbolan la bandera del Movimiento para la Liberación de los Pueblos (MLP) y denuncian en carteles el «fraude, la mafia y la corrupción».

Trataban de presionar, sin éxito, para que el Pleno del TSE aceptara la inscripción del binomio conformado por la candidata indígena Thelma Cabrera y el exprocurador de los Derechos Humanos Jordán Rodas para la Presidencia y Vicepresidencia, respectivamente. Los simpatizantes del MLP amenazaban, incluso, con tomar el Aeropuerto Internacional de Guatemala, así como el



Protesta del MLP ante el Tribunal Supremo Electoral, en Ciudad de Guatemala. Asier VERA SANTAMARÍA

cuarto lugar. Perteneciente a la etnia maya mam, se ha convertido para sus simpatizantes en la única alternativa al «tado fallido» en el que aseguran que se ha convertido Guatemala, merced a la corrupción endémica que condena a la pobreza a ocho de cada diez indígenas.

Tras la decisión del TSE no inscribirles, plega su candidatura, por lo que Rodas adelanta a GARA que presentará en los próximos días un amparo ante la Corte Suprema de Justicia y, si es necesario, recurrirá ante la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos para revertir la decisión de un «evidente fraude».

La hija de Ríos Montt tras el MLP lucha en los tribunales para poder participar en el proceso electoral, el cual tuvo ningún reparo en permitir como candidata a la Presidencia a Zury Ríos, hija del dictador Efraín Ríos Montt, fallecido en 2018 y que

“Guatemala vetoes Indigenous candidate, approves daughter of a dictator”

Last month, the same electoral body that deemed Cabrera and Rodas disqualified from the June ballot [ruled](#) that Zury Ríos can participate, despite a constitutional provision barring the relatives of coup leaders from serving as Guatemala’s president. Ríos was [blocked from the 2019 presidential ballot](#) on those grounds.

That year, as Nick Burns of Americas Quarterly recently [reported](#), Cabrera “gave the Guatemalan political establishment a shock” by winning 10% of the vote in the presidential election.

“It was the most successful presidential run by an indigenous person in Guatemala’s modern history — the only other was by Nobel Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú in 2007, who won 3% of the vote,” Burns noted.

“Cabrera’s biography is striking. She grew up in a Maya Mam family of poor laborers on a coffee plantation on Guatemala’s Pacific coast and was married at

15. She described in a book how she and her sister Vilma went to school through the sixth grade because their mother — who could not read or write — saw education as crucial.”

Cabrera’s supporters have vowed to “paralyze the country” with large-scale demonstrations if the electoral body’s decision isn’t reversed.

“If they do not do it, we are going to take over the international airport, the three ports of the country, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, and all state institutions,” said one MLP supporter. “We are Indigenous, we are Maya, and we can be out here for a month!”

Daniel Zovatto, a political scientist and expert in Latin American elections, [said](#) the tribunal’s ruling against the MLP presidential ticket amounts to an “electoral coup” that “vitiates the integrity and credibility” of the upcoming contest.

Rodas, a [human rights champion](#), lamented in response to the decision that “democracy in Guatemala has taken another step back.”

“They are afraid of the people and their sovereign decisions,” he said.

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### **Elections, but no democracy in Guatemala, ... again**

Ever since the U.S. orchestrated the military coup in 1954 that ousted Guatemala’s last truly democratic government, there has been a succession of elections, but no democracy.

The June 2023 “elections” charade in Guatemala will serve the same purpose, legitimizing the corrupt, repressive rule of the traditional economic, military and political elites, justifying the full political, military and economic relations that the U.S. and Canadian-led “international community” maintain with the “democratically elected” government and business elites of Guatemala.

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