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Interview with the President of the National Electoral Council of Ecuador Diana Atamaint



The Press Office of the Global Campus of Human Rights had the opportunity to interview the President of the National Electoral Council of Ecuador, Diana Atamaint, during her participation in our first Training

on Electoral Technical Assistance.

As President of the National Electoral Council of Ecuador, how would you define the importance and relevance of your role and work?

The electoral function in Ecuador has to comply with a huge responsibility with democracy and democracy is strengthened when this electoral function earns the trust and credibility in the political class and in the Ecuadorian society. It is a huge task and a very big challenge in which we have taken the first steps to go towards that goal and we count on the support of Academia. On the one hand for its role in compliance with the Ecuadorian society with international cooperation which acts as voices and as independent technical external observation that helps a lot in making decisions and on the other hand finally also works very closely with the political organisations that are the protagonists. In this sense, the electoral authority must have the openness and the political will to be able to generate this great network of support, responsibility and co-responsibility that the different actors must have. In that sense I believe that this administration is convinced that the electoral authorities have taken the right decisions are made and we see with great satisfaction that reciprocal collaboration is established between all actors.

You have provided your experience as an example for the participants of the Electoral Technical Assistance Training, a course that aims to train future professionals in the field of electoral observation and technical assistance to enhance the democratisation processes. What is your opinion on this type of educational and skills development initiatives?

I am convinced that the responsibility of carrying out transparent elections generates trust by the citizens is a role of the electoral function but it is not exclusive because it is a responsibility of the State and of the different actors and sectors of a country such as Academia that has an important role with this type of education and training courses because you cannot look the other way but to get involved in the democratic processes like also journalism or mass media sectors that have the responsibility to be part of the information. We now see how they threatened the democratic processes with fake news and with disinformation. Likewise another fundamental factor are the political organisations with fulfilling their role in the formation of new leaderships. Because we are talking about a situation of responsibility or co-responsibility of the different sectors, who could be in a better position of an ally than Academia with an offer of trainings to prepare the citizens who get involved with an academic understanding of what democratic processes mean and why not say the elections to elect authorities at different levels. That in turn will not only serve the country where they are promoting this type of formal education but I see it also for the possibility of expanding the exchange of experiences that is added to the decision-making and in this case in the whole Latin American region considering the involvement of the Academia to be fundamental.

In your role as President of the Electoral Commission and as a woman in this position, how would you describe the situation in Ecuador?

It is a situation of great challenge for us Ecuadorian women and women from the region because we are seeking more and more to democratise these spaces where decisions are made and seek a full validity of democracy as we have said beyond speech phrases. Because if we do not involve women in these processes or in these decision-making spaces, we can even say that without women and without young people democracy is not complete and there is no democracy. So by assuming these important roles we who claim these rights of historical exclusion cannot miss this opportunity to generate public policies and consensus among civil society. The role of the National Assembly, the civil society, the academia is to promote public policies and we have to work more in that direction and unfortunately I am going to say by using the force of law to go democratising these spaces to allow that women and young people to have a more leading role in the decision-making. For me personally has been a historic opportunity in which I have been able to take advantage of every minute of every day that I have been with this responsibility and we

have had a favorable response from the international cooperation of the Academia and also from the political class to go working, maturing and strengthening our democratic system.

Could you give a message to the students, professors, experts, alumni and staff of the 100 Universities that are part of the Global Campus of Human Rights network?

Thank you for the opportunity. I do not like to give advice, but maybe a message. First, I congratulate you all for this decision to have taken to study and look to investigate issues that have to do with the responsibilities of strengthening democracy and your involvement. Because we have a responsibility to carry out the less developed countries in the strengthening of their democracies. It is not only the elected authorities in function responsibility but as I said before it is the co-responsibility of the civil society, the Academia, the political parties, the different unions and that it will do a lot of good if the students have now taken that decision to study in the classrooms and analyse cases seen in the different countries is fundamental. But I recommend something else: later you have to go out into the territory of real life and you have to make decisions either as observers to accompany and learn in the different countries about electoral processes or also the other way around and risk making the decision to think about being candidates to be elected authorities that countries greatly need to refresh politics, to change its face, to have the soul and the spirit of women and youth. I believe that the first step is the one that the students have taken now which is fundamental, then others steps will be challenges to get involved and to get out of the classroom. We say from the desk to the territory, from the classroom to the field in real life to put into practice everything you are doing and studying right now.

For more information contact our [Press Office](#)

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