

## **Honduras: Congress Votes In Favor Of Firing Supreme Court Of Justice Chief**

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Late Aug. 28, members of the Honduran Congress voted in favor of firing Oswaldo Ramos, chief of the Supreme Court of Justice, on the condition Ramos fails to resign within an eight-day period. The vote followed two months of investigations by a congressional committee on charges of corruption in managing judiciary funds, failure to apply sanctions as specified under Honduran law against persons accused of embezzlement affecting state-run enterprises, and involvement in political activities prohibited under the constitution. The committee report and with it, the resolution to dismiss Ramos, was approved by 117 of 128 members of Congress. Seven deputies, described as Ramos supporters, voted against approval, and four members abstained. Ramos claims the committee's report is the result of a political "witch hunt," since he has taken the lead in polls for the ruling National Party's next presidential candidate. General elections are scheduled for November 1993. Rodolfo Irias, president of the Congress, is also a contender for the nomination. Meanwhile, deputies participating in the investigative committee who pertain to all political parties represented in the Congress say they have confirmed the judge's political activities. The nation's constitution sanctions such activity with removal of the offender from the Court. Committee members have also said an audit by the Comptroller General indicates that Ramos authorized about \$200,000 in spending beyond the limit of the budget he controls as Court chief. In addition, they said, he issued bad checks, resorting to use of unauthorized funds. Ramos declared the congressional resolution "illegal," and said he would respond in writing to charges appearing in the committee report within the next few days. (Basic data from ACAN-EFE, AFP, 08/29/91)

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