

Mexican Supreme Court put limits to the government to authorize games of chance

The position of the Supreme Court of Justice about the Law of Games and Draws took an unexpected turn: it opened the debate on its legality and showed the possibility that the licenses granted might be invalidated.

Last Monday, Minister Olga Sánchez Cordero, in charge of the project, expressed its support to the regulation issued in 2004 by ex president Vicente Fox, which gave the power to the Government Secretary to grant licenses for up to 25 years, to instal remote betting centers, horse racetracks, greyhound racetracks, etc.

The minister just rejected the fact that the law brings the control to the SEGOB regarding scratch-games or instant lottery, because she said that those draws are exclusive from National Lottery. Yesterday, however, there were contradictions in its thesis, according to Minister Sergio Valls Hernández, and a statement against the regulation, from Minister Genaro Góngora Pimentel. At last, the ministers delimited the power of the Government Secretary.

After the debate, it was reaffirmed that games of chance are banned in Mexico. The only exceptions established in Article 2, Fraction 1 are: chess, checkers, dice, bowling, billiards, ball games, car, animal or people races, and all kind of sports.

Tomorrow, they will debate on the unconstitutionality of the rule, promoted by the House of Legislators, under the reason that the rule was put beyond the General Law and saying that the government interfered in its sphere of influence.

When treating the two partial points of the project, the Court concluded that the SEGOB “has the power to regulate, authorize, control and surveil all kind of draws (included the instant ones) performed by any person, organ or entity, except those held by the Lottery”.

Minister Olga Sánchez proposed the unconstitutionality for infringing regulations regarding the intellectual property. “It is not an exclusive faculty of the Lottery to perform the instant draws, as the project affirms. Those draws are not registered under its domain, either”, commented minister José de Jesús Gudiño Pelayo.