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López Obrador sweeps all before him to dominate Mexican politics

Andrés Manuel López Obrador has done it at the third time of asking – and in some style. After two narrow defeats in 2006 and 2012 he won a coruscating victory on 1 July. Not since Miguel de la Madrid in 1982 had a Mexican presidential candidate won with a margin of more than 30 percentage points over his closest challenger. And not since 1997 has an incoming president's coalition won a majority in both chambers of Mexico's federal congress. This will allow López Obrador to advance his legislative agenda without hindrance from the opposition. The established party political system was turned upside down, with all of the country's traditional parties sustaining huge electoral setbacks. The most striking was the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), which suffered its most calamitous defeat since its formation in 1929.

López Obrador won as much as 53% of the vote, ahead of Ricardo Anaya of the Left-Right Por México al Frente coalition with 22% and José Antonio Meade of a PRI-led coalition on just 16%, according to the preliminary results released by the national electoral institute (INE). López Obrador won in 31 of Mexico's states, with Guanajuato, taken by Anaya, providing the sole exception. He won as many as 13 of these states with over 60% of the vote, including the northern states of Baja California and Baja California Sur, where Anaya had expected supporters of the right-wing Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) would carry him home. López Obrador peaked in Tabasco, his native state, with 80% of the vote.

López Obrador's disparate Juntos Haremos Historia (JHH) coalition, comprising his left-wing Movimiento Regeneración Nacional (Morena), the Partido del Trabajo (PT), established in 1990 by Maoist activists, and the conservative evangelical Partido Encuentro Social (PES), won 218 of 300 seats in direct elections to the federal lower chamber of congress. In 2015 Morena won just 36 seats, increasing to 47 with defections.

By extrapolating from the latest figures released by the INE it looks like the JHH will have 303 seats in the 500-seat lower chamber after the 200 seats elected by proportional representation are assigned. This would be a thumping majority. It would even put López Obrador within reach of the two-thirds majority of 334 needed to pass constitutional reforms. It is the same story in the 128-seat senate, where the JHH is on course to secure a comfortable majority with 70 seats.

Trump calls

Andrés Manuel López Obrador had phone conversations with US President Donald Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on 2 July. López Obrador is committed to the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta), although like Trump he favours revisions. Intriguingly, López Obrador tweeted that during the “respectful” conversation with Trump they had discussed a “comprehensive agreement on development projects which will create jobs in Mexico, and with it, reduce migration and improve security”. Trump also referred to this “separate deal” between the two countries during remarks in the White House, without providing any further details.

Morena also secured its first state governorships, winning five of the nine gubernatorial elections held concurrently, including the Ciudad de México (CDMX) and Veracruz, Mexico’s third most populous state. And it won majorities in 19 of the 26 state congresses where elections were staged (including Hidalgo which had only ever been controlled by the PRI), meaning that López Obrador will be calling the shots at federal and state level.

This ‘carro completo’ (literally ‘complete car’, a phrase used to describe the PRI’s sweeping victories in the past at all levels of elections) is a remarkable feat given that López Obrador only set up Morena shortly after his defeat in the 2012 presidential elections. This carro completo rubbed salt into the wounds of the PRI, which was eviscerated at all levels.

PRI annihilated

The PRI might have been able to shrug off Meade’s poor showing at the presidential level if it could have remained a formidable force in congress as it did in 2000 after its seven decades of executive power came to an end. Not by a long chalk. The PRI alone won 203 seats in the lower chamber in the last congressional elections in 2015. This time around, even with its allies Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM) and Partido Nueva Alianza (Panal), it looks like mustering just 63. This huge reverse was replicated in the senate elections. The PRI and its two allies look set to win just 20 senate seats. To compound its problems, the PRI suffered the unprecedented ignominy of failing to win a single state governorship, out of the nine up for grabs, an outcome which leaves the party controlling an all-time low of 12 of Mexico’s 32 states.

The PRI party president, René Juárez Cisneros, said the defeat called for a period of “profound reflection”. The PRI will not be alone. Por México al Frente fared little better and it is likely to collapse amid mutual recriminations. The coalition championed by Anaya, comprising the PAN, and the left-wing Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) and Movimiento Ciudadano (MC), did not capture the public imagination. The coalition looks like securing just 140 seats in total in the federal lower chamber of congress and 38 in the senate, although this is more than twice as many as the PRI and its allies. The coalition also won three state governorships – Puebla, Guanajuato, and Yucatán (the latter in a narrow victory over the PRI) – while the MC won a fourth, Jalisco.

PAN and PRD pummelled

Anaya’s personal ambition drove a rift in the PAN, forcing Margarita Zavala to leave the party and run as an independent (before withdrawing from the contest in the face of López Obrador’s unassailable lead). Anaya shot to prominence on the back of successful PAN-PRD alliances at state level in defeating the PRI but, in the wake of his chastening defeat, he now looks like a busted flush and it is unlikely the experiment will be repeated at a national level.

Heads will roll in the inquest into the PAN’s performance but the party will survive. The same cannot be said with the same degree of confidence about the PRD. A painful post mortem awaits. The PRD lost three of its electoral strongholds – Morelos, Tabasco, and CDMX – to Morena in the gubernatorial elections. The loss of CDMX will be a bitter pill to swallow. The PRD had enjoyed a stranglehold on power in the capital. As part of the Por México al Frente alliance, the PRD party president, Alejandra Barrales, ran for election in CDMX but she finished well behind Morena’s Claudia Sheinbaum, an environmental engineer, who becomes the first elected female head of government. There must be a concern within the PRD that the party will haemorrhage further support to Morena in the coming weeks, leaving it at risk of being subsumed.

Votes

Aguascalientes	AMLO	186,858	39.1%
Baja California	AMLO	662,963	63.1%
Baja California Sur	AMLO	117,842	63.3%
Campeche	AMLO	166,328	61.1%
Coahuila	AMLO	461,329	44.2%
Colima	AMLO	165,861	57.3%
Chiapas	AMLO	1,024,832	61.9%
Chihuahua	AMLO	423,985	42.9%
Ciudad de México	AMLO	2,562,027	57.2%
Durango	AMLO	230,149	46.4%
Guanajuato	Ricardo Anaya	780,396	40.7%
Guerrero	AMLO	792,274	63.3%
Hidalgo	AMLO	687,148	60.7%
Jalisco	AMLO	1,122,111	41.3%
México	AMLO	3,379,051	54.4%
Michoacán	AMLO	793,559	50.2%
Morelos	AMLO	499,784	66.3%
Nayarit	AMLO	231,199	65.9%
Nuevo León	AMLO	511,807	33.7%
Oaxaca	AMLO	991,204	65.3%
Puebla	AMLO	1,347,699	57.4%
Querétaro	AMLO	343,094	41.5%
Quintana Roo	AMLO	310,073	66.7%
San Luis Potosí	AMLO	395,514	42.0%
Sinaloa	AMLO	621,809	64.2%
Sonora	AMLO	426,866	59.6%
Tabasco	AMLO	720,198	79.9%
Tamaulipas	AMLO	569,005	48.0%
Tlaxcala	AMLO	305,615	69.3%
Veracruz	AMLO	1,666,144	54.1%
Yucatán	AMLO	302,483	39.7%
Zacatecas	AMLO	299,368	47.8%

With the country's three traditional parties vanquished, and none of them looking equal to the task of providing a firm opposition to López Obrador, his chief concern will be that tensions within his coalition could emerge between more moderate centrist factions and left-wing radicals. Given his dominant position, López Obrador will also need to guard against perceived authoritarianism, of which his detractors have long accused him. Many are predicting that the conciliatory, statesmanlike, pragmatist of the campaign, buoyed by his congressional majority, will transform into the dogmatic, messianic, populist of previous campaigns.

Fourth transformation

López Obrador sought to allay any concerns on this front during his victory speech in the Zócalo when he urged "the reconciliation of all Mexicans", and promised to overcome polarisation. In response to the charge of being an autocrat in democratic garb, López Obrador said he would deliver not a dictatorship but "real democracy".

After meeting President Enrique Peña Nieto in the national palace on 3 July to discuss the five-month transition period before he assumes power on 1 December, López Obrador promised to be "respectful" of the autonomy of the central bank, Banco de México, and to preserve macroeconomic stability. A day later, López Obrador met Juan Pablo Castañón, the president of the powerful business association Consejo Coordinador Empresarial (CCE), which had openly opposed his candidacy. Both men spoke glowingly of each other after the meeting, saying that it had established mutual confidence.

But López Obrador also had a message for supporters concerned he will go back on his promise of radical reform. He promised to deliver "Mexico's fourth transformation" after Independence, Reform, and Revolution (1810-1920). He said his main objective would be to end corruption and impunity, the causes of inequality and violence. Eradicating corruption is the cornerstone of his proposed "Republican austerity" which, together with stamping out wasteful government expenditure, seeks to fund his ambitious social development and welfare programmes.

2006



2012



2018



'Little protests' spreading

Seven weeks after the re-election of President Nicolás Maduro in polls widely seen as fraudulent, the country's political and economic crisis shows no signs of subsiding. With opposition parties still in disarray, the political vacuum has been filled over the last two weeks by waves of localised protests over public services and economic issues.

A lot of small disputes have spread in various urban centres. On 4 July public health workers completed 10 days of uninterrupted protests demanding improved wages and better staffing levels. Nurses from the Hospital Universitario de Caracas (HUC) led a demonstration demanding higher wages (in the first five months of the year consumer prices are estimated to have increased by 1,995.3%). In this hyperinflationary context there are widespread shortages of basic foodstuffs and medicines.

There were also demonstrations by health workers in up to 26 Caracas hospitals and in the states of Táchira, Lara, Mérida, Zulia, and Bolívar. Nurses are currently paid between BF600,000 and 120,000 every fortnight. Depending on which official exchange rates are used, at the high end this is roughly between US\$5.00 and US\$12.50. They also complain that the hospitals themselves often lack water, electric power, and medicines.

On 2 July, local residents complaining over the lack of water and public transport cut off streets in various neighbourhoods in Caracas. In La Candelaria and San Bernardino in west Caracas, residents said some households had not had running water for three months. They added that Hidrocapital, the state-owned water company, had met them but could only offer "excuses". There were also protests in Baruta. In Chacaito, in the eastern sector of the capital, roads were blocked to support demands for cheaper and better public transport.

According to the transport union Comando Intergremial de Transporte, up to 90% of the capital's buses are currently out of service due to the lack of spare parts, which are either too costly or simply unavailable. The government has responded by reorganising bus routes and using cargo trucks to carry passengers (in Caracas these are known as *perreras*).

Other protests over wages have involved employees at the state telecommunications company CANTV and at electric power distributor Corpoelec. The Association of University Lecturers has floated the idea of a one-day general strike to protest over what it described as deteriorating living and labour conditions in the country.

Opposition divisions

The protests come at a time when the opposition to the government is once more divided and demobilised. The Mesa de la Unidad Democrática (MUD), which successfully called for a boycott of the presidential elections in May, and is still the largest opposition group, lacks a policy for engaging with the street protests.

The MUD's main members, political parties such as Primero Justicia (PJ), Acción Democrática (AD), Voluntad Popular (VP), and Un Nuevo Tiempo (UNT), are caught up in an inward-looking internal debate over how the coalition should be structured and who should be its executive secretary. A

Military invasion?

US President Donald Trump mooted a military invasion of Venezuela last year, according to a report published by Associated Press on 4 July, citing anonymous sources. On several occasions last year, the report claimed, Trump met then Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and National Security Advisor HR McMaster to discuss the possibility of military intervention in Venezuela. The report claims that McMaster was instrumental in talking him out of it. The report is a boon for President Maduro who argues that it confirms his accusations of foreign-backed military plots to topple him.

Civilians in military courts

Venezuela's human rights NGO Foro Penal claimed last week that as many as 803 civilians had been tried in military courts in the country since 2017. Foro Penal singled out the most recent case of a medical student, Ariana Granadillo, who has been arrested three times in recent months, most recently by the investigative police (Cicpc) on 23 June in the western state of Táchira. She was put before a military court two days later, accused of military rebellion. Her 'crime', according to Foro Penal, was staying in the home of Colonel Oswaldo García Palomo, who is suspected of involvement in a military plot to topple President Maduro, while completing her studies.

spin-off from the MUD, the Frente Amplio Venezuela Libre (FAVL), including a range of civil society organisations, has also been unable to connect effectively with the street protests.

María Corina Machado, a hard-line opposition leader, set up a rival front called Soy Venezuela, which aims to include not only political parties but also civil society organisations, in September 2017. And then there is Henri Falcón, a dissident Chavista who stood against President Maduro in May's elections. Falcón has created another anti-government coalition known as Concertación por el Cambio. Members of this group include Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), the social-Christian party Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente (Copei), and Movimiento Ecológico (ME).

Venezuelan sociologist Héctor Briceño, from the Caracas-based Centro de Estudios del Desarrollo (Cendes), says the MUD's strategy of boycotting May's elections, which received wide international support at the time, has turned out to be a bigger problem for the opposition than for the government. "What it ended up doing was atomising the opposition. And that's where the opposition now finds itself, without the capacity to call a simple street demonstration, or agree who should be its spokespersons," Briceño argues.

Briceño pointed out that the international community does not now know who to talk to in Venezuela. "Should it talk to the largest anti-Chavista alliance, the MUD, which has almost ceased to exist? Or to the current [UNT] president of the national assembly, Omar Barboza, or his predecessor Julio Borges [PJ]? Or to María Corina Machado and [imprisoned VP leader] Leopoldo López, the anti-Chavista leaders most opposed to a dialogue with the government? Or with the presidential candidates in May's elections?"

Everyone gets promoted

On 2 July the Venezuelan armed forces (FANB) announced a massive series of promotions, with no less than 16,900 members moving up to the rank above. The process has not concluded as further promotions – for generals and admirals – are also expected to be announced.

According to Defence Minister General Vladimir Padrino, the promotions were to recognise loyalty to the head of state, President Nicolás Maduro, and were also the result of a "rigorous" intellectual and physical assessment process, different and more inclusive than the old "capitalist meritocracy".

An alternative reading was that the promotions were intended to reward the rank-and-file for supporting the government, and to threaten it for any display of opposition sympathies. In the run up to May's elections there had been various reports of anti-government activity and possible conspiracies within the FANB [[WR-18-25](#)]. According to the opposition-controlled national assembly, 152 members of the FANB were arrested and are still being held.

Immediately after the elections, in a speech on 24 May, President Maduro demanded that all members of the military should sign an oath expressing personal loyalty to him. According to Rocío San Miguel, head of the lobby group Control Ciudadano para la Seguridad, Defensa y Fuerza Armada, FANB members who refused to sign the oath of loyalty were immediately taken off the promotions list. Those who did not sign faced the possible termination of their military career. She described the oath of personal loyalty as a degree of politicisation of the armed forces that is prohibited in the Venezuelan constitution.

Retired General Juan Antonio Herrera Betancourt said the oath of loyalty was an attack on the professionalism of the FANB. "Nicolás Maduro must be worried," Herrera said. "There are massive murmurings within the armed forces about the state of the country and about personal and family conditions. The institution is being affected and that explains the number of arrested officers."

ELN peace talks face difficulties**Continuing incidents**

At least eight Colombian marines were injured by an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated on a highway in the south-eastern department of Valle del Cauca, the navy said on 4 July. The navy attributed the attack to the Ernesto Che Guevara front of the ELN. Separately, according to media reports, there was a massacre in Argelia, in the department of Cauca, where seven corpses were discovered. The ELN denied responsibility, suggesting the killings may have been the work of criminal gangs or right-wing paramilitaries.

Representatives of the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) guerrilla group and the Colombian government began a new round of peace talks in Cuba on 2 July. Making progress will be difficult. Each phase of the talks (this is the sixth round) has lasted five weeks, meaning that this one will overlap with the presidential transition on 7 August, when Iván Duque will succeed Juan Manuel Santos as head of state. Duque is widely seen as wanting to drive a tougher deal in any peace settlement.

As the talks started the ELN issued a series of statements emphasising the difficulties ahead. The government side has been less forthcoming, possibly because the outgoing and incoming presidents are in the process of trying to coordinate their positions on how to deal with the ELN.

The net result is that for the moment there is an ongoing deadlock. The ELN will not agree to a new ceasefire until it gets some concrete commitments from the government side. The government will not give any commitments until the ELN stops its military operations and its abductions. As often is the case, there is a struggle over who should move first, and how.

In its public statements the ELN accused the government side of refusing to accept international humanitarian law (rules to limit the effects of armed conflict) and of rushing to judge the nature of military incidents without first submitting them to an agreed monitoring and verification process. This is relevant since the government has suspended talks previously in response to attacks by ELN guerrillas.

The ELN's list of demands also includes more effective government action to prevent violent attacks on community leaders in conflict areas (over 100 have been assassinated in the last year). As part of any truce the ELN wants the government to respect local referenda on mining projects and to promise not to privatise state-owned oil pipelines (ironically, these are the pipelines which the ELN has systematically been blowing up over the years).

The ELN is clearly focused on anticipating the position of President-elect Duque. In an article written as a guest columnist for the national daily *El Espectador* on 29 June, the chief ELN peace negotiator, 'Pablo Beltrán' (Israel Ramírez Pineda), summed up the guerrilla group's concerns about Duque.

"Every time he [Duque] is asked if he is going to tear the peace settlement with the [Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia] Farc up into little pieces or walk away from the peace talks with the ELN he answers with a resounding 'no' but he then qualifies that answer, proposing changes, adjustments, or modifications which make those processes no longer viable," Beltrán wrote in his column.

Beltrán also claimed that "war-mongering and triumphalism" in the armed forces could condemn the country to "another 60 or 70 years of conflict". However, in an interview with Canal Capital radio station on 4 July, Beltrán said the ELN would continue in the peace talks with a Duque government.

On the government side, the peace commissioner, Rodrigo Rivera, said a meeting between Santos and Duque to discuss the state of the ELN negotiations was possible. The idea was for the outgoing and incoming presidents to manage a transition and to coordinate the government's position.

Sutep talks
Idel Vexler, a former education minister, agreed with Alfredo Velásquez, the general secretary of Sutep, that the strike had been a failure. Vexler noted that the government and Sutep leadership have been consulting on a range of issues since late last year.

Duque is on record saying that a dialogue with the ELN is only possible when the organisation ceases all “criminal activities”. He also wants a tough demobilisation process, with the rebels required to hand in weapons under international supervision.

Duque has been critical of the transitional justice provisions in the peace accord signed with the Farc, to the extent that leading guerrillas who have committed crimes may escape prison sentences. He is known to want ELN leaders guilty of crimes to face meaningful punishment – another probable sticking point in future talks.

PERU | POLITICS

Teachers' strike crumbles

Attempts to repeat last year's long teachers' strike in Peru appear to have failed. On 3 July a minority faction of teachers' union Sindicato Único de Trabajadores de la Educación del Perú (Sutep) called off a two-week long strike which had been largely ignored by the majority of the union's members. The decision was a victory for the government led by President Martín Vizcarra.

The strike had started on 18 June. It was led by a minority faction of the Sutep loyal to Pedro Castillo. Castillo heads a group called Comité de Lucha Nacional de las Bases Regionales del Sutep which has been challenging the national committee for control of the union.

The national committee supported last year's teachers' strike, which disrupted Peru's public school system for six months. But the Sutep union leadership now remains focused on negotiating with the authorities the remaining issues left over from the 2017 dispute and does not support any further industrial action.

Castillo's faction, on the other hand, wanted to radicalise the movement and make additional demands. While last year's dispute had ended with an agreement to increase teachers' pay by up to PEN2,000 (US\$600) by the end of 2018, the radical faction wanted that doubled to PEN4,000 (US\$1,200) over an extended period running up to 2021.

But the strike was only supported by 5%-6% of teachers, according to ministry of education data. This allowed the government to take a much tougher line than it did in 2017. The strike was declared illegal on 20 June, which meant that, unlike last year, teachers who did not come to work were not paid.

In the 2017 dispute, striking teachers ended up receiving full pay on condition that they agreed after the strike to make up lost hours of classroom time, so that pupils would not lose out. Also different this year was that schools were authorised to hire in new teachers to replace those on strike.

Castillo tried to present the outcome of the strike as a victory, arguing that the government had agreed to negotiate with his regional representatives, rather than with the union's national leadership. But Alfredo Velásquez, the general secretary of the union, said that the stoppage by the minority faction had been a complete failure (*see sidebar*).

Education Minister Daniel Alfaro welcomed the end of the stoppage and said his ministry would continue working in support of “free and high quality public education”. The end of the strike has been a positive outcome for the government although there are still some pending issues. The Sutep leadership says it wants some unresolved issues from last year's stoppage to go to arbitration.

Polling

Economics may also come into the polling discrepancies.

Antonio Lavareda, the head of Ipespe, says that traditional polling companies deliberately “discredit telephone polls to keep a market reserve for face-to-face polling, a very expensive method”.

Critics of telephone polling make the point that it excludes many poor families who do not have a telephone line. They also note that up to 95% of those who answer the phone refuse to take part in the poll, meaning that among the remaining 5% there may be an over-representation of political activists. They also say there is a clear disparity in sample sizes. In the Ipespe telephone poll, 500 people were interviewed, but in the Datafolha poll 2,824 face-to-face interviews were conducted.

Bolsonaro ahead, but are the polls reliable?

The latest opinion poll published on 28 June by Ibope puts the far-right candidate Jair Bolsonaro ahead in the running for October’s presidential elections, with 17% support, followed by environmentalist Marina Silva with 13%. But the race remains wide open and the reliability of the opinion polls continues to be questioned.

Like all polls currently being conducted in Brazil, Ibope asked respondents who they would vote for in two different scenarios. The first assumes former president Lula da Silva (2003-2011), currently in prison on corruption charges, will not be able to run. The second assumes Lula, leader of the left wing Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), will after all be a candidate. In the ‘Lula out’ scenario, Ibope found that 17% would support Bolsonaro, 13% would support Silva (from the small Rede Sustentabilidade party), 8% would back centre-left populist Ciro Gomes, and 6% would support Geraldo Alckmin, the former governor of São Paulo state from the centre-right Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (PSDB).

The Ibope poll confirmed Lula’s enduring popularity. In the “Lula in” scenario, the former president led the field with 33% support, followed by Bolsonaro with 15%. Still, most experts believe this is the most improbable scenario. They expect Lula to be prevented from running because of his corruption conviction, although the legal issue will not be resolved until August at the earliest.

There are at least four reasons why at this stage it is difficult to predict the outcome of the Brazilian elections with any degree of accuracy. First, there is a very high proportion of undecided voters (as high as 33%, according to the Ibope poll). Second, there is the complexity of assessing the ‘with or without Lula’ scenarios. Third, there is the fact that with no candidate likely to win outright there is almost certain to be a second-round run off. Respondents must therefore be asked about their voting preferences not just on the first round but in a further range of hypothetical scenarios for the second round, depending on which two candidates get through to that stage.

The fourth reason is that polling agencies are producing different results and using different methodologies. In early June, using a ‘without Lula’ scenario DataPoder360 put Bolsonaro ahead with 25%, one of the best results he has achieved so far, followed by Gomes with 12%. The two candidates are possibly the most feared by the private sector, and publication of that particular poll triggered a 6% fall in the São Paulo stock exchange (Bovespa).

Only days later, Datafolha, another pollster, put Bolsonaro significantly lower in the ‘without Lula’ scenario, with 19%, followed by Silva and with Gomes in third place. A third poll by Ipespe, on the other hand, was positive for Bolsonaro suggesting that if Lula were able to run, the right-winger might be able to challenge him (coming in second place on 24% support, within reach of Lula’s 29%). In the ‘without Lula’ scenario Bolsonaro led the field again with impressive 24% support, followed by Silva (13%), Gomes (10%), and Alckmin (9%).

The methodological issue is that pollsters like DataPoder360 and Ipespe use telephone interviews, while Datafolha and Ibope carry out face-to-face interviews. Polls based on telephone interviews consistently appear to give Bolsonaro higher levels of support than those based on face-to-face interviews. Supporters of telephone interviews say that in the privacy of their own home respondents feel less inhibited about supporting a far-right candidate who has been accused of racism and sexism.

What are Marina Silva's chances?

Lula confirms presidential bid

In a letter on 3 July from the Curitiba prison, where he is serving a 12-year sentence, former president Lula once more confirmed his desire to stand as a presidential candidate in this October's elections, and insisted on his innocence. In the letter, addressed to his PT, he said he had not committed any crimes, and that his accusers had failed to produce convincing evidence to back their corruption charges. He confirmed his intention was to formally register as a candidate with the electoral authorities on 15 August.

Brazilian analysts are debating the potential electoral appeal of Marina Silva. With a track record on the left, the candidate is now making a strong appeal for the centre ground of Brazilian politics. While other centrists are tainted by links to the outgoing government and by allegations of corruption, Silva is free of both. Could she be a contender?

At the beginning of June, Marina Silva met with foreign correspondents in the city of Rio de Janeiro to set out her approach to the presidential campaign. She made a strong pitch to present herself as the "anti-polarisation" candidate. The logic of political polarisation in Brazil had "taken us into a bottomless pit" she said.

Silva is a former member of the left-wing Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) who was elected senator and then became minister for the environment (2003-2008) in the government of former president Lula da Silva. She has a personal story attractive to many voters: born into a poor rubber-tapping community in an Amazon village, she survived childhood illnesses and became the first member of her family to learn to read and write. She entered politics as an environmental campaigner and became widely known in Brazil and beyond.

After disagreements over a range of environmental issues, Silva left the Lula government and stood as a Green Party presidential candidate in the 2010 elections, receiving 19.4% of the vote. She was again a candidate in 2014, this time for the Partido Socialista Brasileiro (PSB), gaining a 21% share. After those elections she set up her own political movement, known as Rede Sustentabilidade.

Speaking to the foreign correspondents, Silva attributed Brazil's current political and economic crisis to the long battle for control of the country, waged between the left-wing PT (in office 2003-2016) and the centre-right Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (PSDB – in office 1995-2003). What is now needed, she argued, is a non-dogmatic government able to preserve both the economic stability achieved by the PSDB and the social advances achieved by the PT.

Silva maintained that the best option in the 2018 elections would be one that sought to preserve socio-economic advances, meet the challenge of building a new development model, and correct the errors of mismanagement and corruption. She would be neither excessively pro, nor excessively anti market: in her view Brazil had lost out in pursuit of both those extremes. She did, however, say that if elected she would seek a fiscal surplus, low inflation, and a free exchange rate.

Whether the Silva campaign can gain traction over the next few months is open to debate. In June, Brian Winter, editor of US-based *Americas Quarterly*, suggested she was being unfairly dismissed as a serious candidate despite doing well in the polls. In a tweet he asked "Is it group-think? Sexism? Her last minute 2014 collapse?" In response to Winter's tweet Brazilian analyst Gustavo Ribeiro, a self-described "Marina Silva doubter", sought to make the case against. His argument was that although recent polls show her as a potential contender, when the polling data is looked at over time she has shown signs of weakening. Up until June 2017, when voters were asked who they would choose in a second-round run-off ballot between Silva and Lula, Silva was comfortably ahead (52%-31%). But by June 2018 she had lost 21 percentage points to trail Lula by 46% to 31%.

Jara Sentences

A Chilean court sentenced eight retired military officers each to 15 years and one day in prison after finding them guilty of the kidnap and murder, 45 years ago, of musician and left-wing activist Víctor Jara, and of Littré Quiroga, who at the time was director of prisons. A ninth officer was sentenced to five years and one day's imprisonment for covering up the crime. Jara was captured after the 1973 military coup and held in the main stadium in Santiago with other prisoners; there he was tortured before being shot dead.

Silva is also seen as losing support over time when paired with other possible run-off rivals. Ribeiro argues that Silva's social conservatism is a liability: she appeals to women of lower income and educational level, a narrow demographic, where Jair Bolsonaro, the right-wing candidate, also has strong appeal. Crucially, in his view, she has lost ground among middle class and educated voters.

Other more operational difficulties may also be important. As a critic of traditional parties, Silva created Rede, her own movement, but it has little organisational structure at national level and only two federal congressional deputies. It barely made any impact in the 2016 municipal elections.

As party political radio and television advertising time is distributed according to the number of seats held in congress, Rede's voice will hardly be heard. Of the 70 minutes of party political slots that will be available each day when the campaign launches in August, Rede will have only around 10 seconds. There is also some doubt over whether Silva would be disposed to negotiate deals with other parties – such as the loose centrist group called the *centrão* – that would be required to give her a working majority in congress.

Despite all of these points, the very volatility of the presidential race and the large number of undecided voters means that Silva is still an important contender.

CHILE | POLITICS

Government stung by 'legislative drought' criticism

President Sebastián Piñera reacted angrily on 1 July to accusations that his government has been slow to pass new laws. Claims of a "legislative drought", Piñera said in an interview with the national daily *La Tercera*, were "invented by the [opposition] Partido Socialista [PS]". Piñera went on to accuse the opposition of having a "certain kind of obstructionist attitude".

In the interview President Piñera was on the defensive. Governments, he said, should not be judged on how many laws they passed, but on whether they are able to raise the citizens' quality of life. "I'm sure that Chile is a lot better today than it was on 11 March," he said, referring to the date he was sworn in as president. The issue is sensitive, since Piñera himself is on record criticising congress for what he said was its slow work rate and its tendency to spend time criticising the government, rather than approving legislation. Since March the government has tabled 21 legislative initiatives, 17 bills, and 45 urgent motions Piñera said, adding that some opposition members of congress had "taken the road of obstruction".

Tension between the centre-right government and the parties of the former centre-left Nueva Mayoría ruling coalition rose as a result of the polemic over the supposed 'legislative drought'. Piñera's Vamos Chile coalition lacks an outright congressional majority so it has to negotiate to get legislation through. Government officials said orders had been given to speed up the passage of various laws announced during Piñera's first 100 days in office. These included a new migration law, a constitutional reform to guarantee gender equality, and a law to establish the imprescriptibility of sexual crimes against children. A new law on anti-social behaviour is also promised. Gonzalo Blumel, minister secretary-general to the presidency, was dispatched to meet senate president Carlos Montes (PS) and the head of the constitutional commission, Senator Francisco Huenchumilla (Democracia Cristiana – DC), to discuss cooperating on the legislative timetable. Other legislative initiatives were discussed, including the proposed anti-terrorism law.

Fiscal deficit

Uruguay's economy & finance ministry announced that the fiscal deficit reached 4% of GDP in May, up from 3.7% in April.

This is largely due to the acquisition of oil stocks from state oil company

Administración

Nacional de

Combustibles,

Alcoholes y Portland

(Ancap). The

Uruguayan

government had

committed to

maintaining the

deficit at 3.3% of GDP

until the end of 2018.

Senator Huenchumilla said the meeting had been long overdue, adding "I think after our conversation it must have been clear to the minister that with a dialogue things can move forward faster than if there are no meetings". Blumel also met various other members of congress. The official line is that meetings of this type have been going on since the government took office; however, there does seem to be a new government realisation that it must improve its lines of communication with congress.

In his first 100 days in office Piñera has focused on his electoral promise to double Chile's rate of growth, and this may well be in reach, with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) forecasting 3.6% expansion this year compared to 1.6% growth in 2017. Arguably, faster growth does not require new legislation, and if delivered will boost Piñera's popularity. Piñera has on the other hand taken a step back on his campaign promise to cut the 27% corporate tax rate, saying the money was needed to fund social reforms in education and health and to reform the pension system.

At the end of May, Piñera abandoned plans for a pension reform that had been inherited from the previous government. He will therefore be under scrutiny as he comes up with his own new draft pension law. He has said it will deliver higher pensions, incorporate independent workers and entrepreneurs, and create incentives for later retirement. Also up for examination is Piñera's promise of a new migration law. The law, Piñera has said, will be designed to "open the doors to those who do Chile good" while closing it to "criminal networks and delinquents". According to the 2017 census 6.1% of the country's population are foreign born, up from around 1% a decade earlier. The government has already introduced measures tightening up visas and setting quotas for Haitian migrants.

TRACKING TRENDS

ARGENTINA | Drought causes economic losses in agriculture. On 28 June the Bolsa de Cereales de Buenos Aires – the Buenos Aires grain exchange – revealed that Argentina would lose US\$5.895bn, or 0.86% of GDP, due to lower harvests of soybean and maize caused by drought. The country is one of the largest producers and exporters of grain in the world, but 27m tonnes (t) of produce will be lost due to bad weather. According to forecasts, 32m t of maize will be produced in 2017/18, some 22% less than predicted, while a soybean harvest of 36m t will represent a loss of 33%. Reduced production only partly explains the financial losses, which were worsened by falling prices on international markets following the publication of results from 2016/17.

According to the report, the frequency and magnitude of climatic changes and their effects on such an important economic sector shows the need for an integrated strategy for risk management in agriculture. The US\$5.895bn figure only takes into account direct losses in the agricultural sector due to drought, and the authors claim that total macroeconomic losses could be far higher if dependent sectors are factored in.

URUGUAY | Exports and deficit on the rise. Exports rose 2.3% in the first six months of 2018 compared to the same period last year, according to a June 2018 report from investment and export agency Uruguay XXI. A figure of US\$4.630bn represents the best first half in three years.

The value of exports for the month of June was US\$863m, a 17% fall compared to last year. Wood pulp, wood and derivative products, and livestock and beef recorded positive trends, while soybean exports fell 78% compared to June last year, due to reduced production following a period of drought.

Without taking soybeans into account, exports grew 6% in June compared to last year. It was a record month for exports of wood pulp, which increased 57% to US\$188m after prices rose in recent months, and livestock exports reached US\$59m. China was Uruguay's most important trade partner in June, accounting for US\$123m in exports, while Brazil accounted for US\$91m and Turkey US\$51m.

Nicaragua's military under pressure

The Nicaraguan military is facing mounting calls to clarify its stance in relation to the crisis which began mid-April sparked by the brutal state crackdown on anti-government protesters (which is ongoing) and has so far left 309 people dead on the latest (3 July) figures from a local NGO Asociación Nicaragüense Pro Derechos Humanos (ANPDH). Having sought to distance itself from any involvement in the state repression of the protesters, the military has yet to criticise the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN) government led by President Daniel Ortega or the police (PNN). However, the presence of paramilitary forces on the streets is piling the pressure on the military to intervene.

Since the crisis began, the military has issued three statements regarding its position. The first and second, released on 21 April and 12 May respectively, both affirmed support for dialogue between the protesters and government. At the time Edmundo Jarquín, one of the founders of the dissident Sandinista group, Movimiento Renovador Sandinista (MRS), described the call for dialogue as “huge news” [WR-18-19], telling the *Miami Herald* that this “means Ortega will not be able to use the army as an instrument of repression”.

The statements also reiterated that the army's constitutional duty was to protect state property – justifying its public presence outside important buildings during protests. The third statement clarified the entry of civilians, including reported paramilitary members, into a military hospital in Managua on 30 May; the army said that the hospital had been ordered to admit civilian patients in urgent need of assistance.

Given that maintaining public order is a function of the PNN rather than the army, its hitherto lack of intervention is arguably not a surprise. Yet other factors, such as the scale of the protests, a reportedly fatigued PNN, and the widespread belief that the army has become increasingly politicised in its loyalty to President Ortega (*see box*), suggest that this response was far from inevitable.

Local security experts such as Roberto Cajina suggest various reasons why the military has sought to keep a distance. In an article published on 17 June by the national daily *La Prensa*, he said the military is known to have economic interests both in Nicaragua and the US, especially in the New York stock exchange, which could be risked by an escalation of the crisis. This could be through either greater instability in the country or the possible imposition of US sanctions on military leadership if it took part in repression. The institution's finances are shrouded in secrecy and managed by its financial arm, the Institute of Military Social Welfare (IPSM), which controls pensions and savings schemes (*see sidebar*).

Another reason why it has reportedly retained a distance from the repression is to prevent its reputation being tarnished – as has been the case with the PNN. The army enjoys high levels of public support: according to the biennial survey carried out by M&R Consultores in 2016, the army was the most trusted institution in Nicaragua with 87.3% of public trust. It also has good relations with the US which could be risked by action in the crisis.

Yet the military is facing growing pressure to step in, particularly given reports of pro-government paramilitaries which have emerged during the crisis – as identified by human rights groups such as Amnesty International

Military assets

A report by Nicaraguan investigative media outlet *Confidencial* dated 2012 cites figures regarding the military's assets from an audit by Deloitte which valued its holdings at US\$72.3m in 2009, although the 2012 article suggests that, at that point, these assets could have since increased to between US\$90m and US\$100m.

Military independence

As with the military reform, General Avilés' continuance in the post reignited ongoing concerns regarding the military's lack of independence and Ortega's perceived efforts to incorporate the armed forces into his political project, a blurring of boundaries that was embodied in Ortega's choice of a former army chief, (ret.) General Omar Halleslevens, as his running mate in the November 2011 presidential elections.

(AI) and the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR), who claim that they are supported by the government and often act in collusion with the PNN to repress protesters.

Threats to military independence?

On 26 June, 13 political organisations sent an open letter to General Julio César Avilés, the head of the armed forces, recalling that Article 95 of the country's 1987 Constitution states that "no more armed units may exist in the national territory or more military ranks than those established by the law".

Warning that the country is currently "in a situation of emergency in which these unidentified armed groups have become an army of occupation in national territory", the letter calls on the military to disarm these groups – a request to which the military has yet to respond.

In March 2015, Ortega swore in Avilés as head of the armed forces for a second consecutive five-year term, making him the first military chief to serve in the post for longer than five years since 1995 (*see sidebar*). Avilés' ratification followed a military reform passed in January 2014, which removed the prohibition on the re-appointment of the head of the military (which is in the gift of the president).

GIEI established in Nicaragua

On 2 July the IACHR announced the establishment of the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI) in Nicaragua tasked with supporting investigations into the violence.

According to an IACHR press release, the four member panel comprises: Américo Incalcaterra, an Italian who worked in the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) as Regional Representative for South America and served as Deputy Commissioner of the United Nations-backed International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (Cicig); Sofía Macher (Peru), a sociologist who has been a commissioner in two Truth Commissions (Peru and Solomon Islands); Guatemala's former attorney general (2010-2014), Claudia Paz y Paz; and Pablo Parenti, a federal prosecutor in Argentina who has been working for almost 20 years on cases of crimes against humanity.

The GIEI has an initial mandate of six months that may be extended.

HONDURAS | TRANSPARENCY

Attorney general's election sparks controversy

Endemic corruption and institutional weaknesses have long been identified by human rights groups as an obstacle in efforts to reduce violence and insecurity in the Northern Triangle countries. This issue once again made headlines in relation to Honduras amid controversy over the process of electing a new attorney general (AG). The five-year term of the current AG Oscar Chinchilla ends on 1 September, and the new appointment comes at a crucial point given that recent investigations by the Organization of American States (OAS) sponsored Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (Maccih) continue to implicate the ruling elite [[WR-18-24](#)].

Ahead of the election on 29 June, institutions such as the United Nations (UN) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Honduras and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) had flagged up concerns about the lack of transparency surrounding the process. In a statement released on 26 June, the OHCHR complained that the nominating board which proposed the five candidates (on which the 128-member unicameral legislature then vote) had failed to address "repeated calls" by

Homicide rates

The US-based think tank Washington

Office on Latin America (Wola) notes that despite

“important reductions in the overall murder

rates in El Salvador,

Honduras, and

Guatemala in the last

several years, they

rank among the most

violent countries in

the world”. In 2017,

El Salvador

registered a

homicide rate of 60

per 100,000 people,

or 3,947 murders.

Neighbouring

Guatemala and

Honduras reported

rates of 26.1 and

42.8 respectively. In

comparison, the US

had a homicide rate

of 4.8 that same

year.

the UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Diego García-Sayán, and IACHR to guarantee the principles of transparency, by ensuring that the election process is open to public scrutiny and the participation of social sectors.

In a statement released on 18 June, García-Sayán himself expressed concern that “civil society has been excluded from the most important deliberations of the selection process”, warning that “this flies in the face of international human rights standards which state the process should be inclusive, transparent and follow strict, clear and objective criteria to evaluate the integrity, suitability and competences of the candidates”.

García-Sayán also singled out for particular concern the fact that “some of the members of the parliamentary commission in charge of reviewing the candidates have been publicly questioned, or even prosecuted, for corruption” – a reference to the various investigations unveiled by Maccih, the most recent of which was revealed on 13 June [\[WR-18-24\]](#).

With concerns raised about the five candidates on the shortlist (Abraham Alvarenga, Hermes Omar Moncada, Lidia Estela Cardona, Carlos Roberto Cáliz, and Daniel Arturo Sibrián) and their various links to the main political parties, the legislature’s failure to agree on a choice and ultimately opt on 29 June to retain Chinchilla in his post (in line with a proposal by deputy Felícito Ávila of the small opposition Democracia Cristiana) has met with a mixed response.

While well received by Maccih, by President Hernández, and by the association of Honduran prosecutors, the OHCHR has since released a statement warning that the failure to observe constitutional norms and the principle of legality during the election could weaken the AG. Similarly, the main opposition left-wing Partido Libertad y Refundación (Libre), led by former president Manuel Zelaya (2006-2009), has complained that the process was a “pantomime”.

NORTHERN TRIANGLE | US RELATIONS

Migration overshadows Pence’s Guatemala visit

US Vice President Mike Pence last week paid a visit to Guatemala. He had announced the stopover mid-June in the wake of the 3 June eruption of the Volcán de Fuego [\[WR-18-13\]](#), to offer “support to the people of Guatemala as they recover and rebuild”. Yet the focus ended up being on migration, and a meeting which took place between Pence, Guatemala’s President Jimmy Morales, and his Honduran and Salvadorean peers, Juan Orlando Hernández, and Salvador Sánchez Cerén respectively. The encounter once again exposed the policy differences between the current US administration led by President Donald Trump and its predecessor (led by Barack Obama [\[2009-2017\]](#)) with regard to addressing the migrant crisis.

Pence’s 28 June meeting with the leaders from the so-called ‘Northern Triangle’ (Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras) attracted particular attention in the wake of criticism of the zero-tolerance policy pursued by the Trump administration, which criminally prosecutes any migrant or asylum seeker who crosses the border outside of designated ports of entry. Announced back in April 2018, the policy has attracted censure in recent weeks due to the fact that when adults accompanying children are held for prosecution they are separated from their children. The US-based think tank Washington Office on Latin America (Wola) cited figures which show that 1,995 children had been separated from 1,940 adult guardians from 19 April to 31 May.

Such was the outrage that President Trump was ultimately forced to back down on 20 June and reverse the family separation policy. However, the US media

Guatemala extends state of emergency

On 3 July, President Morales extended the state of calamity in three departments (Chimaltenango, Escuintla, and Sacatepéquez) following the eruption of Volcán de Fuego on 3 June. The move, which suspends procedures under the public procurement & state contracting law for the contracting of government suppliers, has the objective of re-establishing essential services and infrastructure.

reported ahead of the meeting with the Northern Triangle leaders that Pence appeared to defend the zero-tolerance approach. In the meeting itself, he called for the Central American leaders to do more to stem the “exodus” of people trying to come to the US illegally; tighten control of their borders; and crack down on smugglers. In a series of tweets, he told them to “tell your people that coming to the US illegally will only result in a hard journey and a harder life”, urging them to “take down public advertisements for human traffickers...Renew the fight against corruption, criminal groups, & gang violence...”

Pence’s remarks, and more generally Trump’s zero-tolerance policy, have again attracted criticism from human rights groups and think tanks such as Wola for failing to address the root causes of migration in the first place: the lack of economic opportunity and endemic levels of violence, corruption, impunity, and weak institutions in the Northern Triangle countries (*see sidebar*).

It bears marked contrast to the more comprehensive approach to addressing the root causes favoured by the previous Obama administration, like the US-backed Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity (PAP). This was a US\$1bn aid package launched in 2014 in support of poverty reduction and economic development. Funding for this initiative has reportedly been cut to about US\$600m.

Guatemala requests TPS

During Pence’s visit President Morales reiterated a request made on 25 June by Guatemala’s foreign minister Sandra Jovel to the US government for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) which temporarily allows those fleeing countries afflicted by war or natural disasters to live and work legally in the US. Jovel gave as the reason the devastation caused by the eruption of Volcán de Fuego on 3 June which has left 113 people dead and more than 1.7m affected.

In recent months however the US administration has cancelled TPS for Nicaragua, Haiti, El Salvador, and Honduras, suggesting that the Morales government stands little chance of success.

TRACKING TRENDS

HONDURAS | IMF visit. On 3 July, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) published a statement after concluding an Article IV consultation with Honduras. The statement notes that Honduras successfully concluded its 2014-2017 Fund-supported program, which it says was “instrumental in restoring investor confidence and reducing macroeconomic imbalances”. The statement notes that the Honduran economy grew by 4.75% in 2017, well above expectations and boosted by “domestic demand, mainly private consumption supported by record remittances inflows and public investment”. It adds that headline inflation picked up to 4.75% from 3.25% in 2016 on the back of strong demand and rising oil prices, while the fiscal deficit increased slightly from 0.5% of GDP in 2016 to 0.75% of GDP in 2017.

As regards predictions for 2018-2019, the IMF expects growth to hover around 3.75% reflecting worsening external conditions. Highlighting that Honduras is “vulnerable to domestic political polarisation and potential deterioration in the institutional framework”, the IMF cites as key risks, tighter global financial conditions, due to the normalisation of the US monetary policy, and more restrictive US immigration policies.

GUATEMALA | FDI down. According to recent figures from Guatemala’s central bank (Banguat), foreign direct investment (FDI) to Guatemala in the first quarter of 2018 was US\$293.2m, down 7% on the US\$313.5m received in the same period of 2017. Total FDI in 2017 was US\$1.147bn on Banguat figures, of which the US was the biggest source, accounting for US\$208.5m of the total. This was followed by Mexico (US\$204.1m) and Colombia (US\$160.2m).

Quotes of the week

“We want a profound change, a radical change. Let nobody be scared; radical comes from the root because we are going to root out privileges.”

Mexico's presidential victor Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

“He has been a professional imposter, a wolf in sheep's clothing, without convictions.”

Ecuador's former president Rafael Correa on his successor President Lenín Moreno.

“Some people think that countries advance only with laws. Laws are important but so is attitude, determination, quality of management.”

Chile's President Sebastián Piñera on criticism that he is presiding over a “legislative drought”.

Paraguay's Cartes presents final state-of-the-nation address

Paraguay's President Horacio Cartes presented his final state-of-the-nation address to the national congress on 1 July. The root of many of his successes in government, according to Cartes, has been the implementation of austerity policies to combat the “political clientelism” inherited by the government. He also claimed that his government had delivered greater transparency, efficiency, and economic stability, and had attained international recognition for Paraguay.

These policies cut the portion of the budget spent on public sector salaries from 86% to 69% which, Cartes declared, has freed up funds for greater investment in public services such as health and education. Cartes claimed that the austerity measures had also encouraged greater transparency, in public contracting especially, and forced public sector entities to be more efficient.

In the economic sphere, President Cartes singled out a sharp decrease in extreme poverty in Paraguay between 2012 and 2017. He also stressed reforms which had made Paraguay more attractive to investors, such as the fiscal responsibility law passed in 2013 and competitive tax rates. As evidence of the success of these measures, Cartes pointed to the fact that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Eclac) named Paraguay as the country with the best return on investment in the region in 2015.

In his address, Cartes also underlined his foreign policy achievements, affirming that Paraguay now received greater recognition on the world stage. He attributed this to high-profile visits from Pope Francis and Ban Ki-moon, the then Secretary General of the United Nations, and Paraguay's entry into the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2017 among other achievements.

Cartes admitted that his government had not achieved all of its desired aims, in particular in the realm of security where, for example, he cited its failure to eradicate the Ejército del Pueblo Paraguayo (EPP) guerrilla group. Opposition members of congress criticised the speech for misrepresenting the state of the country, notably by omitting the controversy surrounding Cartes' attempt to resign before his term formally finishes in August. Cartes tendered his resignation to congress for approval in May 2018 in order to secure an active senate seat, barred in the constitution. It was rejected by congress in a vote which split the ruling Asociación Nacional Republicana-Partido Colorado (ANC-PC) between Cartistas and dissident factions.



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