



CRS Report for Congress

Latin America and the Caribbean: Fact Sheet on Leaders and Elections

Mark P. Sullivan
Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

Julissa Gomez-Granger
Knowledge Services Group

This fact sheet tracks the current heads of government in Central and South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean, and provides the dates of the last and next election for head of government. It also provides the national independence date for each country.

Table 1. South America

Country	Independence Date	Head of Government	Last Election	Next Election
Argentina	July 9, 1816	FERNANDEZ DE KIRCHNER, Cristina	Oct. 28, 2007	Oct. 2011
Bolivia	Aug. 6, 1825	MORALES, Evo	Dec. 18, 2005	Dec. 2010
Brazil	Sept. 7, 1822	DA SILVA, Luis Inácio Lula	Oct. 1/ Oct. 29, 2006	Oct. 2010
Chile	Sept. 18, 1810	BACHELET, Michelle	Dec. 11, 2005/ Jan. 15, 2006	Dec. 2009
Colombia	July 20, 1810	URIBE, Alvaro	May 28, 2006	May 2010
Ecuador	May 24, 1822	CORREA, Rafael	Oct. 15/Nov. 26, 2006	Oct. 2010
Paraguay	May 14, 1811	DUARTE FRUTOS, Nicanor ^a	Apr. 20, 2008	Apr. 2013
Peru	July 28, 1821	GARCIA, Alan	Apr. 9, 2006/ June 4, 2006	Apr. 2011
Uruguay	Aug. 25, 1825	VÁZQUEZ, Tabaré	Oct. 31, 2004	Oct. 2009
Venezuela	July 5, 1811	CHÁVEZ, Hugo	Dec. 3, 2006	Dec. 2012

a. Fernando Lugo won the April 20, 2008 presidential election, and will be inaugurated on August 15, 2008.

Table 2. Mexico and Central America

Country	Independence Date	Head of Government	Last Election	Next Election
Mexico	Sept. 16, 1810	CALDERÓN, Felipe	July 2, 2006	July 2012
Costa Rica	Sept. 15, 1821	ARIAS, Oscar	Feb. 5, 2006	Feb. 2010
El Salvador	Sept. 15, 1821	SACA, Elías Antonio (Tony)	Mar. 21, 2004	Mar. 2009
Guatemala	Sept. 15, 1821	COLOM, Alvaro	Sept. 9, 2007/ Nov. 4, 2007	by Nov. 2011
Honduras	Sept. 15, 1821	ZELAYA, Manuel	Nov. 27, 2005	Nov. 2009
Nicaragua	Sept. 15, 1821	ORTEGA, Daniel	Nov. 5, 2006	Nov. 2011
Panama	Nov. 3, 1903	TORRIJOS, Martin	May 2, 2004	May 2009

Table 3. Caribbean

Country	Independence Date	Head of Government	Last Election	Next Election
Antigua & Barbuda	Nov. 1, 1981	SPENCER, Baldwin	Mar. 23, 2004	by Mar. 2009
Bahamas	July 10, 1973	INGRAHAM, Hubert	May 2, 2007	by May 2012
Barbados	Nov. 30, 1966	THOMPSON, David	Jan. 15, 2008	by Jan. 2013
Belize	Sept. 21, 1981	BARROW, Dean	Feb. 7, 2008	February 2013
Cuba	May 20, 1902	CASTRO RUZ, Raúl	^a	^a
Dominica	Nov. 3, 1978	SKERRITT, Roosevelt	May 5, 2005	by May 2010
Dominican Republic	Feb. 27, 1844	FERNANDEZ, Leonel	May 16, 2008	May 2012
Grenada	Feb. 7, 1974	MITCHELL, Keith	Nov. 27, 2003	Nov. 2008
Guyana	May 26, 1966	BHARRAT, Jagdeo	Aug. 28, 2006	by Aug. 2011
Haiti	Jan. 1, 1804	PRÉVAL, René	Feb. 7, 2006	2011
Jamaica	Aug. 6, 1962	GOLDING, Bruce	Sept. 3, 2007	by Sept. 2012
St. Kitts & Nevis	Sept. 19, 1983	DOUGLAS, Denzil	Oct. 25, 2004	by Oct. 2009
St. Lucia	Feb. 22, 1979	KING, Stephenson ^b	Dec. 11, 2006	by Dec. 2011
St. Vincent & the Grenadines	Oct. 27, 1979	GONSALVES, Ralph	Dec. 7, 2005	by Mar. 2010
Suriname	Nov. 25, 1975	VENETIAAN, Ronald	May 25, 2005	May 2010
Trinidad & Tobago	Aug. 31, 1962	MANNING, Patrick	Nov. 5, 2007	by Nov. 2012

a. On February 24, 2008, Raúl Castro was selected by Cuba's legislature as President of the Council of State, a position that makes him head of state and government. Raúl had been serving as acting President since July 31, 2006, when Cuba's long-serving communist leader, Fidel Castro, stepped down provisionally because of poor health. Since the 1959 Cuban Revolution, there have been no elections for head of government.

b. Stephenson King was sworn in as Prime Minister on September 10, 2007, following the death of Prime Minister John Compton, who had been elected in December 2006.