



**Congressional
Research Service**

Informing the legislative debate since 1914

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

Barbara Salazar Torreon
Information Research Specialist

March 21, 2014

Congressional Research Service

7-5700

www.crs.gov

98-684

This report provides the results of recent elections in Latin America and the Caribbean. Below are three tables organized by region, including the date of each country's independence, the name of the newly elected president or prime minister, and the projected date of the next election. Information in this report was gathered from numerous sources, including the U.S. State Department, the CIA's Open Source, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), and other news sources.

Table I. South America

Country	Independence Date	Head of Government	Last Election	Next Election
Argentina	July 9, 1816	FERNANDEZ DE KIRCHNER, Cristina	Oct. 23, 2011	Oct. 2015
Bolivia	Aug. 6, 1825	MORALES, Evo	Dec. 6, 2009	Oct. 5, 2014
Brazil	Sept. 7, 1822	ROUSSEFF, Dilma	Oct. 3, 2010/ Oct. 31, 2010	Oct. 5, 2014/ Oct. 26, 2014
Chile	Sept. 18, 1810	BACHELET, Michelle	Dec. 15, 2013 ^a	Nov. 2018
Colombia	July 20, 1810	SANTOS, Juan Manuel	May 30, 2010/June 20, 2010	May 25, 2014/ June 15, 2014
Ecuador	May 24, 1822	CORREA, Rafael	Feb. 17, 2013	Feb. 2017
Guyana	May 26, 1966	RAMOTAR, Donald	Nov. 28, 2011	by Nov. 2016
Paraguay	May 14, 1811	CARTES, Horacio ^b	Apr. 21, 2013	April 2018
Peru	July 28, 1821	HUMALA, Ollanta	Apr. 10, 2011/June 5, 2011 (2 nd round)	Apr. 2016
Suriname	Nov. 25, 1975	BOUTERSE, Desi	May 25, 2010	May 2015
Uruguay	Aug. 25, 1825	MUJICA, José	Oct. 25, 2009/ Nov. 29, 2009	Oct. 26, 2014/ Nov. 30, 2014
Venezuela	July 5, 1811	MADURO, Nicolás ^c	April 14, 2013	Oct. 2019

Source: The Congressional Research Service (CRS).

- a. In the first round of voting on November 17, Michelle Bachelet received 46.67% of the vote, in comparison to Evelyn Matthei, who received 25.01% of the vote. Bachelet won the most votes but fell short of obtaining an absolute majority. The run-off election was held on December 15, 2013, and Bachelet won with 62.3% of votes. Bachelet previously served as president from 2006 to 2010. She was inaugurated on March 11, 2014.
- b. Horacio Cartes, a Paraguayan tobacco magnate, took 46% of the vote against 37% for his main opponent, Efraín Alegre, of the ruling Liberal Party.
- c. Venezuela held a special election on April 14, 2013, with Nicolás Maduro winning 50.7% of the votes versus 49.1% for opposition candidate Henrique Capriles. Maduro was sworn in on April 19, 2013.

Table 2. Mexico and Central America

Country	Independence Date	Head of Government	Last Election	Next Election
Mexico	Sept. 16, 1810	PEÑA NIETO, Enrique ^a	July 1, 2012	July 2018
Belize	Sept. 21, 1981	BARROW, Dean	Mar. 7, 2012	by June 2017
Costa Rica	Sept. 15, 1821	CHINCHILLA Miranda, Laura	Feb. 7, 2010	Feb. 2, 2014/ April 6, 2014 ^b
El Salvador	Sept. 15, 1821	FUNES, Mauricio	Mar. 15, 2009	Feb. 2, 2014/ Mar. 9, 2014 ^c
Guatemala	Sept. 15, 1821	PÉREZ MOLINA, Otto	Sept. 11, 2011/ Nov. 6, 2011	Sept. 13, 2015
Honduras	Sept. 15, 1821	LOBO SOSA, Porfirio	Nov. 24, 2013 ^d	Nov. 2017
Nicaragua	Sept. 15, 1821	ORTEGA, Daniel	Nov. 6, 2011	Nov. 2016
Panama	Nov. 3, 1903	MARTINELLI, Ricardo	May 3, 2009	May 4, 2014

Source: CRS.

- a. Enrique Peña Nieto won Mexico's presidential election on July 1, 2012, and took office on December 1, 2012.
- b. During the first-round vote on February 2, 2014, former diplomat Luis Guillermo Solís won 31% of the vote to 30% of the vote for Johnny Araya, the former mayor of San Jose. On March 4, 2014, ruling National Liberation Party presidential candidate Johnny Araya announced that he was ending his presidential campaign a month before a runoff with Luis Guillermo Solís.
- c. In El Salvador, the President is elected by absolute majority vote through a two-round system to serve a five-year term. The First Round was February 2, 2014, and the Second Round was March 9, 2014. Salvador Sánchez Cerén of the ruling left-wing Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) won the narrowest of victories over Norman Quijano of the right-wing National Republican Alliance (Arena), with 50.11% to 49.89%. Quijano is contesting the results.
- d. Juan Orlando Hernandez, head of Honduras' Congress, defeated Xiomara Castro, the wife of former leader Manuel Zelaya. Castro contested the election results. Hernandez was sworn in on January 27, 2014.

Table 3. Caribbean

Country	Independence Date	Head of Government	Last Election	Next Election
Antigua and Barbuda	Nov. 1, 1981	SPENCER, Baldwin	Mar. 12, 2009	by July 2014
Bahamas	July 10, 1973	CHRISTIE, Perry	May 7, 2012	by May 2017
Barbados	Nov. 30, 1966	STUART, Freundel ^a	Feb. 21, 2013	by Feb. 2018
Cuba	May 20, 1902	CASTRO RUZ, Raúl	^b	^b
Dominica	Nov. 3, 1978	SKERRITT, Roosevelt	Dec. 18, 2009	Dec. 2014
Dominican Republic	Feb. 27, 1844	MEDINA, Danilo	May 20, 2012	May 2016
Grenada	Feb. 7, 1974	MITCHELL, Keith	Feb. 19, 2013	Feb. 2018
Haiti	Jan. 1, 1804	MARTELLY, Michel	Nov. 28, 2010/ Mar. 20, 2011	late 2015
Jamaica	Aug. 6, 1962	SIMPSON MILLER, Portia	Dec. 29, 2011	by Dec. 2016
St. Kitts and Nevis	Sept. 19, 1983	DOUGLAS, Denzil	Jan. 25, 2010	by Jan. 2015
St. Lucia	Feb. 22, 1979	ANTHONY, Kenny	Nov. 28, 2011	by Nov. 2016
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Oct. 27, 1979	GONSALVES, Ralph	Dec. 13, 2010	by Dec. 2015
Trinidad and Tobago	Aug. 31, 1962	PERSAD-BISSESSAR, Kamla	May 24, 2010	by May 2015

Source: CRS.

- a. Freundel Stuart was selected as prime minister on October 23, 2010, following the death of Prime Minister David Thompson. Stuart was elected on February 21, 2013.
- b. 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.

Author Contact Information

Barbara Salazar Torreon
 Information Research Specialist
 btorreon@crs.loc.gov, 7-8996

Acknowledgments

Mark P. Sullivan, CRS specialist in Latin American Affairs, was the former author of this report.