GlobalResearch
Center for Research on Globalization

Political Left Close to Winning Elections in Ecuador

By Lucas Leiroz de Almeida
Global Research, February 04, 2021

Region: Latin America & Caribbean
Theme: History

All Global Research articles **can be read in 27 languages by activating the "Translate Website"** drop down menu on the top banner of our home page (Desktop version).

***

A few days before the presidential elections in Ecuador, scheduled for February 7, there are still threats to the candidacy of Andrés Arauz, the favorite to win, and to the democratic electoral process itself. It is a dispute that faces numerous obstacles in the context of a systematic political persecution initiated by the government of Lenin Moreno.

With the greatest chance of victory according to all surveys, Arauz is presented by the "UNES", a party coalition that represents the defenders of the so-called "Citizen Revolution" – a movement led by the former President Rafael Correa. Arauz has signaled that he will increase government spending in favor of social reforms and prioritize topics such as reducing poverty, increasing popular power, among other topics that marked Correa's years in power. One of his campaign promises is to distribute a thousand dollars to about a million families as soon as he takes power, aiming to increase the population's purchasing power and raise the country's social indexes.

On the other hand, the candidate that appears in second place is Guillermo Lasso, a former banker, presented by the "CREO" party in alliance with the Christian Social Party. Contrary to all Arauz's promises, Lasso defends liberal reforms and promises a continuation of Lenin Moreno's legacy, with pro-market policies, being a candidate clearly not concerned with social issues and popular agendas.

In third place is Yaku Pérez, a candidate from the Pachakutik movement, who, despite his position, is a long way from the top two, and his victory is unlikely. His main promises are to ban the current mining policy and impose limits on concessions in oil and gas production.

According to Ecuadorian law, for a candidate to win in the first round, it is necessary to obtain more than 40% and 10 points of difference over the second candidate. Otherwise, the first two candidates will face each other again in a second round. Arauz, who in most polls is close to 40%, appears to be close to winning in the first round – and it is precisely around this that arise threats from his opponents.

Several obstacles have been imposed on Arauz since the beginning of his campaign. Allegations of irregularities and illegalities abound from his opponents, almost always without any reasoning. Indeed, Moreno's legacy has been one of political persecution against his opponents, albeit always disguised as legalism. Censors have been imposed on the campaigns and it is forbidden to even pronounce the name of Rafael Correa. In addition, several candidacies, mainly for the legislative branch which will also have its elections this

year, were vetoed by the simple fact of the candidates supporting Correa, which means that, even if Arauz becomes president of Ecuador, Moreno is managing to form a hostile institutional scenario to force the pro-Correa candidate to capitulate to the interests of the liberal right.

Moreno, who started as an ally of Correa and then helped to overthrow him, not only started a major national dismantling process through neoliberal reforms, but also initiated a major judicialization of Ecuadorian politics, creating a police and judicial apparatus to persecute his opponents and justify any form of oppression with a speech of "defending law". This form of judicial dictatorship is a recent trend in different parts of the world and works perfectly to guarantee the dictatorial intentions of liberal politicians who still want to maintain the democratic and legalistic discourse publicly – a true democratic and legalistic authoritarianism. With this, attempts are made to extinguish all political opposition through judicial sanctions and reprisals. It was in this way that the Ecuadorian liberal right managed to eliminate its greatest opponents, arresting not only Correa but also several of his allies, such as his former vice president, Jorge Glas. The charges – which generally involve crimes of corruption – are always generic and have little factual basis, with several irregularities in the legal processes.

The registration of Arauz's candidacy itself was complicated, having gone through several legal bureaucracies that would not normally occur. Furthermore, once the registration was obtained, Arauz suffered threats to have his candidacy canceled due to links with Correa. These threats are unlikely to stop any time soon. Even if he is elected, Arauz will be legally threatened by his opponents and forced to make decisions that he would not like to make.

Amid a scenario of a possible resurgence of the left, Moreno traveled to Washington in the last week of January. There, he met with several American politicians, as well as figures like Kristalina Georgieva, Director of the International Monetary Fund and Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the Organization of American States, among others. The real intentions behind these meetings are still obscure and raise suspicions among Moreno's opponents in Ecuador about possible articulations involving international agents for a reversal in the electoral process – or agitations for a possible removal of Arauz in the first moments of his office, if elected.

Undoubtedly, electing Arauz will directly damage the American plans, as it will represent a return of the nationalist left, which defends the political and economic integration of the Latin American continent and condemns foreign interference in the region. Washington is interested in continuing Moreno's legacy, now represented by Lasso, but it may not be strong enough to contain the popular will to elect Arauz. What can come of this is a great horizon of possibilities, including an overthrow of Arauz through some judicial maneuver, an attempt to co-opt him as they managed to do with Moreno, who was Correa's ally before or even simply invalidate his candidacy before elections are held.

*

Note to readers: please click the share buttons above or below. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

This article was originally published on InfoBrics.

Lucas Leiroz is a research fellow in international law at the Federal University of Rio de

Janeiro.

Featured image is from InfoBrics

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © Lucas Leiroz de Almeida, Global Research, 2021

Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page

Become a Member of Global Research

Articles by: Lucas Leiroz de Almeida

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca