

# **Ecuador: Correa's triumph is victory against oligarchy and neoliberalism**

Saturday 9 December 2006, by [AGUINAGA Margarita](#) (Date first published: 7 December 2006).

**"Arise the poor of the world, stand up the slaves without bread, we advance united..." The victory of the oppressed is expressed in the election of Rafael Correa as President of the Republic. The last two months have produced a meeting of social consciousness and left politics, expressed in Correa's triumph against oligarchy and neoliberalism represented by Alvaro Noboa and the ultraconservative forces of the country; while their support for Noboa has unmasked the Social Christians, Roldosistas, PRIAN and what remains of Popular Democracy.**

Some years ago, after the fall of President Lucio Gutiérrez in 2003, it was said that there were two possibilities at that time of crisis of political representation in the state, an advance towards the most recalcitrant form of the crisis of neoliberalism, which would imply a strong right bloc and the harshest measures against the people to restore the situation of the model, or a turn to left and the possibility of reversing the neoliberal model in its fundamental aspects.

That change is now certain, it has taken shape and simultaneously a new correlation of forces has been opened and the possibility of a historic moment, favouring the proletariat and the oppressed of Ecuador. The right did not manage to make the fall of Lucio Gutiérrez the arena to usher in neoliberal proposals, as happened in 2000, with Jamil Mahuad and dollarization, after the fall of Abdalá Bucaram in 1997.

Instead, democratic content and the confluence of struggles against the TLC [Tratado de Libre Comercio - the free trade treaty with the United States], fought mainly over the last two years by indigenous and popular organizations, have come together in the left alliance in favour of Rafael Correa. The course of history in favour of the people has been opened initially and this is reason not only to be happy, but to put an impetus into the anti-capitalist processes.

It is evident that the right and imperialism have suffered a defeat, although the form of their counter-offensive can be foreseen, we can be guided by what has happened and continues happening against Venezuela, Cuba and Bolivia; they will not remain quiet, the bourgeoisie is going to look to regain control of the government, under the political and military forms that it requires to do this, hoping to erode this government and the left, to turn the people against it. Rafael Correa won the elections representing, amidst weaknesses and errors, a quite radical discourse and set of proposals.

In addition, with a right wing congress dominated by right populism, which, by means of the Patriotic Society Party announcing that it will support the Constituent Assembly, seeks to disguise the fact that this same political force, along with the Social Christians and the PRIAN and PRE, was on the verge of surrendering the country's sovereignty to the United States by signing the TLC; this is no more than a strategy, because its social base could be weakened - the poor people that voted PSP in the first round, radicalised their position in the second round and went to the left.

It is preferable to trust the direct alliance between the people and the left, to make it stronger, this is the base that not only is going to maintain the new government, but will push for the Correa's campaign proposals to be carried out so we can advance towards another situation of struggle, not only in Ecuador but in Latin America and the world.

Although Rafael Correa obtained a significant vote in the first round, in the second round, an articulation of left consciousness in the urban and rural sectors of the country was developed; a new encounter between the social and political forces of left, between all the actors who for more than two decades have fought openly against neoliberal globalisation.

We have many challenges: - to consolidate a government which fulfils the most important promises like not signing the TLC, creating the Constituent Assembly and improving the conditions of life, employment, health, education and housing, of the poorest people of the country; on the other hand, to consolidate the unity of the left that will be tested in the capacity to take ahead a Constituent Assembly, not only altering but pushing back the neoliberal model in its substance, that is, on privatisation and in relation to the foreign debt; to radicalise specific reforms and to harness the struggle for respect, human and collective rights, that benefit indigenous peoples, women, young people and so on, in the perspective of constructing a New Society; to affirm a process of unity and alliance with Venezuela, Brazil, Cuba, Bolivia and other peoples in resistance in Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia; to promote new processes of organization and to strengthen the proposals of the popular and collective assemblies of struggle to allow the opening of a broad debate about where we want our country to go; also it is a time of revolutionary ideological reaffirmation that should not be lost.

It is a good time to recover and to advance, for a rethink on the new left. The political action of the political and social organizations, in addition, depends on reflection, because to build socialism we need to consider the contributions of history, to strengthen and update it from our conditions, Marxism, feminism and other revolutionary theories that will help us to reconstruct the revolutionary utopia, starting from the historical struggles of our own people.

Times of greater respect, dignity and creativity are coming, some say the beginning of a revolutionary process, in this sense all must contribute in the perspective of maximising the impact the first left government that has existed in the history of Ecuador (there was also the presidency of Jaime Roldós, but this is the first presidency originating from the left and promoting the socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century).

If it represents a great step for one of the smaller peoples territorially, it has beautiful and combative referents next to Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia. It is time to gather the first part of the harvest, of the valiant struggles of the indigenous movement, impelled by the CONAIE, the FENOCIN and other indigenous organizations, by women, workers, young people, and the critical thinkers who are pointing out another way in history and another exit from the crises and defeats that we have experienced, challenging us to continue prioritising political objectives by the construction of popular power and socialism.

---

## **P.S.**

\* From International Viewpoint Online magazine : IV n° 384 - December 2006.

\* Margarita Aguinaga is a feminist activist in Refundación Socialista, Ecuadorian section of the Fourth International.