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There was no “Miracle”: hard-line, right-winged tendency wins in Colombia

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Ivan Duque —inexperienced politician with lack of communication, and protégé of former President Alvaro Uribe— has just won the presidential election in Colombia. The denounced fraud was not finally investigated. Several problems were reported; namely, irregularities in more than 800 polling tables, a million dollar buying of thousands cards and a paramilitary presence in 237 “risky” municipalities in the country.

If we add the “benevolence” of electoral authorities to these facts, the political apathy of 56% of all voters, and the citizens’ hate to everything smelling politics, then we can find the logic behind the wide margin with which Duque (53,95%) defeated left-wing representative Gustavo Petro (41,73%).

Ivan Duque faces now huge challenges. Let’s see how he handles everything: the pressure of being Alvaro Uribe’s protégé, the extreme right-winged forces of the Democratic Center Party, the peace agreement (he is now talking about reforms, not annulment), and the reform of justice so they can avoid the Constituent. It would meet the social urgencies to approve the implementation of land reform and eradicate corruption, which seems really tough given the sort of people surrounding Duque.

## SOME THOUGHTS

Anyway, the left as well as progressive forces around them may join forces and create a bloc that protects the life of former members of FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army), social and peasant leaders, who are being systematically assassinated.

They should be careful with some forces joining the progressive bloc as there are suspicions about leaders who deter votes and then their stance coincides with that of the right's programs.

Remember that after the first round of the general elections and being released the numbers where *Colombia Humana* —Petro's political party—, and *Coalicion Colombia* (CC) earned a higher number of votes than the right led by Duque, the leader of the alternative movement CC, Sergio Fajardo, urged to vote blank instead of calling for the unity of all anti-corruption forces or defending social justice. This fact weakened significantly the democratic trend.

Several analysts warned *Alianza Verde* and *Polo Democratico* that this candidate had been encouraged by Alvaro Uribe (ideologist of the right-wing tendency) and would certainly claim compensation: to divide the democratic process.

It is important to point out that the left has its weakness. The right seems to be stronger as all those who criticized Alvaro Uribe joined forces and left behind their differences. Thus, the extreme right-wing led by Andres Pastrana, Cesar Gaviria, and Vargas Lleras, among others, worked together to endorse Ivan Duque's candidacy.

The neoliberal society has all the legislative power in Colombia with 85 representatives out of 100. Its mayors represent more than 90%. They handle voting nationally and have all the means to pay voluntary officials, guarantee food, hand over propaganda, and provide transportation to voters. Summing up, there is a lot of money for the “dynamic” process.

There is no freedom of information in Colombia. All the media are owned by six families. All of them follow the same script of support to their representative. There has been propaganda on terror as they accused Gustavo Petro of being a guerrilla man. Petro was said to transform Colombia into a new Venezuela.

Nonetheless, the left had its own living candidate. And despite the upcoming storm, there is always hope to find similar conditions for all candidates in the future.

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