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Bolivian Court OKs Vote on Allowing Presidents to Serve 3 Terms

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A referendum on the proposed constitutional change is set for Feb. 21.

The proposal amends Article 168 replacing the phrase “only one time” with “two times” in regard to the maximum number of re-elections of a sitting president.

Should the “yes” prevail in the referendum, President Evo Morales would be able to run in 2019 for what would be a fourth consecutive term.

Bolivia’s first indigenous president took office in 2006, started his second term in 2010 and the third in January of this year.

Although the new constitution enacted in 2009 limits the president to two consecutive terms, Morales was able to run in 2014 thanks to a court decision that concluded his first term did not count against the total because it began prior to the adoption of the new charter.

Morales, Cabinet ministers and pro-government organizations and labor unions celebrated this week his becoming the longest-serving head of state in Bolivia’s history, surpassing Andres de Santa Cruz, who governed for nine years, eight months and 26 days between 1829 and 1839.

In the midst of the celebration, the 55-year-old Morales said he had “much more energy to continue advancing to guarantee Bolivia’s definitive liberation.”