

## After Socialists Win 17 of 23 States, US Claims Venezuela Elections Not ‘Free and Fair’

The United Socialist Party of Venezuela won at least 17 of the 23 governorships, also garnering 54 percent of the vote.

By [Telesur](#)

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*U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, **Nikki Haley**, cast doubt on the results of Venezuela’s Regional Elections where candidates from the governing Socialist Party won a vast majority of seats, claiming the vote was not “free and fair.”*

“An election is only legitimate if it is free and fair, and from the start, this was neither,” Haley said via the U.S. mission to the United Nations Twitter account.

The United Socialist Party of Venezuela, or PSUV won at least 17 of the 23 governorships, also garnering 54 percent of the vote. The PSUV candidate for Bolivar state, where no official results have been declared yet, also claimed victory.

Turnout was 61.14 percent in Sunday’s polls, with ballots cast at 13,559 polling stations nationwide.

Venezuelan **President Nicolas Maduro** said it was the highest turnout in 15 years – more than 10 million people voted.

"An election is only legitimate if it is free and fair, and from the start, this was neither." -Ambassador Haley on [#Venezuela pic.twitter.com/Eqe5D8S1Ki](#)

— US Mission to the UN (@USUN) [October 16, 2017](#)

Prior to the vote, the U.S. State Department issued a statement questioning the “fairness of the electoral process” in Venezuela, and expressing “great concern that the regime will not permit the presence of independent international electoral observers.”

Over 1,300 national and international observers, including opposition appointed auditors, were on hand for the Oct. 15 vote. An audit of the vote will also be held, election officials confirmed Monday.

The U.S.-backed opposition meanwhile, has stated they would not recognize the results that have been reported by the head of the National Electoral Council (CNE), **Tibisay Lucena**.

“We do not recognize the results offered by Tibisay Lucena,” said opposition

coalition MUD campaign chief **Gerardo Blyde**.

Blyde said the results are not reflective of those being tracked by his party. He also accused the electorate of misrepresenting the location of the polling stations in a bid to confuse voters.

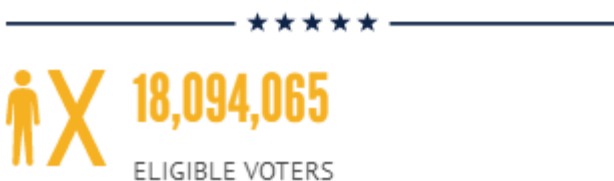
“In the first place, they violated citizens’ rights by unconsciously relocating the CNE’s voting centers and other abusive attitudes and now violate the Venezuelan vote,” Blyde said.

Less than 1.5 percent of voting stations were relocated from areas that saw violence during the July 30 Constituent Assembly election, CNE officials explained.

Despite the statements from Blyde and MUD leaders, elected opposition recognized the results that will see them take office.

“I can only recognize what I have in my hands, and in Tachira, I recognize that the people spoke,” **Leidy Gomez**, the MUD candidate who won the elections for governor of the border state, told teleSUR.

## VENEZUELA REGIONAL ELECTIONS RESULTS: NUMBER AND FACTS



[See this for the results by state.](#)

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