

## Chavez wins poll, days after largest-ever march

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*More than 3 million people marched in support of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and his socialist platform in Caracas on October 4, three days before Chavez was re-elected with 54% of the vote.*

*Venezuela's socialist President Hugo Chavez has won the October 7 Venezuelan elections with over 54.44% of the vote against 45% of the vote for right-wing opposition candidate Henrique Capriles. The National Electoral Council's Tibisay Lucena announced more than 80% of the 19,119,809 registered voters in Venezuela participated in the election.*



*[Venezuela Analysis reported](#) just after the results were announced: "Fireworks are already going off in the centre of the Andean city of Merida, and a massive crowd of Chavez supporters have begun celebrating in front of the presidential palace, Miraflores, in Caracas."*

*Chavez ran on a detailed 39-page platform to deepen the Bolivarian revolution his government is leading, which has significantly reduced poverty. The platform for the next six-year presidential term, widely debated in popular organisations across Venezuela, details plans for a radical transition towards socialism.*

*[Venezuela Analysis](#) is providing more detailed information on the outcome and its significance.*

*The poll came three days after more than 3 million people took over the streets of Caracas in a huge show of support for Chavez and his socialist platform. Below, Venezuela Analysis's Rachael Boothroyd reports from Caracas on the huge demonstration.*

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Over three million Chavez supporters flooded the streets of Caracas yesterday to show their support for the re-election of current Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez ahead of the country's presidential elections on Sunday.

The rally was the final act of the three month long election campaign, and is reported to be the largest to have taken place in the nation's history, stretching right throughout the seven main avenues of the capital city.

It comes just three days after Chavez called on supporters to mobilise for his final campaign rally following an opposition march in support of right-wing candidate Capriles Radonski,

which succeeded in filling one of the main streets in the capital.

“On Thursday, everybody should be in Caracas, so the city overflows with the Bolivarian avalanche. We are going to fill 7 avenues and more,” said Chavez from a campaign rally in Barinas on Monday.

By 1 pm, over five of the main streets and most of the metro lines were already filled to the brim with noisy and joyous supporters, who chanted, sang, danced and blew horns as they waited for Chavez to arrive. Determined to show their support for the socialist president, many people from the nearby shantytowns surrounding Caracas descended from the hilltops on foot when they proved too numerous for local transport links.

“It was him who gave a voice to the students, who thought of the poor and brought us the revolution,” said a student to Venezuelan state TV channel, VTV.

Despite the heavy rain which flooded Caracas’ streets, the Venezuelan president managed to make his way through the crowds by 2pm, when he then addressed what has come to be known as the Chavista “sea of red.” He promised the crowd that he would be a “better president” and a “better companion” to the people during his next term.

“Within the next 6 years we should be in first place in the world for education, health, housing, nutrition and employment... In our hands the life of our homeland will not be lost, of that I am sure,” he declared.

With chants such as “Chavez isn’t going” ringing throughout the centre of the city, the atmosphere was jubilant and many there predicted a resounding victory for the socialist president on Sunday.

“Today Capriles died and on Sunday, we’ll bury him” said an elderly man to other people sheltering from the rain in a cafe near to Bellas Artes in the city centre.

Many of those at the march were eager to talk about their love of Chavez, as well as international perceptions of the elections; especially media reports that marchers were “forced or paid to attend”.

“My presence here comes from the heart,” said one of the women from the government’s education program, Mission Ribas, who was also sheltering from the downpour.

Inside the cafe many continued to dance and sing despite the rain, which was broken by intermittent chants in support of Chavez and his re-election as president.

“Caracas was totally bursting! They (the opposition) say it was a show, they say that people were paid, but the reality is that our homeland calls upon us to be there, long live our leader (Chavez),” said Joseph Sanabria, 19, a student at the Bolivarian University, to [Venezuelanalysis.com](http://Venezuelanalysis.com).

“Just make the comparison, either we live how we did 20 years ago, hungry and poor, or we continue with the transition to socialism, which is simply love, peace, harmony, equality and independence,” continued Sanabria.

The day’s celebrations went on well into the night, with people gathering outside of the presidential palace Miraflores to listen and dance to music from salsa to reggaeton and even

ant-capitalist rap.

Most polls in Venezuela give incumbent president Chavez a 10% lead or more over his right-wing opponent, Capriles Radonski.

The continued popularity of the government has been attributed in part to the implementation of a series of “social missions” which provide free health, education and subsidised food to the population, as well to initiatives aimed at deepening citizens’ political participation such as through locally based bodies of self-governance known as “communal councils”.

Venezuelanalysis.com has published a < a href="http://venezuelanalysis.com/images/7318">set of images and [videos](#) of the march.

Photos below of the Caracas march are from [the Facebook page](#) of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) — the mass party led by Chavez.



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