

Latin America: Is Canada Trying to Create Another “Illegitimate” Government?

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Region: [Canada](#), [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Theme: [History](#)

*Bolivia has recently had a presidential election that without foreign interference would have passed without notice outside Latin America. **President Evo Morales** was re-elected democratically to a fourth term without the need of a run-off election with incumbent **Carlos Mesa**, which shows his strength as the chosen candidate. However, nine days after the elections the Foreign Ministry of the Canadian government issues a [statement](#) expressing “concern” about “reports of serious election irregularities.”*

We are used to expecting that kind of political position towards a popular left-leaning government from the US, which in fact has [not recognised](#) the Morales elections yet. But why is Canada so adamant in questioning the Bolivian election in the face of weak evidence of so-called irregularities?

To start, it is important to establish that US and Canada’s involvement in the region is very well coordinated. In 2017 Ottawa and Washington [formed an association](#) that “called on [the two governments] to take economic measures against Venezuela.” The focus on Venezuela should not hide the reality of the mandate, which is to produce a regime change wherever leftist governments are present, albeit Venezuela is at the top of the list. This is an association based on common ideology to be carried out with a division of tactical labour: Canada uses its “soft power” while the US hits with its brute financial force.

For instance, while the US government is punishing Venezuela with a severe economic and financial blockade, Canada’s “job” has been instrumental in subverting the progressive support base in the region to the extent of even breaking the strong [Cuba-Venezuela friendship](#). Canada has become the self-appointed “leader” within the OAS, an organisation that gathers mostly Latin American and Caribbean countries; only Canada and the US are not from those geographical areas.

Under the direction of **Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland** from 2017, Canadian foreign policy seems to have taken an overt pro-corporation approach with a strong pro-neoliberal ideology. She came to that office from being Minister of International Trade where she would have heard many “complaints” of lost business in Venezuela from Canadian mining corporations, which are nevertheless [questioned](#) in some cases.

With that background and reputation she helped create the so-called Lima Group of a dozen mostly Latin American rightwing governments some of which have appalling records of human rights violations and of breaking the institutional order (Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay among others).

Therefore Canada is a willing partner of US sponsored Color Revolutions that are taking place in Latin America by omission or by commission.

While the ongoing [recent unrest](#) that we observe in [Ecuador](#), [Chile](#) and [Bolivia](#) manifest the same sentiments of rebellion and indeed desire for regime change, not all Revolutions are created equal. Ecuador and Chile have rightwing conservative neoliberal governments, the kind that are supported by the Canadian regime, unlike Bolivia.

It is imperative to pay attention to the political alignment and interests of the major geopolitical players to be able to discern, more than the methods, the goal of the intended change. Canada, which has been called [The Empire's Shadowy Cousin](#), has decidedly engaged in [delegitimising the Nicolas Maduro government](#) in Venezuela because as we previously [reported](#) Canada is bound to gain a large "prize" in mining resources if it manages to oust Maduro.

In the case of Bolivia the main trade interest also seems to be in mining. In 2017 [Canadian imports](#) totaled \$274.35 million (mainly in mineral ores, metals and precious stones and vegetables). But this has to be weighed vis-a-vis Bolivia's claim on "Sovereignty over natural resources" as one of its pillars established in the [Economic and Social Development Plan 2016-2020](#), which states,

"The strategic sectors of hydrocarbons and mining are the cornerstones of the Plurinational State of Bolivia economy as a result of the nationalization process and because of the role of the State in the administration of these strategic resources owned by the Bolivian people."

To the ears of neoliberal politicians this must sound like outright socialism.

In conclusion, the claim of election "irregularities" may just be Canada's public (readily unverifiable) excuse for more political interests. In fact, at the time of writing the OAS has [accepted](#) an invitation by the Morales government to audit the election results. If there should be any proven irregularity a second round of vote is proposed. The findings should be binding by both sides. However the political damage has already been done because the opposition has declared that will only accept a new election.

What has been a crass irregularity and interference is the public statement by the OAS Mission of election observers that overstepped its mandate by issuing "preliminary conclusions" calling for a second round before the vote count was completed.

It is important to recognise that Canadian involvement in the region has a dangerous and questionable implication as suggested by its actions in Bolivia's elections.

The application of sanctions or public statements, propagating unwarranted false or misleading information with the sole intention of countering the resurgence of countries' chosen socialist governments that are opposed to neoliberal austerity policies in Latin America, is a provocation against the sovereignty of those countries and their established social order. This is clearly the case towards Venezuela, and Canada is now attempting to include Bolivia by using similar language in casting "doubt over the legitimacy of the [electoral] results."

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