

Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro Accepts National Assembly Loss, Opposition Coalition Wins 99 Seats

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Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro stated, "The opposition hasn't won, a counterrevolution has won." Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro responded Monday to the outcome of Sunday's National Assembly (AN) election praising the turnout of nearly 75 percent.

"The constitution and democracy have triumphed, we recognize and accept these results," said President Maduro.

The comments came in the wake of Sunday's high stakes AN election, which saw the president's socialist party, the PSUV, lose its majority in the National Assembly.

The head of Venezuela's electoral authority announced the results early Monday. The governing United Socialist Party of Venezuela won 46 seats, the opposition coalition won 99 seats, with 19 still to be announced, as well as the three indigenous positions.

President Maduro thanked the workers of the electoral authority and the country's armed forces that supported the realization of Sunday's elections.

"A perfect electoral system, without a doubt is one the most marvelous creations of these 16 years of revolution, of transformations and the creation of something new," said Maduro.

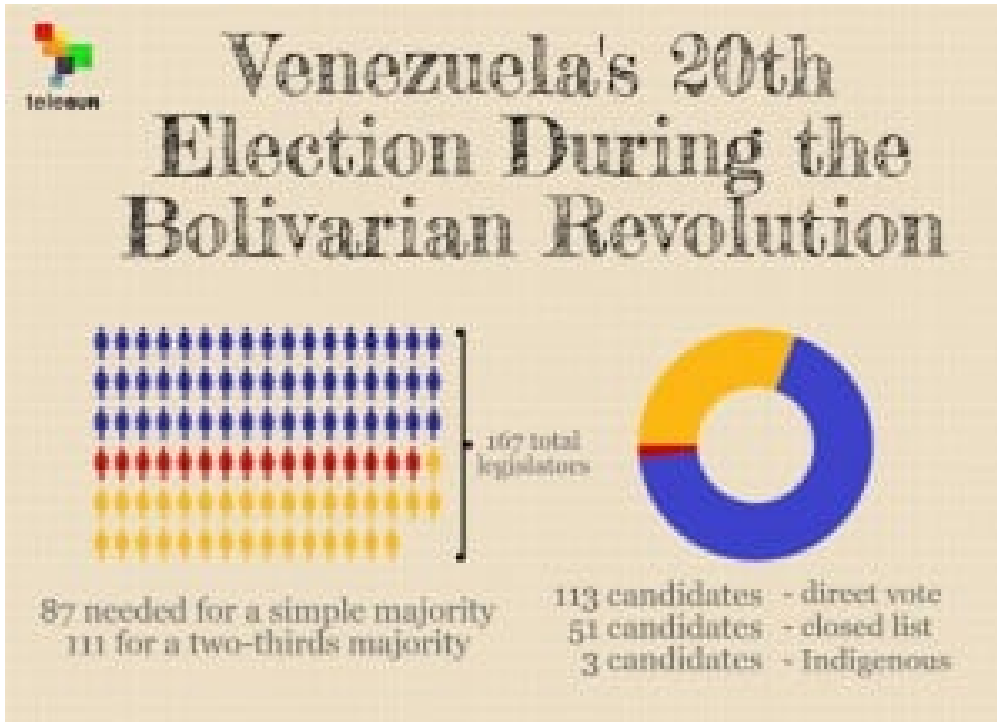
As many as 19 million registered voters were expected to cast ballots in the election, that was widely predicted to be one of the tightest in years.

In light of the results, Maduro called on the opposition and their supporters to cease the "economic war" against the government and to respect the law.

President Maduro also took the opportunity to call on supporters to learn the lessons from this defeat.

"We have lost a battle today but the fight is for a new socialism has barely begun ... We see this as a slap to wake us up to act," said Maduro.

"It is time for a rebirth."



Leading figures in the opposition declared victory before the release of official results.

Ahead of Sunday's vote, the head of an election accompaniment mission representing the UNASUR regional bloc, Jose Luis Exeni, said Venezuela's voting system is secure.

Exeni told teleSUR the mission has have more than 40 personnel positioned in voting stations across the country.

"We come here with important experience to accompany this (electoral) process," he said during an interview Thursday.

The mission head said international media reports in the lead up to the vote suggesting the electoral system is vulnerable to abuse are misleading, describing the Venezuelan electoral process as "consistent," and "very auditable."

"Everyone should commit to respecting the results," he said.

VENEZUELA'S ELECTORAL SYSTEM



Since 1999, when Hugo Chavez came to power, Venezuela has been tarred as a non-democratic country by mainstream media and other private interests. In reality, democracy in Venezuela is going strong, and its voting system has been much praised by international observers. Dec. 6 will mark the 20th time Venezuelans have voted in 16 years.








2004

2012

Venezuela becomes the **first country in the world** to hold a national election with machines that provide voters with a **printout** of how they voted

Venezuela carries out its first national election using voters' **fingerprints** to activate the voting machine

How Does It Work?

1.  Large-print ballots with candidate photos are available, designed with older adults and those with sight problem in mind
2.  The voting machine is activated with a fingerprint
3.  The encrypted vote is sent to the CNE electoral council via its own network, not connected to the Internet
4.  No other computers can access the results
5.  Only votes from CNE-authorized computers are counted
6.  There are 7 ways to authenticate the votes:
 1. The **printout**, which uses security ink and watermarked paper
 2. The voting machine's **internal memory**
 3. The voting machine's **external (removable) memory**
 4. **Monitors' records** at each polling station
 5. The **electronic vote**
 6. The **electronic tally** of each machine
 7. The **final national tally**
7.  Official, precise results are released quickly
8.  In case of electrical fault the machines have backup
9.  Votes have 1 min 10 secs to cast their votes

Audits Safeguard Votes

The system's last audit was overseen by 198 international observers. The following audits are carried out by the CNE, in the presence of political representatives:

BEFORE

Voting software is audited during its production and after it is installed on the voting machines

DURING

Audits done of: fingerprint identification system; the data transmission network, the tally system; the indelible ink used on fingers to prevent attempts to vote multiple times

AFTER

Inspection of the voting machines' memory and backup data, counting the printouts of the votes, the electronic ballots and the registration book

ELECTORAL COUNCIL



PRESIDENT
Tibisay Lucena



VICE PRESIDENT
Sandra Oblitas Ruzza



SECRETARY-GENERAL
Xavier Moreno Reyes



JUDICIAL ADVISOR
Roberto Mirabal Acosta

WHAT IS THE COUNCIL?

Venezuela's National Electoral Council, known as the CNE, is the **independent governing body** responsible for the **transparency, fairness, credibility** and efficient organization of elections and referenda and for their results

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