



FIRST ROUND OF THE COLOMBIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

MAY 30, 2010

REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION



Parliamentary Confederation
of the Americas



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INTRODUCTION

Created in 1997, the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA) is an interparliamentary organization that brings together the congresses and parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal and federated states, regional parliaments and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas.

Its goals include strengthening parliamentary democracy and building a community of the Americas founded on respect for human rights and dignity, peace, democracy, solidarity between peoples, social justice and gender equality.

To achieve this objective, COPA sought to take an active part in strengthening democracy in the Americas and so adopted the *By-laws of COPA Electoral Observation Missions* in May 2005.

From May 26 to 31, 2010, a delegation of 24 COPA parliamentarians was in Colombia, in the Bogotá district, to observe and report on the first round of the general elections held on May 30.

This was the 11th electoral observation mission organized by COPA,¹ which has developed electoral observation know-how and expertise over the years, and its first one in Colombia.

The purpose of this report is to present the delegation's activities and findings during its visit to Colombia from May 26 to 31, 2010. The report is divided into eight sections:

- (1) mission terms of reference;**
- (2) delegation members;**
- (3) pre-election political context;**
- (4) legal and institutional framework of May 30, 2010 elections;**
- (5) mission activities prior to election day;**
- (6) mission activities on election day;**
- (7) COPA mission findings;**
- (8) mission conclusions and recommendations.**

1. COPA conducted observation missions during the following elections:

- Bolivian early general elections, December 18, 2005;
- Mexican presidential and legislative elections, July 2, 2006;
- 1st round of the Brazilian presidential and legislative elections, October 1, 2006;
- Nicaraguan presidential and legislative elections, November 5, 2006;
- 1st round of the Guatemalan presidential and legislative elections, September 9, 2007;
- Argentinian presidential and legislative elections, October 28, 2007;
- Paraguayan presidential election, April 20, 2008;
- Salvadoran general elections, March 16, 2009;
- Mexican legislative elections, July 5, 2009;
- Bolivian general elections and autonomy referendum, December 6, 2010.

1. MISSION TERMS OF REFERENCE

On September 18, 2009, in Salta, Argentina, COPA's General Assembly adopted a recommendation (Appendix I) proposing that an electoral observation mission be sent to Colombia for the presidential election to be held on May 30, 2010.

In a letter dated March 5, 2010, the President of COPA, **Edda Evangelina Acuña**, informed the Colombian authorities of COPA's willingness and availability to dispatch a delegation of parliamentarians for the May 30, 2010 ballot (Appendix II).

On April 12, 2010, Colombia's National Electoral Council and National Registrar of Civil Status authorized the COPA parliamentarians to be present during Colombia's presidential election on May 30, 2010, as international observers (Schedule III). The COPA observers were invited to participate in the program organized for observers from the Inter-American Union of Electoral Organizations (UNIORE).² On receiving the invitation, it was agreed that the COPA delegation would conduct its observation activities independently on election day.

In a letter dated May 19, 2010, COPA President Edda Acuña informed Colombia's electoral authorities of the composition of the COPA delegation that she would be heading up.

From May 26 to 29, 2010, the delegation attended an international seminar on democracy, organized by Colombia's National Electoral Council, which focused on the electoral processes in Latin America, and particularly in Colombia. Important working meetings were also held with political party representatives, electoral authorities, representatives of private organizations and other international observers to gather information on the electoral process and the situation prevailing in the country on the eve of the vote.

On polling day, the delegates observed election operations at over 100 polling stations in the Bogotá district.

2. DELEGATION MEMBERS

The COPA delegation included **Edda Evangelina Acuña**, mission leader, President of COPA and Senator of the Province of Buenos Aires.

The other mission members were **Cristina Ruíz Sandoval**, Deputy for the State of Mexico and COPA Executive Secretary; **Eduardo Nava Bolaños**, Senator of the Congress of the Mexican Union and COPA Vice-President representing North America; **Zulma Gómez**, Senator of the Republic of Paraguay and COPA Vice-President representing the Southern Cone; **Carlos Jiménez Macías**, Senator of the Congress of the Mexican Union and former COPA President; **Alejandra Vucasovich**, Deputy for the Province of Santa Fe, Argentina, and Vice-Chair of COPA's Committee on Democracy and Peace; **Gloria Bidegain**, Deputy of the Congress of the Argentine Nation and COPA Executive Committee member; **Jorge Alberto Lagna**, Deputy of the Congress of the Argentine Nation and COPA Executive Committee member; **Julio César Franco**, Senator for the Republic of Paraguay and COPA Executive Committee member; **Edgar Carrasco**, Regional Legislative Council member for the State of Anzoátegui, Venezuela, and

². The Inter-American Union of Electoral Organizations (UNIORE) is a non-governmental inter-American organization that promotes dialogue and collaboration between the electoral organizations of the different States.

COPA Executive Committee member; **Antonio Morante**, Deputy of the Congress of the Argentine Nation; **Nancy González**, Deputy of the Congress of the Argentine Nation; **Antonia Alegre**, Deputy for the Province of La Pampa, Argentina; **Joaquín Blanco**, Deputy for the Province of Santa Fe, Argentina; **Victor Hugo Dadomo**, Deputy for the Province of Santa Fe, Argentina; **Alicia Gutiérrez**, Deputy for the Province of Santa Fe, Argentina; **Dario Boscarol**, Deputy for the Province of Santa Fe, Argentina; **Estela Mendez de Micheli**, Deputy for the Province of Santa Fe, Argentina; **Daniel Ratthé**, Member of the National Assembly of Québec, Canada; **Norma Esperanza**, Senator of the Congress of the Mexican Union; **Pascual Bellizzia**, Deputy for the State of Tabasco, Mexico; **José Carlos Ocaña Becerra**, Deputy for the State of Tabasco, Mexico; **Marta Angón**, Deputy for the State of Mexico, Mexico; and **Maria José Alcalá**, Deputy for the State of Mexico, Mexico.

The parliamentarians were assisted technically and administratively by **Christiane Bérubé**, advisor to the COPA Committee on Democracy and Peace, **Denis Royer**, director of the Research, Modernization and International Cooperation Service of the office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Québec, and **Mailen Velez**, advisor to the President of COPA.

Cristina Bidegain (Argentina), **Hector Leguizamon** (Paraguay) and **Lilia Hernández** (Mexico) also accompanied the delegation.

3. PRE-ELECTION POLITICAL CONTEXT

3.1 Portrait

Colombia is the only country in South America having coastlines on both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. With almost 45 million inhabitants, it is the third most populous country in South America after Brazil and Mexico, and shares borders with Panama, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador and Brazil.

In 2009, Colombia's GNP was US \$400.3 billion.³ Economic growth was strong between 2002 and 2007, partly due to President Uribe's policy of opening up the country's economy. The international financial crises brought slower growth in 2008 (2.5%) and slight negative growth in 2009 (- 0.1%). The unemployment rate for 2009 was 12%.⁴

In descending order of importance, services, industry and agriculture are the country's chief economic sectors. Colombia is internationally recognized as a major producer of coffee, flowers, coal and oil and the world's largest producer of emeralds. Its main trading partners are the US, China and Venezuela.⁵

Colombia is also known for its cultural diversity. More than 60% of the population is *mestizo*, 5% is of African origin and approximately 1% is formed of indigenous peoples.⁶

Colombia's biodiversity is one of the richest in the world.

³. In 2009 US dollars. CIA, "Colombia", *The World Factbook*, 2009, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/co.html>.

⁴. Ibid.

⁵. Ibid. This position may change in 2010 with Venezuela's decision to restrict entry of Colombian goods in its territory.

⁶. Ibid.

3.2 Historical Overview

Cartagena was declared independent in 1811, but it was only several years later, in 1819, that Simón Bolívar definitively declared Colombia an independent country. The first Constitution dates from 1821, a time when “*Gran Colombia*” comprised the modern states of Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador and Panama.

The first century of the republic was marked by civil wars that shaped the country’s history and brought on changes not only in the Constitution, but in the country’s name, type of government and territorial boundaries.

The Conservatives held power between 1886 and 1930. The Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal*) led the country between 1930 and 1946, when the Conservatives regained the executive power, with the Liberals nonetheless holding the majority of seats in Congress. In 1948, with the assassination of Liberal Party presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, the country was plunged into a series of partisan riots known as the *Bogotazo*, which left thousands dead. Civil war—“*La Violencia*”—ensued, lasting until the mid-fifties.

The Conservatives remained in power until 1953 when they were swept away by a *coup d’état* led by General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. Pinilla’s brief dictatorship ended in 1957, when the Liberal and Conservative parties created the National Front (*Frente Nacional*), a bipartisan political and electoral coalition that spearheaded the transition back to democracy. Between 1958 and 1974, Liberals and Conservatives held the executive power on an alternating basis, and congressional seats were evenly divided between the two parties. This coalition excluded all other political parties.

As for its major institutions, it should be noted that Colombia is, relatively speaking, one of the most stable countries of Latin America. Without meeting all the criteria of a model democracy, [TRANSLATION] “Colombia is the only country in the [Andean] region with an almost uninterrupted democratic tradition and an equally long tradition of institutional stability.”⁷

The Civil Conflict

According to a number of experts, the drug trade is not the cause but rather the catalyst of Colombia’s societal woes. The conflict, these experts note, began well before the era of large-scale drug production and is rooted in a long history of social inequality and political exclusion.⁸

Out of the turbulent times of *La Violencia* and the advent of the National Front, there emerged groups of former liberal militants and dissatisfied communist activists, of which one of the best known, formed in the sixties and inspired by other revolutionary struggles taking place in Latin America, was the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas revolucionarias de Colombia* – FARC). Another group to emerge during this time was the National Liberation

⁷. Daniel Pécaut, “Colombie : ¿qué pasa?”, 2008, http://info.tsr.ch/geopolitis/hebdo_colombie.pdf.

⁸. For reference purposes, see Grace Livingstone, *Inside Colombia: Drugs, Democracy, and War* (Chapel Hill, NC: Rutgers University Press, 2004) or Daniel Pécaut, *Las Farc: ¿Una Guerrilla sin fin o sin fines?* (Grupo Editorial Norma, 2008).

Army (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional* – ELN). At their foundation both of these still active leftist movements were engaged in the liberation of territories and the promotion of social equality.⁹

Until the late sixties, the mostly small-scale operations of such groups were concentrated in remote areas far from the country's large urban centres.

The growth of drug trafficking in Colombia over the past 35 years was a money-maker for guerrilla groups, and the emergence of drug cartels led to an upsurge of violence both in large cities and in rural areas.

Guerrilla attacks, combined with the State's ineffective countermeasures, led to the formation of paramilitary groups. Some of these sprung out of the state apparatus itself, while others were funded by large landholders seeking to protect their property. One of the most well known of these groups is the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* – AUC). Although officially demobilized today, the AUC is said by some to have engendered splinter groups that are rapidly expanding their operations on Colombian soil.¹⁰

Today, many authors affirm that the complexity of the conflict is not attributable solely to social and political issues, [TRANSLATION] “but equally to several other actors and implicit interests.”¹¹ The various factions are engaged, rather, in a power struggle for the political and geographical control of territory, which is also a way of controlling the resources (especially oil) and the people as well as the drug trade.¹²

But it is the civil population that is suffering the disastrous consequences of the unending conflict between the Government, the paramilitaries and the guerrillas. Thousands of murders are linked to the conflict every year,¹³ and while the situation seems to have improved considerably since 2002, people continue to feel unsafe. In some large cities, such as Medellín and Cali, the homicide rate is on the rise once again.¹⁴

In addition to homicides, armed confrontations between the parties to the conflict give rise to massive population displacements,¹⁵ disappearances, hostage takings and forced recruitment. The 2009 Red Cross Report estimates the number of displaced persons in Colombia at more than 3,000,000, with all the problems of poverty and exclusion that figure implies. Children, women, indigenous peoples and rural Afro-Colombian communities continue to be forcibly recruited, displaced, threatened and massacred by new paramilitary groups and other armed groups.¹⁶

⁹. François Audet, “Colombie : des intérêts divergents pour une guerre sans fin” (Montréal: Observatoire des Amériques, Centre d'études internationales et mondialisation (CEIM), Université du Québec à Montréal, 2003).

¹⁰. Human Rights Watch, “Colombia”, *World Report 2010*, <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/87513>.

¹¹. François Audet, “Colombie : des intérêts divergents”.

¹². Grace Livingstone, *Inside Colombia*.

¹³. Philippe Dufort, “Paramilitarisme et scandale de la parapolitique en Colombie”, *La Chronique des Amériques*, no. 17 (October 2007).

¹⁴. International Crisis Group, “Uribe's Possible Third Term and Conflict Resolution in Colombia”, *Latin American Report*, no. 31 (December 18, 2009).

¹⁵. International Committee of the Red Cross, “Colombia: Humanitarian Situation Deteriorates”, 2009, <http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/colombia-update-150409>.

¹⁶. International Crisis Group, “Uribe's Possible Third Term”.

3.3 Government of Álvaro Uribe

On May 26, 2002, exasperated by the situation, the Colombian people voted massively for a right-wing government (*Primero Colombia*) that promised to put an end to the conflict. Nonetheless it was the Liberal Party, two months before, that had won the legislative elections.

Álvaro Uribe Velez, former mayor of Medellín, former senator and former governor of the department of Antioquia, became the 56th president of the Republic of Colombia and the first president ever who did not belong to one of the two traditional parties. Though formerly a Liberal Party member, he ran as an independent candidate in the 2002 elections. Shortly before the 2006 elections, a political movement was formed for the President's re-election; this was the Social Party of National Unity (*Partido Social de Unidad Nacional – Partido de la U*).

President Uribe's first term was marked by strong efforts to re-establish state control over all Colombian soil. The Uribe government's policy to combat Colombia's problems was to launch a military offensive against illegal armed groups, particularly the FARC, and to demobilize AUC paramilitaries.

Implemented in 2003, the Democratic Security Policy (*Política de Seguridad Democrática*) received millions of dollars in US military aid¹⁷ and helped to substantially reduce insurgency threats on major urban and economic centres.¹⁸

In October 2005, the Constitutional Court accepted a presidential proposal to amend article 197 of the Constitution, thus allowing the President to run for a second term.

Though Álvaro Uribe was re-elected on May 28, 2006, with 62% of the vote, the abstention rate was 56%.¹⁹ In the March 2006 legislative elections, the Social Party of National Unity and its allies (Conservative Party, Radical Change Party and Democratic Party) obtained an absolute majority both in the Chamber of Representatives and in the Senate.

Uribe's second term was tarnished by the so-called "paragate" scandal. Since 2006, following revelations of links between paramilitaries and members of the Congress, more than 80 congress or former congress members have been charged, investigated or incarcerated for corruption, fraud or influence peddling.²⁰ Most belong to the pro-Uribe Social Party of National Unity and coalition. The Attorney General's Office (*Fiscalía General de la Nación*) and the Supreme Court of Justice (*Corte Suprema de Justicia*) have also investigated senior civil servants as well as regional and local authorities. The Administrative Department of Security (*Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad – DAS*), comprising the country's intelligence services, was particularly shaken by the scandal. Scandals involving corruption and influence peddling have continued to rock the Uribe government over the past few years.²¹

¹⁷. Sibylla Brodzinsky, "Colombia Court Ruling: No Third Term for Uribe", *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 28, 2010, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Americas/2010/0228/Colombia-court-ruling-No-third-term-for-Uribe>.

¹⁸. International Crisis Group, "Uribe's Possible Third Term".

¹⁹. The FARC paramilitaries called for a boycott of the vote.

²⁰. Human Rights Watch, "Colombia".

²¹. For example, the "*yidispolitica*", "*cuellopolitica*" and "*farcpolitica*" scandals. For more information, see International Crisis Group, "Uribe's Possible Third Term".

On February 26, 2010, after much equivocation in Congress, the Constitutional Court, in a seven-to-two decision, ruled unconstitutional the President's proposal that he be allowed to run for a third term pending the results of a popular referendum on the question. In the court's opinion, opening the door to the possibility of a third term would have undermined the spirit of the Constitution and violated the country's democratic principles.²²

Uribe left office after eight years as President; his support rating at the time was in the neighbourhood of 65%,²³ as it had been for the greater part of his two terms. He may legitimately take credit for driving the guerrillas back into isolated parts of the country, demobilizing the main paramilitary group (the AUC), and lowering the number of homicides.

On the other hand, he did not achieve the oft-announced victory over "terrorism" or bring about the peace Colombians were longing for, as had been his promise when first elected. The 2008 successes of the Democratic Security Consolidation Policy (release of hostages, arrest of FARC leaders) were followed in 2009 by an upsurge in violence. Some authors maintain that the new President will have to introduce a more multi-faceted strategy to attack the structural causes of the conflict.²⁴

3.4 Legislative Elections of March 14, 2010

Outgoing President Uribe's Social Party of National Unity won the legislative elections of March 14, 2010. It is worth noting, however, that while the pro-government coalition (Social Party of National Unity, Conservative Party and National Integration Party – PIN²⁵) won a majority of seats in Congress, its congressional control fell sharply, from approximately 70% to 50 or 55%. The results shown for the Chamber of Representatives are provisional.

Here are the announced results of the legislative elections:²⁶

Senate		Chamber of Representatives	
National Social Unity Party	28	National Social Unity Party	46
Conservative Party	22	Conservative Party	38
Liberal Party	17	Liberal Party	32
National Integration Party	9	National Integration Party	12
Radical Change Party	8	Radical Change Party	12
Alternative Democratic Pole	8	Alternative Democratic Pole	4
Green Party	5	Green Party	3
Others	5	Others	17
TOTAL	102	TOTAL	166

22. Corte Constitucional de Colombia, Sentencia C-141/10, February 26, 2010, <http://www.corteconstitucional.gov.co/comunicados/No.%2009%20Comunicado%2026%20de%20febrero%20de%202010.php>.

23. International Crisis Group, "Uribe's Possible Third Term".

24. Ibid.

25. Created in November 2009, this radical right-wing party openly supports paramilitary groups. Though highly controversial, it enjoys high popularity in remote regions formerly controlled by the FARC. The PIN is not running a presidential candidate, but will likely win nine seats in the Senate and 12 in the Chamber of Representatives. The party regards itself as part of the pro-Uribe coalition.

26. Provisional results of April 15, 2010, after 93.82% of the votes had been counted for Senate representatives and 93.96% for Chamber representatives. The final results should be known by July 2010. <http://www.registraduria.gov.co/elec2010/resultados.htm>.

The international and national observers (from, respectively, the Organization of American States and the *Misión de Observación Electoral – MOE*) on hand for the legislative elections emphasized the improvement in election day operations. Acts of violence were much less common than during the previous elections. However, electoral abuses were observed in several departments, vote-buying being one of the most widespread.²⁷

A number of technical problems were reported during the vote count. The MOE noted that both electors and polling station officers had trouble making sense of the ballot,²⁸ since the system of assigning numbers to candidates made it difficult to identify them. Spoiled ballots accounted for approximately 11% of the total.²⁹

Technical problems were also reported during the transmission of election results. In addition to delays, the threat of attack by computer hackers compelled authorities to block access to the Internet site that was to post election results in real time. The National Electoral Council is now in charge of tabulating results, but its president, Adelina Covo, anticipates additional delays before the final results can be published, since a number of complaints and denunciations are currently pending investigation.

3.5 The 2010 Presidential Electoral Campaign

The presidential electoral campaign officially got under way on January 29, 2010. Uppermost on the list of electoral issues was the possibility of a third term for President Uribe.

When a third term was ruled out by the Constitutional Court, the media concentrated its full attention on the race for the presidency. In April 2010, polls gave the lead to Juan Manuel Santos, presidential candidate for the National Social Unity Party and a former Minister of Defence.³⁰ He advocated continuing the work of Alvaro Uribe in all spheres, with security issues front and centre.

By April 15, 2010, the campaign having been dominated by movements that had sprung up within the various political parties and coalitions, there had still been almost no debate between the candidates. One daily newspaper, *El Espectador*, noted that [TRANSLATION] “the economy, which according to the polls is the electorate’s main preoccupation, does not seem to be the candidates’ priority.”³¹

According to some dailies, Conservative Party candidate and sometime diplomat Noemí Sanín, who was initially running second in the polls, had lost much support in the weeks before the elections. Sanín wished to distance herself from the Social Party of National Unity, and the smear campaign orchestrated against her indicated a deep division in the coalition of the right.³²

27. “Observadores de la OEA denunciaron compra de votos en 6 departamentos en elecciones des domingo”, *El tiempo*, March 16, 2010, <http://www.eltiempo.com>.

28. “Observadores de la OEA”, *El tiempo*, March 16, 2010.

29. Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, <http://www.registraduria.gov.co/elec2010/resultados.htm>.

30. Sarmiento, Eduardo, “Política y Economía”, *El Espectador*, April 3, 2010, www.elspectador.com.

31. “La Economía en la campaña presidencial”, *El Espectador*, April 3, 2010, <http://www.elspectador.com/articulo196557-economia-campana-presidencial>.

32. León Valencia, “Sorpresas y más sorpresas en la campaña presidencial”, *El Colombiano*, April 13, 2010, www.elcolombiano.com.

The surprise of these elections might have come from the Green Party. This party had won five seats in the Senate and three in the Chamber of Representatives in the legislative elections. The party seemed to have the wind in its sails after Sergio Fajardo, former mayor of Medellín, left his “independent citizen movement” (*Compromiso ciudadano por Colombia*) to join the team of Antanas Mockus, Green Party candidate and former mayor of Bogotá. All candidates endeavoured to give politics a positive image, and all called for an end to corruption, tighter ethical rules for Congress, and changes in the spheres of culture and education. Polls put Mockus a close second behind Juan Manuel Santos one month before the first round of the presidential election.³³

4. THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF MAY 30, 2010 ELECTIONS

4.1 Electoral System

The first round of the presidential election was held on May 30, 2010, and, since none of the candidates had obtained more than 50% of the vote, a second round was held on June 20, 2010.

The presidential election followed on the heels of the legislative elections of March 14, 2010, when representatives were elected to both congressional Chambers. As part of these elections, Colombians were able for the first time to directly elect the five Colombian representatives to the Andean Parliament.³⁴ In addition, the departments of the Caribbean coast were consulted with regard to the possibility of granting them more regional autonomy.

Executive Authority

In Colombia, the President holds the executive power and is both head of state and the head of the Government. The President shares power with the Vice-President, the ministers, and the governors of the administrative departments.

The President is elected by universal suffrage with a **simple majority** (50% +1); a second round of voting is required if this majority is not achieved (art. 190, Constitution).

An incumbent President may seek re-election once only (art. 197, Constitution).

Presidential Election – May 30, 2010	
1st Round	Universal suffrage: 50% + 1 of the votes
2 nd Round	Universal suffrage: If this percentage is not achieved, a second-round runoff election will be held three weeks later between the two candidates having obtained the most votes. Simple majority.

33. “Santos y Mockus están en empate técnico; el candidato del Partido Verde ganaría en la segunda vuelta”, *El Tiempo*, April 23, 2010, http://www.eltiempo.com/elecciones2010/encuesta-del-centro-nacional-de-consultoria_7649568-1.

34. The Andean Parliament is composed of five representatives from each member State (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru). Each member State is responsible for the election of its representatives. The Andean Parliament is dedicated to promoting and orienting the process of economic, social and political integration of the countries forming the Andean Community of Nations.

Legislative Authority

The Colombian Congress comprises two chambers, the Senate and the Chamber of Representatives.

In both cases the term of office is four years, to begin officially on July 20, 2010.

The **Chamber of Representatives** has 166 Members.

- Of these 166 Members, two are elected in a special riding for indigenous communities and two in a special riding for communities of African descent; one Member is elected by Colombians residing outside the country.
- Colombia's 32 departments and one federal district³⁵ make up the territorial ridings, each of which has at least two representatives, plus one Member per 365,000 inhabitants and one Member for any remainder of more than 182,000 inhabitants (art. 176, Electoral Code).³⁶
- Each party, movement and political group establishes the order of its candidates on a closed list (*no preferente*) or opts for an open list (*preferente*) whereby the electors choose a candidate.
- In the case of an open list, electors can choose to vote for the party only or for the party and a candidate. Once the votes have been counted, the list of candidates is ordered according to the number of votes obtained by each candidate.
- In the case of a closed list, electors vote only for the party. Once the votes have been counted, seats are assigned according to the order set out in a predetermined list of candidates.
- To obtain a seat in the Chamber of Representatives, there is a minimum threshold of votes a party must receive; this threshold is 50% of the quotient obtained by dividing the total number of valid votes by the number of seats to be filled.
- Subsequently, the seats are divided in proportion to the number of votes obtained by each party, association or citizens' group.

35. See map in Appendix V.

36. The figures of 365,000 and 182,500 are those of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Colombia after amendments A.L. 2/2005 and A.L. 3/2005. According to the official document of the National Registrar of Civil Status for the elections of 2010, the actual ratios are to be one Member per 250,000 inhabitants and one Member for any remainder of more than 125,000 inhabitants.

Composition of the Chamber of Representatives			
Ridings	Number of ridings	Electoral system	Number of candidates
Territorial	33 (32 departments and one federal district)	Proportional (open or closed list)	161 (min. 2 representatives per riding + 1 for the first 365,000 inhabitants and 1 for any remainder of more than 182,000 inhabitants)
Afro-Colombian	1 special	Proportional	2
Indigenous	1 special	Proportional	2
International	1	Proportional	1
Total			166

The **Senate** has 102 Members.

- 100 Members are elected in the sole national riding under a system of proportional representation, and two are elected in a special riding for indigenous communities.
- Candidate lists may be open or closed as decided by the political parties.
- Colombians residing abroad are eligible to vote in Senate elections.
- To win a Senate seat, a party, political movement or citizens' group must obtain at least 2% of valid votes.

Composition of the Senate			
Ridings	Number of ridings	Electoral system	Number of candidates
National (and international)	1	Proportional (open or closed list)	100
Indigenous	1 special	Proportional	2
Total			102

4.2 Main Political Parties and Presidential Candidates

As enumerated by the National Registrar of Civil Status (*Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil*), the main political parties and presidential candidates are as follows:

- Radical Change Party (*Partido Cambio Radical* – PCR) – **Germán Vargas Lleras**;
- Conservative Party (*Partido Conservador Colombiano* – PCC) – **Noemí Sanín**;
- Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal Colombiano* – PLC) – **Rafael Pardo**;
- Social Party of National Unity (*Partido Social de Unidad Nacional* – *Partido de la U*) – **Juan Manuel Santos**;
- Green Party (*Partido Verde* – PV) – **Antanas Mockus**;
- Alternative Democratic Pole (*Polo Democrático Alternativo* – PDA) – **Gustavo Petro**.

Independent candidates:

- Afro-Colombian Social Alliance (*Alianza Social Afrocolombiana* – ASA) – **Jaime Araújo Rentería**;
- Liberal Opening Movement (Movimiento Apertura Liberal – MAL) – **Jairo Calderón**.
- Voice of Conscience Movement (*Movimiento Voz de la Conciencia* – MVC) – **Robinson Alexánder Devia**.

4.3 Election Officials and Organizations

Under the current Electoral Code, voting must be impartial, secret, public, free and proportional (art. 1).

Elections are organized by

- (a) the National Electoral Council (*Consejo Nacional Electoral*);
- (b) the National Registrar of Civil Status (*Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil*);
- (c) the delegates of the National Registrar of Civil Status;
- (d) the district (Bogotá), municipal and auxiliary registrars; and
- (e) the delegates of the district and municipal registrars (art. 9, Electoral Code).

The supreme authority in electoral matters is the National Electoral Council.

Autonomy of Electoral Organizations

Colombia's electoral organizations are responsible for organizing, conducting and supervising elections, and for monitoring voter identification (art. 120, Constitution).

In keeping with the constitutional principle establishing and guaranteeing the autonomy of electoral organizations, the National Electoral Council (*Consejo Nacional Electoral* – CNE) is independent from a budgetary and administrative point of view, and may adopt its own by-laws (art. 265, Constitution).

The CNE is composed of nine members elected during a plenary session of Congress. They are elected on a proportional basis reflecting the political composition of Congress, for a four-year term renewable one time only (art. 264, Constitution).

To become a member of the CNE, a person must not have held an elected office or been an active member of a political party in the two preceding years. In addition, he or she must not have a relative who is involved in electoral decisions as an advisor to the State (art. 17, Electoral Code).

Decisions of the CNE must be assented to by two thirds of the members, with the regulatory quorum of 50% + one members present.³⁷

Decisions of the CNE take their final form as resolutions which regulate or define the scope of general provisions. Resolutions are normative in nature.³⁸

37. Resolución No. 65 de 1996, June 11, 1996, *Por el cual se dicta el Reglamento de la Corporación*, Capítulo Tercero, art. 11.

38. Ibid., art. 24.

Under the Electoral Code and the CNE by-laws, no government institution may intervene in the electoral process.

CNE members are answerable to the Supreme Court of Justice for their actions (art. 24, Electoral Code).

The National Registrar of Civil Status is chosen by the presidents of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court of Justice and the Council of State³⁹ pursuant to a competition. The Registrar serves a four-year term of office under the same conditions as those applicable to CNE members, and may be re-elected once only (art. 266, Constitution).

Main Powers, Functions and Duties of Electoral Organizations

The National Electoral Council

The main responsibilities of the National Electoral Council are

- to monitor and supervise electoral organizing;
- to remove the National Registrar of Civil Status from office if necessary;
- to determine the most appropriate course of action in the event of election-related problems;
- to review, if necessary, vote counts and electoral documents at every administrative stage, with a view to guaranteeing accurate results;
- to advise the Government on electoral matters and introduce appropriate legislation (bills);
- to ensure compliance with the legislation governing political parties, electoral publicity, poll-taking, and the rights of the Opposition and of political minorities;
- to allocate public funding for election campaigns;
- to conduct voting and vote counting operations in all national elections;
- to recognize or revoke the legal personality of political parties;
- to regulate political party advertising in the media (art. 265, Constitution);
- to designate delegates responsible for voting operations in each electoral riding;
- to approve the budget of the National Registrar of Civil Status;
- to approve the delegate appointments made by the National Registrar of Civil Status and the registrars of the district of Bogotá.

The National Registrar of Civil Status

The main responsibilities of the National Registrar of Civil Status are

- to direct and organize elections (establish maps, programs, voting procedures);
- to attend to matters pertaining to the civil register and citizen identification (art. 266, Constitution);
- to act as secretary to the CNE;
- to submit a draft budget and a spending report to the CNE;
- to propose resolutions to the CNE;
- to submit for CNE approval the number of electors authorized to vote per polling station;⁴⁰
- to organize the national electoral census;

39. *Tribunal Supremo de lo Contencioso Administrativo y Cuerpo Supremo Consultativo del Gobierno.*

40. Resolución No. 65 de 1996, art. 31.

- to convene the CNE;
- to organize the dissemination of election results;⁴¹ and
- to appoint a Secretary General whose political affiliation differs from that of the Registrar (but whose actions must be impartial), and to appoint the delegates of the National Registrar of Civil Status and the registrars of the district de Bogotá, with CNE approval (art. 26.8, Electoral Code).

Delegates of National Registrar of Civil Status (*delegados*)

In each riding, the National Registrar of Civil Status appoints two delegates of differing political affiliations who must carry out their tasks with the strictest impartiality. These delegates organize the election in their respective territories and ensure that identification cards are issued. They also appoint municipal registrars, subject to the approval of the National Registrar in the case of capital cities of departments and of cities with more than 100,000 electors (art. 32–33, Electoral Code).

District (Bogotá), Municipal and Auxiliary Registrars

The main function of the district (Bogotá) and municipal registrars is to ensure that voting proceeds in an orderly fashion in their respective municipalities. There are two registrars of differing political affiliations for the district of Bogotá and for each municipality with more than 100,000 electors. All other municipalities have one registrar. The main responsibilities of the registrars are

- to ensure that everything is ready for election day;
- to respond to inquiries concerning identification cards;
- to officially assign sworn officers to polling stations, and provide for alternates;
- to sanction remiss polling station officers by fining them;
- to transmit and publish election results; and
- to receive and remit election materials in accordance with the inventory (art. 40–49, Electoral Code).

Where there are two district or municipal registrars, their decisions must be reached by mutual agreement (art. 42, Electoral Code).

Auxiliary registrars perform the same duties as municipal registrars, but may not appoint polling station officers or issue sanctions (art. 49, Electoral Code). Their role is to act as alternates.

Delegates of District and Municipal Registrars

The district and municipal registrars are responsible for voting preparations and operations at voting centres. They supervise the work of polling station officers, settle disputes, ensure that absent officers are replaced by alternates, signal any problem to the appropriate registrar and transmit the results of the vote count to the registrar on election day (art. 56, Electoral Code).

41. Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, http://www.registraduria.gov.co/Informacion/func_regis.htm.

Polling Station Officers

Polling station officers are selected by a random draw conducted by the National Registrar of Civil Status, from a data bank of citizens' names submitted by public and private enterprises, educational institutions and political parties or movements. All civil servants and public or private employees between the ages of 18 and 61 are eligible to be appointed as polling station officers, except military personnel, members of a political party executive, senior civil administrators, civil authorities, etc. (art. 104, Electoral Code).⁴²

Six sworn officers are designated for each polling station 15 days prior to the election. The designations are made by resolution of the competent registrar. There are three officers—a presiding officer, a deputy presiding officer and an advisor—and three alternates. When voting ends, all three officers participate in the vote count.

It is important to note that such criteria as political affiliation, education and mailing address are taken into account in selecting and designating polling station officers to ensure a balanced mix at each polling station.⁴³

Service as a polling station officer is compulsory except in the cases provided for in the Electoral Code (art. 105 and 108).

Polling station officers vote at the polling station to which they are assigned.

Preservation of Election Results

The role of the persons in charge of preserving election results (*claveros*) is to look after electoral documents. Having received these documents from the polling station officers, they preserve them in secured boxes from election day to the final vote count in each municipality. They represent the municipal registrar or are mayors or judges; they work in pairs and must not have the same political affiliation.

4.4 Election Day Voting

In Colombia, elections are held every four years on a fixed date, with legislative elections taking place on the second Sunday in March and the presidential election on the last Sunday in May (art. 207, Electoral Code).

Under section 10 of Act 163 of September 2, 1994, all forms of electoral propaganda are prohibited on election day.

42. Colombia's Electoral Code has not been updated and contains provisions that are no longer valid. Information must therefore be sought in a multiplicity of laws, resolutions and orders. The information given above comes directly from the website of the National Registrar of Civil Status: <http://www.registraduria.gov.co/index.htm>.

43. Ibid.

Voting

The stages of the vote are not specified in Colombia's Electoral Code, which stipulates that voting must be conducted in accordance with the directives of the National Registrar of Civil Status (art. 114, Electoral Code).

On voting day, polling stations open at 8:00 a.m. and close at 4:00 p.m. All polling station officers must be on hand 30 minutes prior to opening, to see that election materials are properly laid out (art. 111–112, Electoral Code).

Subsequently, the polling station officers may be joined by “electoral witnesses” (who represent the political parties), accredited observers and representatives of monitoring agencies.

Political parties and movements may delegate one electoral witness per polling station (art. 121, Electoral Code) throughout the country.

The polling station officers must ensure that the ballot box is the proper one for the polling station, that it is in plain sight to all and that their names, identification numbers and signatures are clearly visible (art. 105, Electoral Code).

Each polling station must have a ballot box, voting booth, six chairs and a table, and an ELECTORAL KIT consisting of

- ballots;⁴⁴
- a booklet of voting instructions with information on the political parties;
- electoral certificates;
- a SEALED BALLOT BOX form;
- a VOTERS LIST form;
- an OFFICIAL OPENING AND ELECTORS REGISTER form;
- an ELECTIONS STATEMENTS form (two copies);
- adhesive tapes marked with “VOTO NO MARCADO”;
- a black envelope for unused or spoiled ballots and electoral certificates;
- an envelope for presidential election ballots;
- an envelope for persons in charge of preserving the election results (*claveros*);
- an envelope for the delegate of the National Registrar of Civil Status; and
- an ink pad, pens, tape, etc.

Prior to the vote, the ballot box must be opened for public inspection to show that it is empty (art. 113, Electoral Code).

The presiding officer asks for each elector's citizenship card (the only acceptable card for voting purposes), confirms the person's identity and locates the card number on the voters list. If the number is present, the person may vote; if not, the person is referred to the delegate of the municipal or district (Bogotá) registrar, as the case may be.

In the electors register, another polling station officer enters the elector's name and sex next to the citizenship card number. The elector must then appose his or her fingerprint in the register.

44. Appendix II shows a sample ballot for the 2010 presidential election, but this is not the official ballot for the presidential election scheduled for May 30, 2010.

The elector receives a ballot signed by the polling station officer, proceeds to the voting booth to mark his or her ballot in secret, and deposits the ballot in the ballot box. The officer may provide another ballot to voters who make a mistake or spoil their ballots.

Visually impaired and handicapped electors as well as electors aged over 80 may be accompanied in the voting booth by a responsible individual other than a polling station officer, an electoral witness, an election observer or a member of the security forces (s. 16, Act 163 of 1994). A parent may be accompanied in the voting booth by his or her child.

After voting, electors receive an electoral certificate; finger-printing, which imbues one finger with blue ink, testifies to their having voted.

Polling stations close at 4:00 p.m. At this point, electors who have begun the voting process may complete it, but those standing in line are ineligible to vote.

Under article 85 of the Electoral Code, the National Registrar of Civil Status sets the number of electors per polling station. This number, with some few exceptions, was 400 for the legislative elections of March 2010.⁴⁵

Ballot Counting and Results

As soon as polling stations close, a polling station officer reads aloud the total number of electors who turned out to vote. This number is entered in the elections statements and in the electors register (art. 134, Electoral Code).

The ballot box is opened publicly and a polling station officer counts the ballots inside. If there are more ballots than registered voters, the ballots are put back in the ballot box and an officer extracts the number of ballots equal to the difference (art. 135, Electoral Code).

The polling station officers then count the votes and add up the number obtained by each presidential ticket. The results are entered in the electoral statements (art. 136, Electoral Code).

The following ballots are invalid:

- ballots on which more than one choice is marked;
- ballots which clearly indicate the elector's desire to spoil his or her vote;
- ballots which do not clearly indicate the elector's choice; and
- ballots on which the blank voting space is marked in addition to the choice of a candidate.

Ballots have a blank voting space to be used by voters who wish to express their lack of support for all candidates on the ballot (*voto en blanco*). Blank votes differ from unmarked ballots (*no marcado*) in that they are counted as valid votes and entered in the elections statements.

Once the votes have been counted, polling station officers must grant any request for a recount (one time only) and take note of the request in both copies of the elections statements.

45. Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, Resolución No. 0167-DE, January 13, 2010.

Any other written demand presented by electoral witnesses must be transmitted, in the envelope reserved for that purpose, to the person in charge of preserving election results. Complaints are normally dealt with by the National Electoral Council.

Each polling station officer must sign the copies of the elections statements.

After the vote count but before 11:00 p.m., the elections statements, electoral materials and other electoral documents are placed in their respective envelopes and remitted by the presiding officer, against acknowledgement of receipt, to the district or municipal registrar (art. 144, Electoral Code) or directly to the person in charge of preserving results.

The first envelope, sent to the “preserver”, contains the ballots, the voters list, the opening and electors register form, a copy of the elections statements as well as voter authorizations and any complaints.

The second envelope, sent to the National Registrar of Civil Status, contains a copy of the elections statements.

The preserver receives the envelopes containing the ballots and puts them away in a secure place or a safe until the Tuesday following election day, when teams of scrutineers of differing political affiliations verify the final results. Under National Electoral Council Resolution 0237 of March 31, 2009, the final vote consists of the consolidated, certified election results, subject to any decisions taken at the local, municipal, departmental and national levels with regard to disputes.

The results of each polling station should be posted on the website of the National Registrar of Civil Status (www.registraduria.gov.co) as soon as possible. However, the final results will be announced only a few days after election day.

Articles 157 to 191 of the Electoral Code define the operations to be followed in departmental vote counts and in the national vote count.

4.5 Security

However much security in Colombia has improved in recent years, violence perpetrated by groups of drug traffickers, guerrillas and paramilitaries continues to affect rural areas and large cities alike. Foreign nationals are especially likely to be targeted. Travel alerts most often concern the cities of Cali and Medellín, as well as rural routes and regions.⁴⁶

The legislative elections of March 14, 2010, unfolded in a calm and peaceful atmosphere. At a press conference, General Orlando Páez Barón, chief of public security with the Colombian police force, noted that [TRANSLATION] “no public incident compromised the electoral process.”⁴⁷

The sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited from 6:00 p.m. the day before election day to 6:00 a.m. the day after election day (art. 206, Electoral Code).

46. See <http://travel.state.gov> for regularly updated travel alerts.

47. Michaela Cancela-Kieffer, “Colombie: l’argent coule à flot”.

5. MISSION ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO ELECTION DAY

5.1 Arrival of Delegation and Accreditation of Members

On arrival in Colombia on May 26, 2010, the COPA delegation issued a press release (Appendix VII) announcing its objectives and the makeup of its delegation, and briefly introducing COPA.

5.2 Working Meetings with Representatives of Institutions and Organizations Involved in the Electoral Process

On May 27 and 28, 2010, the delegation attended an international seminar on elections, institutions and democracy organized by the National Electoral Council and the National Registrar of Civil Status for the international observers.

During the seminar, delegation members attended three round-table discussions held to present a comparison of international observations and research findings on electoral processes, especially those relating to political party financing, participation and electoral training. Appendix IX presents a summary of those discussions.

The delegation then met with representatives of the electoral authorities and the political parties running in the election as well as national observers, who briefed the delegation on the electoral process and the situation prevailing in the country on the eve of the ballot.

On May 29, 2010, COPA representatives met with the head of the Organization of American States (OAS) delegation to discuss the major issues surrounding the presidential election and to share information on the electoral observation.

A copy of the program can be found in Appendix VIII. The following sections give summaries of the discussions held and the information gathered during the working meetings.⁴⁸

Institutional and Political Context – Friday, May 28, 2010, 8:30 a.m.

- Adelina Covo, President of the National Electoral Council

According to Ms. Covo, Colombia's electoral system is in need of two reforms—one, of the Electoral Code, to reflect the needs of the 21st century, and the other, of the candidate lists, to eliminate open lists—and it is the National Electoral Council's role to propose the content of these reforms. She explained that, under article 265 of the Constitution, the CNE has the necessary autonomy to draw up its own internal by-laws, within the limits of the Constitution. She did, however, express a desire for greater financial independence for the CNE, which would enable it to properly fulfill its role as electoral authority. A reform should also put the CNE in charge of election polls, electoral studies and electoral lists, as well as democracy education.

She would like to see the role and structure of the Council reviewed in order to entrust it with more responsibilities, although such a reform would require extensive debate. The purpose of the reform would be to guarantee authentic and reliable election results and a transparent election process.

48. This report simply presents the views of the representatives of institutions and organizations interviewed without in any way endorsing those views.

- Claudia López, Electoral Observation Mission (MOE), Colombia

The MOE is a Colombian organization which is independent from government, political parties and private interests and which brings together private organizations and promotes the right of citizens to participate in political life. The purpose of the MOE is to identify problems during and after the vote and to try to introduce corrective measures to bring elections into compliance with international standards and Colombian law.

Ms. López presented the organization's findings on electoral risks in Colombia. Those risks can be divided into two categories: the risk of violence by illegal armed groups and the risk of non-violent abuse (fraud) by legal actors. For both categories, the mission's objective is to evaluate the extent to which these risks could affect the electoral process.

Using various statistical charts and geographical maps based on electoral observation activities in Colombia and data gathered over the years, Ms López showed that 1) the number and severity of risk factors for violence have decreased considerably since 2002 (although they are still numerous); 2) the at-risk zones have shifted over time (since the conflicts have moved); and 3) there is a geographical link between the large mining and agricultural industries and paramilitary groups.

Ms. López is of the opinion that guerrillas, paramilitary groups and drug traffickers all affect the electoral process, but not in the same way. Although the presence of guerrillas in certain regions causes voter participation to drop drastically, the presence of paramilitary groups has the opposite effect (possible vote-buying). The mafia clearly influences the process as well, but the nature of its impact is harder to determine.

With respect to the risk of non-violent abuse, Ms. López mentioned that when the voter participation rate or the number of cancelled or unmarked votes is abnormally high or low, electoral fraud is generally present.

She also mentioned that the same problems had been detected for both legislative and presidential elections but to different degrees. While illegal financing and electoral fraud were the main problems observed during the legislative elections, political intervention and armed interference were more prevalent during presidential elections.

Lastly, Ms, López advanced that the electoral authorities should concentrate on doing their job well before attempting to broaden their mandate. She admitted being concerned about the state of the Colombian electoral system, which she feels needs an overhaul. She didn't anticipate any major problems during the May 30 vote and hoped that the final results would be broadcast around 8:00 p.m. on election day without any delays.

Opinion Polls During the Election Period – Friday, May 28, 2010, 10 a.m.

- Juan Manuel Ramírez Pérez, former magistrate of the National Electoral Council**
- Napoléon Franco, statistics expert, IPSOS**

Mr. Ramírez began by recalling that, under Colombian law, public opinion polls are very tightly monitored, with only the results obtained by firms chosen by the State being recognized. Polling firms must observe very strict guidelines operationalized in a technical chart that must be published. He concluded by questioning the role of the State in the regulation of opinion polls.

Mr. Franco, who has been working in the polling field for nearly 30 years, detailed the various aspects involved in conducting an opinion poll. He specified that recognized firms, in particular IPSOS, comply with international polling standards, and he emphasized that Colombia's regulation of polling activity is among the best in the world and guarantees valid and reliable results.

He added that a detailed self-regulation agreement provides a framework for defining the methodology to be followed. Elements covered by the agreement include the publication of results, the size and composition of samples, the sampling method and the margin of error. He believes these elements guarantee that poll results are representative and can be extrapolated to a larger group. He concluded by presenting certain detailed poll results on the presidential campaign and on the legislative elections held in March.

Political Party Representatives – Friday, May 28, 2010, 11 a.m.

- Green Party (*Partido Verde*)

The Green Party representative presented his party's electoral platform. The party would like to increase taxes in order to improve the population's quality of life by investing in schools, transportation, science and culture.

The Green Party would like to be considered a regulator and not a producer of goods and services, and would like to provide equal opportunity for all, particularly in education.

He went on to state that foreign policy should reflect Colombia's interests and that countries have enough interests in common to work together. The party would like to review certain aspects of Colombia's alliance with the United States without calling into question the advantageous relationship it has with that country.

He was unhappy about the context of violence reigning in certain parts of Colombia and the inappropriate dealings between some government officials and criminal groups. He gave a clear picture of the struggle against guerrilla factions but insisted that the battle must be waged in compliance with the law and with due respect for the sovereignty of neighbouring nations.

- Social Party of National Unity (*Partido Social de Unidad Nacional – Partido de la U*)

The representative of the Social Party of National Unity began by highlighting the academic credentials of the party's presidential candidate, Mr. Santos, from reputable schools of economics, and his vast experience, in particular within the current government (Minister of Finance, Minister of Defence, and so on). He also emphasized the importance of taking into consideration a candidate's professional achievements, which demonstrate the candidate's character and his ability to manage situations and solve problems.

He then discussed various aspects of the party platform, which focuses in particular on job creation and economic growth, monetary and fiscal policy, infrastructure development, transportation and communications, and natural resource management.

He added that the party would like to increase school enrolment rates by offering incentives such as financial assistance to university students, which he feels would reduce corruption and bring down the unemployment rate. He also expressed concern about access to health care, an issue which polarizes the social classes.

- Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal Colombiano*)

The Liberal Party representative told us that his party had held an internal consultation in December 2009 to choose its leader, Rafaël Pardo. In the legislative elections held in March 2010, seventeen party members won Senate seats and 76 were elected as representatives; as a result, the party now ranks third in Parliament.

The party platform focuses mainly on putting an end to the inequalities that characterize Colombia. One way the party proposes to achieve this is through fiscal reform.

In response to questions concerning the free-trade agreement with the European Union, the representative explained that he was not calling the agreement into question but felt that close attention should be paid to the dairy industry during negotiations.

He then brought up the current President's intervention in the electoral campaign in support of Mr. Santos, a practice prohibited under Colombian law.

- Alternative Democratic Pole (*Polo Democrático Alternativo*)

The representative of the Alternative Democratic Pole expressed concern about vote-buying, which she feels has grown to alarming proportions. She wondered about the impact of "tainted money" and its ramifications, in particular extortion.

She then mentioned that some party candidates had been the victims of a serious intimidation campaign, and she planned to file a list of instances of such intimidation with the CNE.

The party platform focuses on the necessity of financing basic rights, particularly in the health sector. The representative pointed out that the current health program does not cover serious illnesses, which has clear consequences for the population and divides it along economic lines. She felt that health care should be fully financed by the State.

- Afro-Colombian Social Alliance (*Alianza Social Afrocolombiana*)

The representative of the Afro-Colombian Social Alliance began by mentioning that the party leader, Jaime Araujo Renteria, had joined the party following problems related to the collection of a sufficient number of signatures for his candidacy.

The party platform comprises several planks, including the defence of human rights, access to education, health and housing, a sustainable economy, regional empowerment, gender equality, the protection of children, judicial reform and the fight against discrimination and exclusion.

- Conservative Party (*Partido Conservador Colombiano*)

The Conservative Party, led by Ms. Noemi Sanín, the only woman running for the office of President, proposes an ambitious platform based on four points which could, according to the party representative, bring balance to the country.

The party proposes improving education from early childhood on and making university more accessible. In the field of science and technology, the party pledges to develop value-added products and to hire professors with Master's degrees and doctorates in key sectors. With respect to public security, the party wants to work on reducing violence in the cities by offering

recreational and sports activities for youth in an effort to combat domestic violence. It also intends to strengthen police forces and invest in technologies, reform the judicial system to make it more efficient, organized and respectful of privacy, and strengthen the social fabric to develop tolerance and promote acceptance of diversity. Lastly, the party wants health care to be made a basic right, and proposes more efficient use of resources.

- Radical Change Party (*Partido Cambio Radical*)

The representative of the Radical Change Party showed us a three-part video. The first part presented the image of a return to relative peace after years of struggle, although it also showed that significant work remains to be done to consolidate territorial control.

The second part presented the career path of party candidate Vargas Lleras from senator to presidential candidate. The video told the story of the assassination of a senator in 1985, and of attempts to murder Mr. Vargas, with an emphasis on the candidate and on the upright and incorruptible image he projects.

The last part presented images of the candidate's campaign, showing him touring the country and meeting people.

- Voice of Conscience Movement (*Movimiento Voz de la Conciencia*)

The Voice of Conscience Movement representative came to the meeting in chains to symbolize the condition of the Colombian people. The party, led by Robinson Devia, has made itself known through the stands it takes, which are diametrically opposed to the powers and parties in place. The representative believes that the Government is very corrupt and has been lying to the people. He cited the example of "false positives" (*falsos positivos*), namely, people assassinated and then disguised as guerrillas by people trying to earn a bounty and boost the Government's image.

The presidential candidate and his allies had been on a hunger strike since May 10, 2010. The party representative read a statement of denunciation, which he left us, along with a copy of a manifesto.

Meeting with the Head of Mission for the Organization of American States (OAS), Enrique Correa – Saturday, May 29, 2010, 11:00 a.m.

The OAS electoral observation mission was comprised of 85 observers from 26 countries, and covered 30 of the 32 departments of Colombia during the legislative and presidential elections.

Mr. Correa began by stating that the March 14 legislative elections had been very peaceful, which in itself was a democratic victory for Colombia.

He recalled that the police had been out in full force and that the issue of security had been addressed in speeches by the political parties and the electoral authorities. He did point out, however, that physical security was not a panacea for all electoral problems. The electoral system has certain weaknesses that became especially apparent during vote counting and results reporting. As a result, the vote recount had not yet been finalized and several inconsistencies still remained two months after the legislative elections. The final results were to be made public near the end of July.

Mr. Correa was aware of the vote-buying phenomenon, which he believes still goes unpunished in rural areas. During the legislative elections, OAS observers witnessed some instances of vote-buying right at polling stations. According to Mr. Correa, outdoor voting without the benefit of voting booths is not conducive to eliminating the practice, and he would like to see better protection for the secrecy of the ballot.

With respect to the political situation, Mr. Correa explained that the balance of power between the political parties had changed over the course of the election campaign. While there was a battle between the Conservative Party and the Social Party of National Unity in March, the competition in May was between the Social Party of National Unity and the Green Party. He was of the opinion that, given the fragile nature of the electoral system, the outcome of the presidential election could be in question if the election results were close during the second round.

Lastly, Mr. Correa excluded the possibility of massive fraud by electoral authorities. He mentioned, though, that the fact that a new president had been appointed to the National Electoral Council in the middle of the campaign had raised certain questions as to the independence of the institution. He also expressed concern over the fact that the party in power had used the “institutional machine” (public service, government authorities) to promote its candidate, Mr. Santos, even though this practice is prohibited by law (*Ley de garantías*). Mr. Correa advised COPA observers to examine and report on the extent to which Colombia’s election laws had been complied with.

6. MISSION ACTIVITIES ON ELECTION DAY

6.1 Composition and Deployment of COPA Observation Teams

On election day, the mission members divided into five teams of observers:

- 1) The first team, made up of representatives from Argentina and Mexico, that is, **Edda Acuña**, mission leader, **Carlos Jimenez Macias**, **María Alejandra Vucasovich**, **Estela Mendez de Micheli** and **Mailen Vélez**, observed voting operations in six polling stations in the municipality of Bogotá, D.C.

Municipality/ District	Voting centre	Polling station	Arrival time	Departure time
Bogotá, D.C./Parque Lourdes	Cra 13 No. 65-10	2; 9; 24	8:15 a.m.	8:35 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./Chapinero Norte	Cra 9 Bis No.62-43	10; 14; 16; 28	8:40 a.m.	9:15 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./Bosque Calderón	Calle 52 No.13-65	10; 11; 18	9:20 a.m.	9:40 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./Egipto	Cra 3 Este No 9-77	2; 3; 8; 17	9:55 a.m.	10:15 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./Archivo nacional	Cra No. 5-40/50	4; 8; 17	10:20 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./La Concordia	Calle 14 N 1B-24	1; 5; 9; 16	1:15 p.m.	1:35 p.m.

- 2) The second team, made up of representatives from Argentina, Mexico and Venezuela, that is **Cristina Ruiz Sandoval**, **Edgar Carrasco**, **Antonia Alegre**, **Martha Angon** and **Maria José Alcalá**, observed voting operations in five polling stations in the municipality of Bogotá, D.C.

Municipality/ District	Voting centre	Polling station	Arrival time	Departure time
Bogotá, D.C./Camilo Torres	Cra 7 No 33-64	1; 7; 15	8:15 a.m.	8:45 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./Policarpa Salavarrieta	Calle 28 No 5 A-06	3; 4; 6	9 a.m.	9:30 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./Parque Santander	Cra 6 No. 15-32	2; 4; 16	9:30 a.m.	10 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./La Perseverencia	Calle 32 A No. 3 C-37	2; 9	10:15 a.m.	10:45 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./La Concordia	Calle 14 N 1B-24	1; 7; 8; 9	3:45 p.m.	4:30 p.m.

- 3) The third team, made up of representatives from Mexico and Argentina, that is **Eduardo Nava Bolaños, Victor Hugo Dadomo, Jorge Alberto Lagna, Dario Boscarol** and **Lilia Hernández**, observed voting operations in six polling stations in the municipality of Bogotá, D.C.

Municipality/ District	Voting centre	Polling station	Arrival time	Departure time
Bogotá, D.C./ San Cristobal	Calle 11 Sur No 6-27 Este	3; 12; 13	8:30 a.m.	8:50 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ San Blas	Cra 3 Este No 8-76 Sur	5; 8; 9; 12	9 a.m.	9:20 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Las Brisas	Calle 7 A Sur 0-50 Este	1; 2; 3	9:40 a.m.	10:15 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ 20 de Julio B	Cra 7 No 25-01 Sur	1; 2; 5; 8	10:30 a.m.	11 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Lucero Medio	Diag. 65 D No 18 A-04 SUR	3; 6; 14	11:30 a.m.	12 p.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Sotavento	Calle 73 A Sur No 16 F -35	3; 4; 6; 25	12:20 p.m.	1:15 p.m.

- 4) The fourth team, made up of representatives from Argentina and Paraguay, that is **Zulma Gomez, Julio César Franco, Alicia Gutiérrez** and **Hector Leguizamon**, observed voting operations in eight polling stations in the municipality of Bogotá, D.C.

Municipality/ District	Voting centre	Polling station	Arrival time	Departure time
Bogotá, D.C./ El Tunal	Cra 24 D No 49-66 Sur	4; 6; 9; 27	8:25 a.m.	8:55 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ El Carmen Sur	Calle 48 C Sur No. 28-44	6; 11; 15	9:15 a.m.	9:25 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Ciudad Montes	Cra 51 No 16-64	2; 9; 12	10 a.m.	10:20 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Santa Matilde	Calle 1 No 34 B-20	1; 3; 19; 20	10:20 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ El Tejar	Avenida 1 de Mayo No 50-28	3; 10; 19	10:55 a.m.	11:10 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Colon	Calle 4 No 56-03	13; 25; 26	11:20 a.m.	11:30 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Santa Ana Oriental	Calle 114 Carrera 6 Entrada Zona C	5; 15; 23	3:10 p.m.	3:30 p.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Cedro Golf Club	Cra 7 A No 150-01	3; 19; 20	3:45 p.m.	4:35 p.m.

- 5) The fifth team, made up of representatives from Argentina and Québec, that is **Gloria Bidegain, Daniel Ratthé, Denis Royer** and **Christiane Bérubé**, observed voting operations in five polling stations in the municipality of Bogotá, D.C.

Municipality/ District	Voting centre	Polling station	Arrival time	Departure time
Bogotá, D.C./ Chapinero Norte	Cra 9 Bis No.62-43	10; 37	8:20 a.m.	8:40 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ USME	Transv. 2 A No 135 – 78 Sur	16; 17; 18	10:15 a.m.	10:35 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./Santa Marta	Calle 69 Sur 1 B- 37 Este	10; 11; 12	11:50 a.m.	12:10 p.m.
Bogotá, D.C./Normandia	Avenida Carrera 70 No. 51- 14	3; 5; 13	3:15 p.m.	3:30 p.m.
Bogotá, D.C./Minuto de Dios	Trans. 74 No 82 B -05	19; 28	3:55 p.m.	4:35 p.m.

- 6) Certain participants followed the program of Colombia's National Electoral Council, which also planned on visiting certain voting centres. A team made up of representatives from Argentina and Mexico, that is **Jaquín F. Blanco, Nancy González, Antonio Morante, José Carlos Ocaña Becerra, Pascual Bellizzia** and **Norma Esparza**, observed voting operations in three polling stations in the municipality of Bogotá, D.C.

Municipality/ District	Voting centre	Polling station	Arrival time	Departure time
Bogotá, D.C./ La Cita	Calle 165, No. 8A- 03	1	9:50 a.m.	10:10 a.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Roma	Calle 57 A Sur No 78 N-21	25	2 p.m.	2:10 p.m.
Bogotá, D.C./ Corferias	Carrera 37 No 24 – 67	269	3:50 p.m.	4 p.m.

6.2 Aspects Observed

To help them perform their observation duties, the parliamentarians received an election observation grid prepared by the secretariat of the COPA Committee on Democracy and Peace (see Appendix X). The grid, a copy of which was filled out at all polling stations visited, is based on the provisions of the Colombian Electoral Code and was divided into eight sections:

- (1) general information (on the observer and the polling station);
- (2) polling station;
- (3) election materials;
- (4) voters;
- (5) complaints;
- (6) other observations;

- (7) vote count;
- (8) overall evaluation.

Most of this information was gathered through conversations with polling station presiding officers.

The six teams of observers also strove to obtain a good sampling of voting practices by visiting voting centres in different types of neighbourhoods. Thus, in the greater Bogotá district, they visited voting centres set up in working-class, middle class and affluent neighbourhoods.

7. COPA MISSION FINDINGS

The main findings of the observation mission are shown here in the form of tables based on the observation grid provided to COPA delegation members. The tables cover the following aspects: **(1) polling stations**; **(2) election materials (2 tables)**; **(3) complaints**; and **(4) general observations**. A fifth aspect—the vote count—is not illustrated by a table⁴⁹. The compiled results are as follows:

7.1 Polling Stations

In most of the polling stations observed, voting began at 8:00 a.m. as stipulated in the Electoral Code. Only one polling station opened somewhat late (30 min.), mainly due to the late set-up of voting materials. Due to logistical problems on the morning of election day, the COPA observation teams were not present when the polling stations opened, but obtained their information later from polling station staff.

	YES	NO	No answer
Suitable polling station site and set-up	77	15	7
Polling station is complete	91	0	8
Presence of security forces	94	0	5
Presence of candidate/party representatives	61	32	6
Presence of election advertising on site	5	90	4
Acts of voter intimidation	1	89	9

In the great majority of cases, polling station sites were well chosen and the premises well organized for voting.

However, some observers noted a problem with the way certain voting centres were set up. For example, the reception area was very small at the *Policarpa Salavarrieta* centre. There were large groups of voters gathered in the voting area at the *El Tejar* voting centre and a very long line-up at the entrance of the *Chapinero Norte* centre.

49. These results are but a reflection of the observations made by the members of the COPA delegation.

Certain voting centres were outdoors. According to Law 1227 of 2008, polling stations must be set up in an area covered by a roof (art. 50). However, at the *Colón* and *El tejar* centres, several polling stations were outdoors. At the *Normandia* centre, the polling stations were set up under a roof but the voters had to line up outside in the rain.

Observers noted the presence of security forces in all the voting centres, which helped ensure orderly elections. One team of observers saw a plain clothes police officer waiting for a voter at a polling station at the *Santa Marta* voting centre. The voter was wanted by the police, who were waiting to arrest him as soon as he had cast his ballot.

Last, COPA delegation members noted the presence of political party representatives in 61% of the polling stations observed. The vast majority of the representatives were from the Green Party. At the *Bosque Calderón* voting centre, observers commented that political party representatives were placed very close to the voting booths.

7.2 Election Materials

In all the polling stations observed, election materials were provided in sufficient quantity and in compliance with prescribed standards.

	YES	NO	+ or -	No answer
Properly sealed ballot boxes	93	1	3	2
Voting booths ensuring ballot secrecy	29	58	0	12
Voters list	93	0	0	6
Ballots in sufficient quantity	96	0	0	3
Design of ballot (enables voter to clearly identify his or her choice)	94	0	0	5

Most of the COPA observers noted that the design of the voting booths (sheets of cardboard linked together) provided by the National Electoral Council did not adequately protect the secrecy of the ballot. The observers recorded specific comments on this subject at the following voting centres: *Santa Ana Oriental*, *Santa Matilde*, *Cedro Golf Club*, *Ciudad Montes*, *El Tunal*, *La Perseverencia*, *Egipto*, *Parque Lourdes*, *Chapinero Norte*, *El Tejar*, *Colon*, *Camilo Torres* and *La Concordia*.

The most common complaint was that it was often possible to see which candidate a voter had chosen.

At the *Normandia* centre, one observer reported that voters instinctively went to vote in the voting booth but, since there was no pencil there, they had to come back out to mark their ballot.

	Very good	Good	Poor	No answer
Election materials	32	61	0	6
Work of polling station officials	34	41	3	21

No specific comments were made by observers with respect to election materials. The materials were generally adequate and the ballot design allowed the voters to clearly indicate their choice.

Generally speaking, the polling station officers observed were conscientious and respectful and performed their duties well. The procedure prescribed by law was followed, and the observers reported that the officers had collaborated with them. At the *El Carmen Sur* voting centre, voters told COPA observers that they thought the voting was very well organized.

7.3 Complaints

Generally speaking, there were few official complaints from party representatives, candidates or citizens.

	YES	NO	No answer
Complaints by party or candidate representatives	8	76	15
Complaints by voters	6	69	24

Nonetheless, some voters complained informally to observers about accessibility issues at certain polling stations. For instance, at the *Las Brisas* and *El Tunal* voting centres, the polling stations were located on upper floors and no attempt had been made to facilitate access for voters with reduced mobility or the elderly.

At the *La Concordia* voting centre, political party representatives complained about being asked to leave by the staff of the National Registrar of Civil Status. After reporting the incident to the electoral authorities, they were finally readmitted.

At the *20 de Julio B* centre, one party representative made a formal complaint about being denied entry.

At the *Normandia* centre, polling station staff complained about the outdoor location of the voting centre.

Lastly, in three polling stations observed, voters complained about not being registered on the voters list.

7.4 General Observations

In general, the Electoral Code was complied with as far as the following elements were concerned:

	YES	NO	No answer
Respect for ballot secrecy	35	43	21
Presence of more than one voter in the voting booth	24	60	15
Electoral staff compliance with procedures	81	3	15
Voter understanding of procedures	46	1	17
Presence of unauthorized persons in the polling station	6	74	19
Visit by other international observers	37	30	32
Visit by national observers	56	27	16
Orderly conduct of voting	77	6	16
Interruption in voting during the day	6	60	33
Incidents (disturbances, intimidation, fraud, violence, tampering with results, etc.)	5	67	27

However, as mentioned above, in 43% of the polling stations observed, the secrecy of the ballot was not guaranteed due to the location of the voting booths.

At the *Policarpa Salavarrieta* voting centre, observers reported an interruption in voting during the day, when a presidential candidate came to cast his ballot.

At the *Parque Lourdes* and *El Tunal* centres, observers noted that police forces had exercised very tight control over voters (searches, identification, inspection), which significantly slowed down the voting process.

Lastly, national observers such as the MOE were seen in 37% of the polling stations. International observers, mostly from the OAS, were seen in 56% of the voting centres visited.

7.5 Vote Count

COPA observers witnessed vote counting in the *La Concordia*, *Cedro Golf Club*, *Minuto de Dios* and *Corferia* voting centres. The process was carried out in a serious, calm and transparent manner and in compliance with the Electoral Code; COPA observers did not notice any irregularities whatsoever.

In contrast with the problems encountered during the vote count after the legislative elections, the presidential election counting process was very efficient. The ballot design allowed quick identification of the voter's choice, which significantly facilitated the compilation of votes. COPA observers would like to congratulate the electoral organizers for their efficient compilation of election results.

Furthermore, the observers noted the presence of political party representatives in the majority of the polling stations observed. They did not witness any formal complaint regarding vote counting.

Unfortunately, the COPA observers were not able to observe the transfer of election results. However, several observers were present when the results were announced in real time at the *Corferia* voting centre.

8. MISSION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of the mission, the delegation considered that voting had generally been calm and in compliance with the applicable electoral legislation and most international standards for democratic elections.

They were impressed by the sense of responsibility and civic duty displayed by voters, as well as the quality work of the electoral officers, so much so that the delegation sent out a press release (Appendix XI) to highlight the respect shown by Colombians toward their institutions, and the peaceful nature of the voting process, which constituted a great democratic victory for Colombia.

Through its working meetings with the representatives of institutions and organizations involved in the electoral process and through its observation of the May 30 vote, the delegation was able to learn about Colombia's electoral process and the main concerns respecting the election expressed by the stakeholders. The delegation's attention was drawn to the following three elements: (i) the protection of the secrecy of the ballot; ii) suspicions of vote-buying; and iii) the collaboration of the electoral institutions in the organization of COPA's electoral observation mission.

(i) the protection of the secrecy of the ballot

Under Colombia's current Electoral Code, voting must be impartial, secret, public, free and proportional (art. 1). Even though the delegation did not witness any irregularities that could have affected the electoral process, the vast majority of observers noted that the voting booths meant to provide voters with the opportunity to vote in private were inadequate. Some delegation members mentioned having seen the choice made by some voters.

In that respect, the COPA delegation recommends that Colombia's electoral authorities review the design of voting booths to ensure that they do indeed protect the secrecy of the ballot. It also recommends that polling stations be set up in a way that is conducive to voter privacy.

(ii) suspicions of vote-buying

Some participants in COPA's working meetings brought up the problem of vote-buying in Colombia. During their brief time in Bogotá, COPA delegation members did not have the opportunity to confirm these allegations, and neither the geography of the country nor the time available were conducive to detecting this type of electoral fraud. Nevertheless, the delegation recommends that the electoral authorities exercise vigilance with respect to this problem and implement every possible measure to foster voting free from any undue pressure, in particular through training for electoral and security staff.

(iii) the collaboration of the electoral institutions

By adopting the *By-laws of COPA Electoral Observation Missions* in May 2005, COPA manifested its desire to take an active part in strengthening democracy internationally. One of the main points of the by-laws is to “act with independence and impartiality”. That is why COPA prepares its own program during elections.

To that end, from its first meeting with National Electoral Council and National Registrar of Civil Status personnel, the COPA delegation stated clearly that it wished to organize its observation program independently on election day. However, the delegation feels that it did not obtain all the assistance it needed from the electoral authorities with respect to the logistical aspects that would have helped the observers carry out their work in an independent manner, despite asking for such assistance several times. Some of the resulting inconveniences included non-accredited vehicles and observers, a lack of information on voting centre addresses, and a lack of support from electoral organizations to ensure safe travel on election day.

The COPA delegation would like to conclude by emphasizing the warm welcome received from the representatives of institutions and organizations involved in the electoral process during the working meetings before election day, and from the voters and electoral staff during their visits to voting centres.

In order to ensure follow-up, this report will be sent to the Colombian electoral authorities and the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy of the Organization of American States (OAS).

9. APPENDICES

Appendix I – Recommendation



PARLIAMENTARY CONFEDERATION OF THE AMERICAS 9th GENERAL ASSEMBLY SALTA (SALTA), ARGENTINA SEPTEMBER 14 – 20, 2009

Recommendation on the dispatch of an electoral observation mission to Colombia

WHEREAS presidential elections are to be held in Colombia on May 30, 2010;

WHEREAS the participation of parliamentarians from COPA in multilateral electoral observation missions is a matter of priority in order to attain the COPA objective of contributing to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy and to the edification of a community of the Americas founded upon respect for human rights and dignity, peace, democracy, solidarity among peoples, social justice, and equity between women and men; and

WHEREAS the presidential elections in Colombia are particularly significant for the community of the Americas;

WE, the representatives of the congresses and parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal and federated states, regional parliaments, and interparliamentary organizations gathered in Salta, Argentina, for the 9th General Assembly of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas,

And acting upon the recommendation of the Committee on Democracy and Peace:

DECLARE our support for and our solidarity with Colombian society and the democratic institutions of that country in organizing presidential elections next May 30;

PROPOSE the dispatch of a COPA electoral observation mission to these elections in Colombia, with due respect for the national sovereignty of that country;

PLEDGE OURSELVES to uphold the principles of regional balance and political pluralism in forming a delegation of parliamentarians from the Americas, and to make sure that the observation mission will carry out its task in an independent and impartial manner as stipulated in the By-laws of COPA Electoral Observation Missions. 2009-09-18

Appendix II – COPA's Letter of Interest and Availability



5 de marzo de 2010

*Señor Marco Emilio Hincapié
Presidente del Consejo Nacional Electoral
Av. El Dorado No. 46 - 20
CAN - Piso 6
Bogotá
REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA*

Objeto: Elecciones presidenciales del 30 de mayo de 2010

De mi mayor consideración:

La organización que tengo el honor de presidir, la Confederación Parlamentaria de las Américas (COPA), fundada en 1997, reúne a los congresos y las asambleas parlamentarias de los Estados unitarios, federales y federados, los parlamentos regionales y las organizaciones interparlamentarias de las Américas. Su principal objetivo es contribuir al fortalecimiento de la democracia parlamentaria y la edificación de una comunidad de las Américas basada en el respeto de la dignidad y los derechos humanos, la paz, la democracia, la solidaridad entre los pueblos, la justicia social y la equidad entre los sexos.

Para lograr alcanzar este objetivo, nuestra organización expresó el deseo de participar de manera activa en materia de observación electoral en la escena internacional al adoptar en mayo de 2005 el “Reglamento sobre las Misiones de Observación Electoral de la COPA”. Desde entonces, la COPA ha implementado la realización de diez misiones de observación de elecciones en varios países del continente.

En el marco de la implementación del programa de misiones de observación electoral, los miembros de nuestra organización, en la IX Asamblea General de la COPA celebrada en la Ciudad de Salta, Provincia de Salta, Argentina, del 14 al 20 de septiembre de 2009, adoptaron una recomendación, que adjuntamos a la presente, en la que se propone, si las autoridades competentes de su país manifiestan su deseo, “el envío de una misión de observación electoral de la COPA a las elecciones presidenciales, en pleno respeto de la soberanía nacional de Colombia”.

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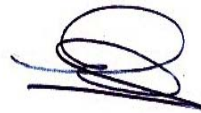
Por la presente, como Presidenta de la COPA, le informo del interés y la disponibilidad de nuestra organización para constituir una delegación de parlamentarios de las Américas, respetando los principios de equilibrio regional y pluralismo político, que podría viajar a Colombia, en el marco de una misión de observación electoral, con motivo de las elecciones presidenciales del 30 de mayo de 2010. Nuestra misión se desplegaría en la Ciudad de Bogotá y sus alrededores.

Para su información, envié recientemente una carta al señor Javier Enrique Cáceres Leal, Presidente del Senado de la República y al señor Édgar Gómez Román, Presidente de la Cámara de Representantes de su país, para informarles de la disponibilidad de nuestra organización con este fin.

Si esta propuesta es de su agrado, nuestra organización podría iniciar desde ya las gestiones tendientes a formar la delegación de parlamentarios. Le agradezco de antemano todas las disposiciones que tenga usted a bien adoptar con respecto a nuestra organización, con el fin de facilitar los arreglos logísticos necesarios para la implementación de una misión de este tipo, en especial en lo relativo a la obtención de las credenciales.

Para ello, designo a la señora Christiane Bérubé, asesora de la Comisión de Democracia y Paz de la COPA (teléfono (1-418-644-2888) o correo electrónico (copa@assnat.qc.ca) para establecer los contactos con su organización.

Deseándole el mayor de los éxitos en la organización de estos importantes comicios, le ruego reciba mis más cordiales saludos.



EDDA EVANGELINA ACUÑA

Presidenta de la Confederación Parlamentaria de las Américas

Honorable Cámara de Senadores de la Provincia de Buenos Aires

Se adjunta documentación:

- “Reglamento de las Misiones de observación electoral de la COPA”
- “Recomendación sobre el envío de una misión de observación electoral en Colombia”, adoptada en la IX Asamblea General de la COPA celebrada en la Ciudad de Salta, Provincia de Salta, Argentina, del 14 al 20 de septiembre de 2009.

Appendix III – Letter of Acceptance of the National Electoral Council and the National Registrar of Civil Status



CONSEJO NACIONAL ELECTORAL

DRN-SP-372

Bogotá D.C., 12 de abril de 2010

Doctora
EDDA EVANGELINA ACUÑA
Presidenta
Confederación Parlamentaria de las Américas (COPA)
Buenos Aires, Argentina
copa@assnat.gc.ca

Respetada Señora Presidenta:

En atención a su comunicación de fecha 5 de marzo de 2010, en la cual nos solicitan la vinculación para conformar la Misión de Observación Internacional con ocasión de la jornada Electoral que se aproxima, es un honor para la Organización Electoral de Colombia saludarla y extenderle una cordial invitación, con el fin de que nos acompañen como Observadores Internacionales de COPA y se integren al grupo de la Unióre, Continente Americano y Europa, quienes se desempeñarán como garantes del proceso electoral a celebrarse en todo el territorio colombiano el próximo domingo 30 de mayo de 2010.

En esta fecha los colombianos elegirán al Presidente y Vicepresidente de la República, período Constitucional 2010-2014. Para ello el Consejo Nacional Electoral y la Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, movilizarán la infraestructura y la logística que requiere este evento democrático.

Nos permitimos anexar la agenda programada del 26 al 31 de mayo del año en curso.

Infelizmente, La Organización Electoral por limitaciones de orden presupuestal, no podrá sufragar los costos de los representantes de su Institución que atenderán esta convocatoria, únicamente podrá asumir los costos relacionados con el transporte interno y las actividades previstas en la programación, durante la estadía en Bogotá. Le agradecemos confirmar la asistencia antes del día 23 de abril del año en curso al correo electrónico mrangel@registraduria.gov.co, y en los números telefónicos, 057- 097, 2207604, 2202880 extensiones 1804, 1376 y telefax 057- 097, 2207604.

Reciba un cordial saludo,

MARCO EMILIO HINCAPIÉ RAMÍREZ
Presidente
Consejo Nacional Electoral

Carlos Ariel Sánchez Torres
CARLOS ARIEL SÁNCHEZ TORRES
Registrador Nacional del Estado Civil

"El servicio es nuestra identidad"

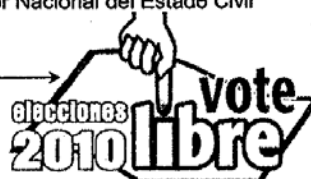
Despacho

Av. Calle 26 No. 51-50 CAN piso 3 Bogotá D.C.

Tel.: 220 28 80 Ext. 1541 1556 1557

Directo 2207604 ext 1804 mrangel@registraduria.gov.co

www.registraduria.gov.co



Appendix IV – Letter of Designation



19 de mayo de 2010

*Dra Adelina Covo
Presidenta del Consejo Nacional Electoral
Av. El Dorado No. 46 - 20
CAN - Piso 6
Bogotá
REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA*

Objeto: Elecciones presidenciales del 30 de mayo de 2010

De mi mayor consideración:

En consideración a la decisión de que el Consejo Nacional Electoral de la República de Colombia haya decidido acreditar a los miembros de la Confederación Parlamentaria de las Américas (COPA) para que participen como observadores en las próximas elecciones presidenciales que se desarrollarán en dicho país el día 30 de mayo del año 2010, es un placer informarle que la misión de observación electoral de la COPA, que se llevará a cabo entre el 26 y el 31 de mayo de 2010 en la Ciudad de Bogotá, estará compuesta de las personas siguientes:

Jefa de la misión:

Sra. Edda Acuña, Presidenta de la COPA y Senadora de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Miembros:

Sra. Cristina Ruiz Sandoval, Secretaria Ejecutiva de la COPA y Diputada del Congreso del Estado de México, México

Sr. Eduardo Nava Bolaños, Vicepresidente de la COPA – Región América del Norte y Senador de la Unión de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos

Sra. Zulma Gomez, Vicepresidenta de la COPA – Cono Sur y Senadora de la República del Paraguay

Sr. Carlos Jimenez Macías, Ex Presidente de la COPA y Senador de la Unión de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos

Sra. María Alejandra Vucasovich, Vicepresidenta de la Comisión de Democracia y Paz de la COPA y Diputada de la Provincia de Santa Fe, Argentina

Sra. Gloria Bidegain, miembro del Comité Ejecutivo de la COPA y Diputada de la Nación Argentina

Sr. Julio César Franco, miembro del Comité Ejecutivo de la COPA y Senador de la República del Paraguay

Sr. Edgar Carrasco, miembro del Comité Ejecutivo de la COPA y Diputado del Consejo legislativo de Anzoátegui, Venezuela

Sr. Antonio Morante, Diputado de la Nación Argentina

Sr. José Antonio Vilariño, Diputado de la Nación Argentina

Sra. Nancy González, Diputada de la Nación Argentina

Sra. Antonia Josefa Alegre, Diputada de la provincia de La Pampa, Argentina

Sr. Joaquín F. Blanco, Diputado de la Provincia de Santa Fe, Argentina

Sr. Jorge Alberto Lagna, Diputado de la Provincia de Santa Fe, Argentina

Sra. Estela Mendez de Micheli, Diputada de la Provincia de Santa Fe, Argentina

Sr. Daniel Ratthé, Diputado de la Asamblea Nacional de Québec, Canadá

Sra. Norma Esparza, Senadora de la Unión de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos

Sra. Alejandra Noemi Reynoso Sanchez, Diputada de la Unión de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos

Sr. Miguel Angel Terrón Mendoza, Diputado de la Unión de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos

Sra. Martha Angón, Diputada del Congreso del Estado de México, México

Sr. Maria Jose Alcalá, Diputada del Congreso del Estado de México, México

Sr. Pascual Bellizzia, Diputado del Congreso del Estado de Tabasco, México

Sr. José Carlos Ocaña Becerra, Diputado del Congreso del Estado de Tabasco, México

Sr. Denis Royer, Experto electoral, Director General de Elecciones de Québec

Sra. Christiane Bérubé, Asesora de la Comisión de Democracia y Paz de la COPA

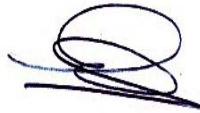
Sra. Cristina Bidegain, Asesora parlamentaria, Argentina

Sr. Hector Leguizamon, Asesor parlamentario, Paraguay

Sra. Mailen Velez, Asesora parlamentaria de la Presidenta de la COPA, Argentina

Sin más por el momento, reciba las seguridades de mi aprecio y consideración más distinguida.

Atentamente

A handwritten signature in dark ink, featuring a large, stylized loop at the top and a horizontal line at the bottom.

EDDA EVANGELINA ACUÑA

*Presidenta de la Confederación Parlamentaria de las Américas
Senadora de la Provincia de Buenos Aires*

Appendix V – Map of Colombia



Appendix VI – Sample Ballot for the First Round of the May 30, 2010 Presidential Election⁵⁰



50. This is only a sample ballot. The original ballot may differ slightly.
http://www.registraduria.gov.co/Informacion/images/tarj_primer_presi.jpg

Appendix VII – Press Release, May 26, 2010



Delegation of parliamentarians of the Americas to observe the first round of the Colombian presidential election

Bogotá, May 26, 2010 – Parliamentarians representing the **Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas** (COPA) arrived today in Colombia to observe the first round of the presidential election set for May 30. The Senator of the province of Buenos Aires and President of COPA, Ms. Edda Evangelina Acuña, will head up the electoral observation mission from May 26 to 31.

An estimated thirty parliamentarians coming from the Honourable Chamber of Deputies of Argentina, the Chamber of Deputies of the province of La Pampa (Argentina), the Chamber of Deputies of the province of Santa Fe (Argentina), the National Assembly of Québec (Canada), the Congress of the Mexican Union, the Legislative Assembly of the Federal District (Mexico), the Congress of the State of Mexico (Mexico), the Congress of the State of Tabasco (Mexico), the Chamber of Senators of Paraguay and the Regional Legislative Council of the State of Anzoátegui (Venezuela) are also taking part in the mission.

Invited by Colombia's National Electoral Council and the National Registrar of Civil Status as international observers, the COPA parliamentarians will cover as many polling stations as possible on election day. The delegation will also meet with key actors in the electoral process in order to be better positioned to assess the state of election organization. Candidates and representatives of civil society and public organizations will be among those consulted by the COPA delegation. Following the mission, the parliamentarians will present a report of their observations to the Colombian electoral authorities.

This is the 11th such mission for COPA. By taking an increasingly active role in election monitoring throughout the Americas, COPA has established its strategic importance in the consolidation of democracy.

Founded in Québec City in 1997, COPA brings together over 300 parliamentary assemblies of unitary, federal and federated states, as well as the regional parliaments and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas. For additional information on previous COPA electoral observation missions, please visit the following website: www.copa.qc.ca

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Appendix VIII– Program

REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA
ELECCIONES PRESIDENTE Y VICEPRESIDENTE
DE LA REPÚBLICA
Bogotá-Colombia
AGENDA
Del 26 al 31 de mayo de 2010

Observador Internacional




Miércoles 26 de mayo de 2010
SALUDO DE BIENVENIDA

7:00 p.m. Cóctel de bienvenida Salón Principal Hotel Tequendama-Sede de la Misión.
Saludo a cargo de:
Dra. Adelina Covo, Presidenta del CNE.
Dr. Carlos Ariel Sánchez Torres, Registrador Nacional del Estado Civil.

Jueves 27 de mayo de 2010
SEMINARIO INTERNACIONAL
ELECCIONES: INSTITUCIONALIDAD Y DEMOCRACIA

8:00 a 8:30 a.m.
Instalación a cargo de: Dra. Adelina Covo, Presidenta del Consejo Nacional Electoral, Dr. Carlos Ariel Sánchez Torres, Registrador Nacional del Estado Civil y Dr. José Thompson, Director de CAPEL.
Moderador: CNE.

8:30 a 9:30 a.m.
Conferencia Inaugural
"Elecciones: Democracia y Legitimidad Política"
Expositor: Humberto De La Calle Lombana- Ex-Vicepresidente de la República.

9:30 a 10:30 a.m.
I. Mesa Redonda
"Financiamiento, Oportunidades e Inequidades."
9:30 a 9:50 Dr. Fernando Tuesta Soldevilla - Director Instituto de Opinión Pública del PUCP-Lima, Perú

9:50 a 10:10 a.m. Dr. Francisco Javier Guerrero Aguero, Consejero Electoral del Instituto Federal Electoral de México-IFE

10:10 a 10:30 Sesión de preguntas y respuestas
Moderador: CNE

10:30 a 11:00 m. *Coffee Break*

11:00 a 12:30 p.m.
II. Mesa Redonda
"Participación y Capacitación Electoral"
11:00 a 11:30 a.m. Dra. Carmen Chacón de Cárcamo - Jefe de Capacitación Electoral-Tribunal Supremo Electoral de Panamá
11:30 a 12:00 m Dr. José Alfredo Pérez Durán - Director de la Escuela Electoral y Gobernabilidad - Jurado Nacional de Elecciones de Lima, Perú.
12:00 a 12:30 p.m. Dra. María Elena Tili Rold - Subgerente de Organización Electoral Desconcentrada- ONPE de Lima, Perú.
12:30 a 12:40 Sesión de Preguntas y Respuestas
Moderador: CNE

12:40 a 2:00 p.m. *Almuerzo Hotel Tequendama sede de la Misión*

2:00 a 3:30 p.m.
III. Mesa Redonda
"Partidos Políticos, Candidatos y Procesos Electorales"
2:00 a 2:30 p.m. Dr. Salvador Romero Bativián - Ex-presidente Corte Electoral de Bolivia.
2:30 a 3:00 p.m. Dr. Rotsay Rosales - Profesor Universidad de Costa Rica.
3:00 a 3:30 p.m. Dr. Fernando Giraldo - Dr. en Ciencias Políticas y Consultor en temas electorales- Colombia
3:30 a 3:40 Sesión de preguntas y respuestas
Moderador: CNE

3:40 a 4:00 p.m. *Coffee Break*

4:00 a 4:40 p.m. Relatoría Final Dr. José Thompson, Director de CAPEL, San José de Costa Rica

7:00 p.m. *Cena- Restaurante Andrés Carne de Res*

Viernes 28 de mayo de 2010
CONTEXTUALIZACIÓN INSTITUCIONAL Y POLÍTICA
Moderador: Dr. José Thompson, Director del Centro de Asesoría y Promoción Electoral (CAPEL)

7:00 a.m.
Desayuno en el Hotel Tequendama-Sede de la Misión

8:30 a 8:40 a.m.
Instalación a cargo de:
Dra. Adelina Covo, Presidenta del Consejo Nacional Electoral.

8:40 a 9:10 a.m.
Proceso Político-Electoral en Colombia. Elecciones Presidente - Período 2010- Dr. Fernando Giraldo - Político y Consultor Internacional.

9:10 a 9:40 a.m.
Encuestas y Sondeos Electorales - Elecciones Presidenciales 2010-
Dr. Juan Manuel Ramírez Pérez, Ex-Magistrado del Consejo Nacional Electoral.
Dr. Napoleón Franco, experto en encuestas y sondeos.

9:40 a 10:00 a.m.
Cuento y Escrutinio en Colombia, Elecciones 2010.
Conferencista - Dr. Alfonso Portea Herrán - Registrador Delegado en lo Electoral - Colombia
Comentarista - Dra. Beatriz Franco Cuervo - Profesora Universidad del Rosario - Colombia.

10:00 a 10:20 a.m. *Coffee Break*

10:20 a 10:30 a.m.
Metodología de la Presentación de los candidatos a la presidencia República-Período Constitucional 2010- 2014.
Moderador: Dr. Fernando Giraldo García

10:30 a 11:00 a.m.
Dr. Andrés Molano Shyloz - Candidato a la Presidencia de la República - Partido Verde.

11:00 a 11:30 a.m.
Dr. Rafael Pardo Rueda - Candidato a la Presidencia de la República - Partido Liberal Colombiano.

Observador Internacional

11:30 a 12:00 a.m.

Dr. Juan Manuel Santos - Candidato a la Presidencia de la República - Partido de la U

12:00 m. - 2:00 p.m. Almuerzo Hotel Tequendama sede de la Misión

2:00 a 2:30 p.m.

Dr. Jaime Araújo Rentería - Candidato a la Presidencia de la República - Partido Alianza Social Afrodescendiente.

2:30 a 3:00 p.m.

Dr. Germán Vargas Lleras - Candidato a la Presidencia de la República - Partido Cambio Radical.

3:00 a 3:30 p.m.

Dra. Noemí Santa Posada - Candidata a la Presidencia de la República - Partido Conservador Colombiano.

3:30 a 4:00 p.m.

Dr. Gustavo Petro - Candidato a la Presidencia de la República - Partido Polo Democrático Alternativo.

4:00 a 4:30 p.m.

Dr. Robinson Alexander Devia - Candidato a la Presidencia de la República - Partido La Voz de la Conciencia.

4:30 a 5:00 p.m.

Dr. Jairo Enrique Calderón - Candidato a la Presidencia de la República - Partido Movimiento Apertura Liberal.

5:00 p.m.

Cierre y conclusiones: Magistrado CNE

7:30 p.m. Cena Restaurante Santa Clara Menorretto

Sábado 29 de mayo de 2010
ORGANIZACIÓN Y ADMINISTRACIÓN DEL PROCESO ELECTORAL 2010

7:30 a 8:30 a.m.

7:30 a 8:30 a.m. Desayuno de trabajo - Hotel Tequendama - Sede de la Misión.

8:30 a 9:30 a.m. Intervención del Registrador Nacional del Estado CNE, Dr. Carlos Ariel Sánchez Torres.

10:00 a.m. Presidencia de la República o Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá - T6 T

11:00 a.m. Recorrido Cultural - Museo Bolero

1:00 p.m. Almuerzo Restaurante La Juguetaría La Candelaria

3:00 p.m. Recorrido Cultural - Museo del Oro

6:00 p.m. Reunión Logística y de Seguridad - lobbie del Hotel

7:00 p.m. Cena Hotel Tequendama sede de la Misión
Muestra Cultural

Domingo 30 de mayo de 2010

6:00 a.m.

Desayuno en el Hotel Tequendama - Sede de la Misión

8:00 a.m.

Instalación en la Plaza de Bolívar a cargo de:
Dr. Samuel Moreno Rojas, Alcalde Mayor de Bogotá
Dra. Adelina Covo, Presidenta Consejo Nacional Electoral,
Dr. Carlos Ariel Sánchez Torres, Registrador Nacional del Estado Civil.

9:00 a. 12:00 m.

Recorrido de los Observadores Internacionales en los diferentes puestos de votación

1:00 p.m. Almuerzo Hotel Tequendama sede de la Misión

2:00 a 2:30 p.m.

Continuación recorrido Observadores

4:00 a 4:30 p.m.

Cierre de Elecciones Centro de Operaciones - Corferias

4:30 a 5:30 p.m.

Transmisión de Resultados

6:30 a 8:00 p.m.

Rendición del Informe:
Observadores Internacionales
"Sala VIP Corferias"

Appendix IX

International Seminar on Elections, Institutions and Democracy Bogotá, Colombia, May 27, 2010

Summary⁵¹

Opening of the Seminar – Thursday, May 27, 2010, 8:30 a.m.

The International Seminar on Elections, Institutions and Democracy was officially opened by Carlos Ariel Sanchez Torres, National Registrar of Civil Status, and Adelina Covo, President of the National Electoral Council.

Ms. Covo gave a short presentation on potential challenges and concerns during the presidential election, and a historical overview of the electoral process in Colombia, with an emphasis on the progress made since the March 2010 legislative elections, especially with respect to consideration of ethnic issues and the strengthening of the political parties.

Humberto De La Calle Lombana, former Vice-President of the Republic, gave a talk entitled “Elections: Democracy and Political Legitimacy”, during which he presented the work accomplished to improve election oversight in Colombia.

He pointed out that talking about democracy doesn’t make it a reality; measures, means and actions must also be introduced to make it a reality. He mentioned respect for minorities as an example. It is also fundamental, in his opinion, to hold elections that enable democracy to blossom and thrive, and it is the CNE’s responsibility to see that this happens.

He expressed certain reservations with respect to the reform of the CNE but recognized that, in expanding the CNE’s mandate, the Government had improved transparency by introducing certain guarantees, in particular with respect to financing, a challenge not only for Colombia but also for other South American countries.

First Round-Table Discussion: “Financing: Opportunities and Inequalities” – Thursday, May 27, 2010, 9:30 a.m.

**- Fernando Tuesta Soldevilla, Director of the Public Opinion Institute of the PUCP of Peru
(Pontífica Universidad Católica del Perú)**

Using a comparative analysis of the political party and election campaign financing methods in the Andean region, Mr. Soldevilla presented the difficulties encountered in the allocation and oversight of public financing.

51. This report simply presents the views of the representatives of institutions and organizations without in any way endorsing those views.

- Francisco Javier Guerrero Aguirre, Advisor to the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico

Mr. Aguirre gave a detailed presentation on the issue of political party financing in Mexico. He began with a historical overview of the subject, reviewing the measures introduced since the decision was first made in the 1970s to authorize public financing. This policy direction was reinforced during the 1990s, when it was decided that public financing would prevail over private financing, an idea that was further defined in 2007-2008 when legislation was passed to limit private financial contributions.

In Mexico, most political party financing now comes from public sources so as to prevent the private sector from controlling political parties. Mexico has also enacted legislation to shorten election campaigns, from 161 days in 2006 to 60 days in 2009, and to prohibit the purchase of media air time, which must now be granted by the State. As a result, none of the parties obtained air time in the July 2009 elections. Furthermore, to improve oversight of political party financing and to provide a framework for increasing party accountability, legislators created the Political Resource Auditing Unit (*Unidad de Fiscalización de los Recursos de los Partidos*) in 2007.

Mr. Aguirre also raised the issue of opinion polls and their influence on voting intentions and election results. In his opinion, it could be to a party's advantage to use poll results to influence voters in its favour.

For Mr. Aguirre, it is impossible to discuss opinion polls and their potential influence without talking about how they are conducted and who conducts them. Controlling these aspects would in some ways guarantee representative and fair polls. He proposed that the authorities be given the right to regulate how polls are conducted so that the findings can be used to give the public adequate and objective information. He pointed out, however, that there is a fine line between the independence of polling firms and the need for accurate and neutral information.

Second Round-Table Discussion: "Electoral Participation and Education" – Thursday, May 27, 2010, 11:00 a.m.

- Carmen Chacón de Cárcamo, Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Panama

Ms. Chacón de Cárcamo spoke on the need for training to ensure the development and protection of democracy. She believes that training must be offered to everyone involved in managing and running the election process: instructors, members of the Administrative Tribunal, polling station staff, and so on.

This training must also be made available to members of the public through the establishment of a citizenship education plan. For instance, information and awareness days should be organized for young people voting for the first time, in order to develop their sense of civic responsibility. In Panama, there are different categories of training programs geared to the development of election knowledge and skills. In addition, one full week is devoted to a specific election topic every year in April. Moreover, teachers are offered training on the practice of democratic values, the strengthening of democracy and voter responsibility to equip them to pass on these values to their students.

- José Alfredo Pérez Duarte, Member of the National Election Jury of Peru

Mr. Duarte presented the results of a study on electoral participation. He began by listing the factors that may cause such participation to increase or decrease, such as culture, traditions, education and training, the party system, whether or not voting is mandatory, and the accessibility of polling stations.

He went on to explain that Latin America has been experiencing a slow but steady decline in its voter participation rate, but this decline defies easy explanation. In his opinion, this situation puts pressure on the education system and calls for an examination of the relevance of electoral training activities, which he distinguishes from the more long-term vision of citizenship education. He proposed better adapted training programs which take greater account of such characteristics as the region concerned, its ethnic composition and prevailing culture and the education level of its inhabitants.

Mr. Duarte concluded by presenting a government observatory which provides the public with a database containing information on electoral candidates, including their detailed curriculum vitae and any other documents they have drafted or posted.

- María Elena Tillit Roig, Member of the National Office of Electoral Processes of Peru

Ms. Roig began her presentation by arguing that democracy implies values, an abstract notion which is fleshed out through a people's culture. Each State, through the lifestyle and culture of its citizens, promotes a certain number of values, and these values constitute the foundation of its democracy.

In her opinion, the development of training programs on citizenship, civic responsibility or civic education must take those values and their order of importance into consideration. She also mentioned that certain realities such as ethnic differences, accessibility and territorial issues, access to information through modern technologies, social exclusion and male chauvinism must also be taken into account. She cited the example of Peru, whose population is comprised of 15 ethnolinguistic families and 71 different ethnic groups which speak some 70 languages.

Third Round-Table Discussion: "Political Parties, Candidates and Electoral Processes" – Thursday, May 27, 2010, 2:00 p.m.

- Salvador Romero Ballivián, Former President of the National Electoral Court of Bolivia

Mr. Ballivián started the discussion by presenting a comparative study of Bolivia's political party system. He gave an overview of political party development over the past 20 years and highlighted the periods during which certain social, economic and political factors influenced the growth and evolution and, in certain cases, disappearance of parties.

- Rotsay Rosales, Professor at the University of Costa Rica (*Universidad de Costa Rica*)

Mr. Rosales spoke on the subject of parties, electoral democracy and electoral processes in Central America. His presentation focused on the transparency which must characterize parties. Recognizing that money and democracy are necessarily related, he advanced that their relationship must be subject to structured public accountability. He was of the opinion that financing must exclude private sources, a policy which should in turn trigger reflection on sanctions in the area of political party financing.

Appendix X – Observer's Grid



Presidential elections in Colombia
(1st round)
May 30th, 2010

ELECTION OBSERVER'S GRID

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of observer: _____

City/District: _____

Voting Centre: _____

Polling station: _____

Arrival time: _____

Departure time: _____

2. POLLING STATION

Opening time: _____

Reasons for delay (if any): _____

Composition of the polling station: _____

	YES	NO
Suitable polling station site and set-up		
Polling station is complete		
Presence of security forces		
Presence of candidate/party representatives		
Presence of election advertising on site		
Acts of voter intimidation		

Details: _____

3. ELECTION MATERIALS

	YES	NO
Properly sealed ballot boxes		
Voting booths ensuring ballot secrecy		
Voters list		
Ballots in sufficient quantity		
Ballot design (allows the voter to clearly identify his choice)		

	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor
Election materials				
Work of polling station officials				

Details: _____

4. VOTERS

Number of voters registered: _____

Waiting time: _____

Average time required to vote: _____

Voters without voter registration cards: _____

Voters who were not on the voters list: _____

Details: _____

Comments on the new electoral list: _____

5. COMPLAINTS

	YES	NO
Complaints by party or candidate representatives		
Complaints by voters		

Details: _____

6. OTHER OBSERVATIONS

	YES	NO
Respect for ballot secrecy		
Presence of more than one voter in the voting booth		
Electoral staff compliance with procedures		
Voter understanding of procedures		
Presence of unauthorized persons in the polling station		
Visit by other international observers		
Visit by national observers		
Orderly conduct of voting		
Interruption in voting during the day		

Details: _____

7. VOTE COUNT

Vote count start time: _____

Number of voters registered: _____

Number of people who voted: _____

Invalid ballots: _____

Blank ballots: _____

Challenges by representatives: _____

Details: _____

Signature of tallies by representatives: _____

Level of security for transport of material to the District Council

Excellent () Average () Low ()

Details: _____

8. OVERALL EVALUATION

Irregularities to report: ()

Minor irregularities: () Specify

Serious irregularities capable of affecting the integrity of the electoral process: ()
Specify _____

Remarks: _____

Appendix XI – Press release, May 31, 2010



COPA electoral observation mission in Colombia

PARLIAMENTARIANS SALUTE AND CONGRATULATE THE COLOMBIAN PEOPLE ON CONDUCTING SUCCESSFUL PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Bogotá, May 31, 2010 – A delegation of 24 parliamentarians from the **Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA)** led by Edda Acuña, COPA president and senator of the province of Buenos Aires, observed the 1st round of the presidential election in Colombia held May 30, 2010. The COPA delegation, consisting of parliamentarians from the Honourable Chamber of Deputies of Argentina, the Chamber of Deputies of the province of La Pampa (Argentina), the Chamber of Deputies of the province of Santa Fe (Argentina), the National Assembly of Québec (Canada), the Congress of the Mexican Union, the Congress of the State of Mexico (Mexico), the Congress of the State of Tabasco (Mexico), the Chamber of Senators of Paraguay and the Regional Legislative Council of the State of Anzoátegui (Venezuela), reported that voting was orderly and in compliance with the rules in effect.

On election day, the delegates went to the capital, Bogotá, to observe balloting in about a hundred polling stations.

Members of the delegation did not witness any major irregularities. However, they observed that many polling booths were not set up in such a way that the secrecy of the vote would be ensured. They were impressed by the rigor and sense of civic duty shown by citizens and electoral personnel during the election. Delegation members also underscored the peacefulness of the election day and Colombians' respect for their institutions.

In addition to observing the polling stations on election day, the COPA delegation held important meetings with various key actors. Shortly after arriving on May 26, delegates met with political party representatives, Colombian electoral authorities, as well as representatives from other organizations of national and international observers in order to gather information on the preparation of the electoral process and the situation prevailing in the country on the eve of the election.

This was COPA's 11th observation mission. By taking an increasingly active role in election monitoring throughout the Americas, COPA has established its strategic importance in the consolidation of democracy. Founded in Québec City in 1997, COPA brings together over 300 parliamentary assemblies of unitary, federal, and federated states, as well as the regional parliaments and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas.



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