Presidential and Parliamentary Elections 2006: Nicaragua

Latin American Presidential Election Series
November 1, 2006
Political Database of the Americas
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Georgetown University
Agenda

- General Elections
- Systems / Reforms
- Presidential Candidates
  - A few polls
- Asamblea Nacional
  - A few more polls
General Elections

- Election Day: Sunday, November 5, 2006
  - President/Vice-president
  - 90 (+2) Diputados to the Asamblea Nacional
  - 20 Diputados to the Central American Parliament (Parlacen)
Presidential Election

- Relative majority with Second round option
  - First round (Nov. 5):
    - 40% needed for victory, or
    - 35% with a 5% margin over 2nd candidate (Constitutional reform of 2000 - previous requirement was 45%).
  - Second round (held within 45 days of first round)
    - Top two candidates compete
Asamblea Nacional Election

- Unicameral legislature
- Closed-list, proportional representation (PR) system
- 15 departments, 2 autonomous regions
- 92 total Diputados
  - 90 elected
    - 20 from national constituency
      - Seats distributed to party list based on proportion of votes received
    - 70 from Department or Autonomous Region constituencies
      - Follows same formula as national constituency
      - Based on 1995 census data
  - 2 designated (the outgoing president & the 2nd presidential candidate)

Source: Mision de Observacion Electoral de la Union Europea. www.eueom-nic.org
Asamblea Nacional

- Diputados serve five-year terms
- One re-election permitted
5 Presidential Candidates

- Daniel Ortega Saavedra
- Eduardo Montealegre
- Edmundo Jarquín
- José Rizo Castellón
- Edén Pastora
Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN)

- Daniel Ortega Saavedra
  - Former president (1984-1990)
  - Lost in 3 subsequent elections
  - Sandinista revolutionary, 1980’s
  - Leader of the FSLN party
- VP: Jaime Morales Carazo
  - Asamblea Nacional
  - Formerly close to Alemán
  - Co-founder of PLC (current govt)
Alianza Liberal Nicaraguense (ALN)

- Eduardo Montealegre Rivas
  - Founder of ALN (after forced from PLC)
  - Wealthy banker, economist (Brown and Harvard educated)
  - Foreign Minister (Alemán), Treasury Minister (Bolaños)
  - Enjoys U.S. Support
Movimiento Renovación Sandinista (MRS)

- Edmundo Jarquín
  - MRS presidential candidate after death of Herty Lewites in early July (previously VP candidate)
  - Former ambassador to Mexico and Spain
  - Asamblea Nacional, ‘90; IDB ‘92-’05
  - Enjoys U.S. support
  - VP: Carlos Mejía Godoy
    - Popular singer/songwriter joins ticket
José Rizo Castellón
- VP until 2005
  - Stepped-down from vice-presidency to pursue presidency (and differences with Bolaños)
- Supported by fr. president Alemán (1997-2001), serving 20-year sentence for money laundering and fraud
- Opposed by U.S. due to ties with Alemán
Alternativa por el Cambio (AC)

- Edén Pastora
  - “Comandante Cero”
    - 1978: storms the Asamblea with FSLN
    - Key in the insurgency vs. Samoza
  - Former Deputy Defense Minister (1979-1981)
  - Presidential candidate, Partido Acción Democratica (1996)
  - Managua mayoral candidate
  - VP: Mercedes Tenorio
Other players

- Arnoldo Alemán
  - 20-years house arrest
  - Continues to influence PLC

- Enrique Bolaños
  - Current president
  - Impeachment talk: 2005
# CID/Gallup poll

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>October 2006</th>
<th>August 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSLN</td>
<td>Daniel Ortega Saavedra</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALN</td>
<td>Eduardo Montealegre</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRS</td>
<td>Edmundo Jarquín</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC</td>
<td>José Rizo Castellón</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>Edén Pastora</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td><em>Don't know/NA</em></td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CID-Gallup. Source: LaPrensa.com.ni October 21, 2006
### Latest – Friday October 27, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Borge &amp; Associates</th>
<th>M&amp;R Consultores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSLN</td>
<td>Daniel Ortega Saavedra</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALN</td>
<td>Eduardo Montealegre</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
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</table>

Reuters, source: Inter-American Dialogue, Latin America Advisor, October 30, 2006
## Ortega: Past Presidential Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ortega % vote</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>42</td>
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</table>

Consistency in support – does this indicate a “ceiling”?  

Current numbers approaching the 35% w/ 5% margin needed for 1st round win  

Big question: what happens in the case of second round?

Source: Inforpress Centroamericana, October 20, 2006
Current *Asamblea Nacional*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>2001 election results (%)</th>
<th># of seats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Alliance (PLC, PCCN, PALI, PLIUN, PUCA)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSLN</td>
<td>36.55</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>1</td>
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Current Poll: *Asamblea Nacional*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>September 2006 poll (% of vote)</th>
<th>= # of seats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSLN</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALN-PC</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRS</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0</td>
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