

# *Ruling Party of Ecuador Gets Majority Votes in Regional Elections*

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Quito, February 24 (RHC) -- Ecuador's ruling Alianza Pais Party won the majority of the prefectures in the regional elections held this Sunday, but lost the mayorship of important municipalities of Quito and Guayaquil.

According to preliminary results of exit polls in Quito, Mauricio Rodas won the mayorship of Quito with 58.7% of the vote. The current mayor of the city and candidate of the Alianza Pais party, Augusto Barrera, followed behind with 39.5% of the ballots.

In Guayaquil, opposition candidate Jaime Nebot, won with 60.2% of the votes against 38.1% for Viviana Bonilla of the Alianza Pais Party.

According to the president of the National Electoral Council (CNE), Domingo Paredes, 99% of voters cast their vote under normal conditions. Paredes also thanked the 158 observers from more than twenty international organizations that monitored the process.

Opening the polls early on Sunday, President Rafael Correa said that this is the tenth time that Ecuadorians go to the polls since he took office in 2007. Correa said: "We should be proud of our

country's strong and vibrant democracy."

Some 11.6 million Ecuadorians were eligible to participate in the regional elections on Sunday, when 221 mayors, 23 provincial governors, 1305 city and rural councilors and 4079 members of parish councils were chosen from 27,895 registered candidates.

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