

Chile closes the constitutional process

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By Guillermo Alvarado

With an advantage of more than 11 percentage points, the Chilean population rejected a draft Constitution written by the right and the extreme right, which eliminated conquests of women and workers and enshrined principles of the most brutal neoliberalism.

After the plebiscite of September 4, 2022, this was the second failure in the effort to provide the country with a Magna Carta to replace the one imposed in 1980 by the dictatorship headed by Augusto Pinochet.

Both President Gabriel Boric and most political party leaders agreed that this process had reached its end and that the Pinochetista fundamental law would remain in force for several more years.

The result was clearly a setback for the extremist Republican Party and its allies in the conservative groups, but it is also a wake-up call to the whole political class that looks fragmented and polarized, unable to reach agreements for the benefit of the population.

Urgent issues, such as the pension reform to provide better pensions to retirees or a fiscal pact to force those who have more to pay more to those who have more, remain stuck in Congress.

In these terms, the population not only voted against a constitutional project that would roll back their rights for the benefit of the large business sector, but also rejected a way of doing politics where each current blocks the others while the people are left defenseless.

It is undeniable that Chile is immersed in a growing wave of insecurity due to the action of common crime and the introduction of forms of organized crime unknown there until recently.

This is not the responsibility of a particular government, but of years of apathy to face a particular problem that keeps the population on edge.

In addition to the fear of going out on the streets that many families suffer, there are frequent scandalous cases of corruption, such as the most recent one involving some 50 businessmen who for years swindled the Treasury. The school system, which has been under the responsibility of the municipalities and not the central government since the times of the dictatorship, suffers from serious deficiencies and public health is a disaster since many people have to wait more than a year to be seen by a specialist or to receive surgery.

This is what the vote against two consecutive magna carta magna proposals really refers to. Many people recognize the importance of modernizing the law of the land, but they demand that politicians focus more on their day-to-day needs instead of fighting among themselves.

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