

Peru's Neo-liberal Presidential Candidates Clash at Debate



Lima, May 23 (RHC)-- Peru's right-wing presidential candidates Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, a businessman, and Keiko Fujimori, daughter of imprisoned former dictator Alberto Fujimori, clashed on an economic policy at debate on Sunday held ahead of a June 5th run-off vote.

Fujimori has a slight lead in the polls over her opponent, but critics of her authoritarian father and her conservative politics have been protesting in the lead-up to the elections, with some on the left embracing an anyone-but-Fujimori approach to the election.

Debating economic policy, Fujimori, leader of the Popular Force, promised she would allocate a one percent general sales tax to local governments in need of funds. She added that she would not lower the tax, as her opponent has advocated.

Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, who was accused of vote-buying in the first round, said he would look to boost tourism and introduce agricultural subsidies to invest in technologies and prop up the rural poor. He criticized Fujimori's plan for a central management of investments, calling instead for a break with her father's legacy and decentralization of state funds through regional bodies.

Keiko Fujimori declined to talk about the past, and instead expressed her defense of the environment, which she said Kuczynski threatens with his support of GMOs. Both have closely-aligned neo-liberal agendas, with the candidates differing mostly in style.

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