

# *Evo Morales wins Bolivia's presidency in first round*

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La Paz, October 21 (RHC)-- Bolivian President Evo Morales has been re-elected in the first round of voting after obtaining 46.86 percent of the votes against 36.73 percent for right-wing main opposition candidate Carlos Mesa -- giving him a 10-point lead to win outright.

With 95.03 percent of votes counted from within Bolivia and across the world, the candidate of the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) Party and current head of state beat Mesa from the Citizen Community (CC) party by gaining more than 40 percent of the valid votes and a 10-point lead.

The official announcement with the final vote count was made Monday night. The Bolivian leader claimed victory Sunday evening, adding that "most importantly, we again have an absolute majority in the chambers of Deputies and Senators."

Morales counted on the rural vote, which took more time to be counted but handed him the awaited victory to lead the South American country from 2020 to 2025. His party will also have a majority in Congress, meaning governance will not be blocked by opposition parties.

The president, a former union leader for coca growers, became Bolivia's first Indigenous president in 2006. He has overseen a long stretch of political and economic stability for Bolivia, a landlocked country of 11 million people.

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