

# *Earthquake in the region*

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**Numerous countries in Latin America and the Caribbean were shaken by the so-called Pandora's Papers scandal**

By Guillermo Alvarado

Numerous countries in Latin America and the Caribbean were shaken by the so-called Pandora Papers scandal, which revealed how presidents, retired and incumbent presidents, officials and other people used tax havens to evade taxes or hide their fortunes.

In some places, measures have already begun to be taken to investigate these cases, which have aroused indignation among the population, who once again see that justice and the laws are mandatory for the middle and lower classes, but non-existent among the wealthy.

A commission of the Brazilian Senate approved two petitions for the Minister of Economy, Paulo Guedes, and the President of the Central Bank, Roberto Campos Neto, to come to that chamber to give explanations for the resources they have in offshore accounts and companies, i.e. offshore.

They are two politicians very close to the head of state, Jair Bolsonaro, and both are committed to the neoliberal policies that have led millions of people in the South American giant to poverty.

In Colombia, the opposition asked to debate in the House of Representatives the accusations against the vice-president, Martha Lucía Ramírez, the director of Customs, Lisandro Junco, and the minister of Transportation, Ángela María Orozco.

Also involved in the Pandora scandal are former presidents César Gaviria and Andrés Pastrana, the Colombian ambassador to Chile, Guillermo Botero, and the former Minister of Education, Gina Parody.

In Chile, a constitutional accusation is being promoted against President Sebastián Piñera, accused of the illicit sale of the Dominga mining company through a cardboard company located in the British Virgin Islands.

No less complex is the situation of the president of Ecuador, the former banker Guillermo Lasso, whose name appears in the documents leaked by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, which also involves the president of the Dominican Republic, Luis Abinader.

The Macri family, long-time protagonist of tax evasion and other schemes in Argentina, is also in the spotlight. Mariano Macri, younger brother of the former president of that surname, recently said in an interview that "to earn money you have to evade taxes", and now his name appears in this scandal.

Another implicated person is the former Paraguayan ruler, Horacio Cartes, who appears as a beneficiary of a Panamanian offshore company, although so far the administration of Mario Abdo Benítez has not initiated any investigation in this regard.

The full extent of Pandora Papers is not yet known, so many other surprises may be on the way.

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