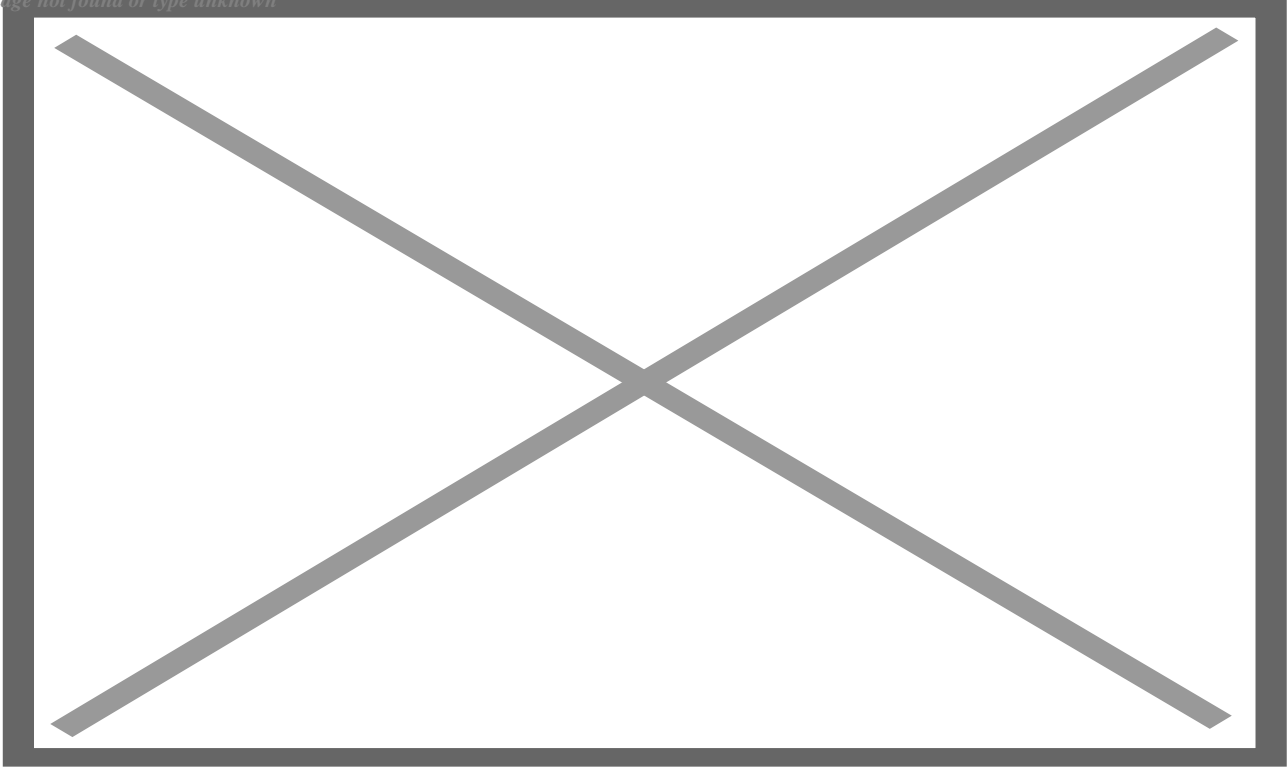


Winds of change

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Winds of change are blowing in Latin America and the Caribbean

By Guillermo Alvarado

I said in a previous commentary that the winds of progressive change are blowing in Latin America and the Caribbean, after the successive victories of Luis Arce in Bolivia, Pedro Castillo in Peru, Xiomara Castro in Honduras and Gabriel Boric in Chile, in addition to the reelection of Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua.

It is clear that each of these arrivals to the presidential chair has a particular significance, both for the scope of the transformations they will achieve within their countries, as well as for their weight in the regional integration process, but there is no doubt that all of them are positive.

This is a trend that could be consolidated in 2022, when three electoral processes will be held in Costa Rica, Colombia and Brazil, the last two of tremendous importance.

In the case of Costa Rica, no major significance is expected because of the more than twenty candidates that will run on February 6, the ones with the greatest possibilities of winning at the polls belong to conservative currents or, if anything, tending more towards the center of the political spectrum.

This is not the case in Colombia, where dissatisfaction with years of neoliberalism could defeat the current led from the shadows by former President Alvaro Uribe.

For the initial round on May 29 and the second round scheduled for June 19, opinion polls are in favor of the economist, former guerrilla fighter and former mayor of Bogota, Gustavo Petro, which would bring a representative of the left to the presidency for the first time in the history of that country.

Voting is a few months away, but insecurity, repeated assassinations of social leaders and poverty are daily undermining the radical right's chances of retaining power.

In Brazil, although former governor Luis Inacio Lula da Silva has not yet confirmed his candidacy for the Planalto Palace, he is leading in all polls of voting intentions, especially if he faces Jair Bolsonaro.

Lula promised that in February or March he will announce whether he will compete again for the presidential chair, although many already see him back at the head of the Workers' Party.

These are perspectives that undoubtedly keep many people in Washington awake at night, where the machinery must already be in motion to prevent these fresh winds from spreading throughout the area.

Times of battle are coming in which everyone must be in their own trenches to protect what has already been won and advance towards new conquests.

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