

# *Brazilian Elections will Determine Regional Future*

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Next Sunday's presidential elections in Brazil will undoubtedly will not only bring a president, because their result will have a direct impact on regional integration blocs like South Common Market (Mercosur) and the Union of South American Nations (Unasur).

Experts in Buenos Aires agree that bearing in mind the economic and political importance of Brazil in the region, the new president will have significance influence on the future of the two blocs.

If the candidate of the Social Democratic Party, Neves, is elected he would take Mercosur back to its original form of mere free trade zone, the experts noted and added that the presidential candidate favors the individual capacity of the bloc's member states to set up bilateral trade accords, as he told foreign reporters recently.

If that were the case, Brazil would go for alliances with western countries and thus would get closer to the United States, but farther from other emerging Latin American countries in its natural scenario. However, this would not mean the elimination of Mercosur, though the bloc would be reduced to its minimum expression.

If Neves takes power, Mercosur would lose its political line, which it has developed over the years, particularly during the past decade, the experts noted and added that Latin America's commercial

geography is split into two sections, one is Mercosur and the other is the Pacific Alliance, with quite different models each.

This split is the result of the US penetration and pressure policy after the White House failed to impose its Free Trade Alliance for the Americas, the FTAA, at the Summit of the Americas, back in 2005.

However, following the social programs carried out by the Dilma Rousseff administration, optimism reigns that the current head of state will continue to lead the future of the millions of Brazilians, who bet on an improved economic and social life, while favoring the long overdue regional integration of the nations of this part of the world.

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