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Mexico

# A victory for “progressivism” in Mexico - what now?

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**Unlike the recent electoral results in Latin America (Ecuador, Salvador, Argentina, etc.), Mexico has just experienced a resounding victory for “progressivism” during the presidential, legislative and several state governorship elections.**

In the presidential elections, it was Claudia Sheinbaum who presented herself as the heir and successor of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO), supported by his party, MORENA (National Regeneration Movement), who won hands down, against her competitor, the candidate of the coalition of three right-wing parties (PRI, PAN, PRD). With 60 per cent of the votes cast, she crushed the right-wing candidate, who although heavily supported by the vast majority of the media, obtained barely 30 per cent of the votes. In the legislative elections, MORENA's coalition won 365 seats out of 500 and will have a qualified majority making it possible for constitutional laws to be passed, which was not the case under AMLO's presidency.

## Popular rejection of policies

These results first of all confirm the deep rejection by a large majority of the Mexican people of the parties which dominated and locked down political life for decades. Already in 2018, AMLO's victory had shaken the corrupt regime established by the PRI, relayed by the PAN. The dominant parties hoped that economic and social difficulties would quickly wear down Lopez Obrador's government and ceaselessly tried to destabilize it throughout the six years of his presidential mandate (non-renewable in Mexico). But despite the profound limitations of his policies, the economic and social measures taken in favour of the most disadvantaged sectors of the population and the curbs placed on the most violent policies and practices of neoliberalism ensured that his government had broad majority support among the population.

This popularity was transferred to his candidate whose former mandate at the head of the municipality of Mexico City and feminist positions also counted in her large victory.

## End of the “perfect dictatorship”

We must take stock of what this electoral triumph means. The regime that prevailed in Mexico for almost a century (“the perfect dictatorship”), where one party, the PRI, concentrated all powers, managed a system corrupted to the core, controlled all mass organizations, including unions, won all the elections, rigging them when necessary, in a formally democratic framework, seems to have suffered a mortal blow. After having had to share part of government power at the beginning of the 2000s with a right-wing party, the PAN, and a split from its own ranks, the PRD, the PRI now only has 10 per cent of the votes and, with its allies, finds itself in the minority in parliament and in state governments.

The electoral campaign was marked by deep polarization. To the most delusional accusations from the right and the media against Lopez Obrador and his candidate, they responded with massive popular mobilizations. This resulted in strong politicization among the popular classes and an unusually high turnout, 60 per cent as in 2018, during the election of AMLO as president.

# The broad credit of Claudia Sheinbaum

The confirmed rejection of the parties of the old system does not guarantee real and profound change for the working classes. The outgoing president's policy was based on a personalist mode of government, very ambiguous relationships with social movements, and an economy that was certainly partly redistributive, but always based on extractivism. AMLO also failed to reduce the widespread influence of drug traffickers and the endemic violence, particularly against women. Claudia Sheinbaum benefits from a credit which today exceeds that of her predecessor, and she has a parliamentary majority which initially gives her additional means to promote radical reforms. Will she want to? Will she be able to?

The fact that among the newly elected representatives of her MORENA party, a large number are defectors from the old parties of the system and that none come from the left of the party, is not a good sign in this sense. But the pressure of popular intervention and of the social movements that mobilized in the campaign can push her in another direction.

*Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).*

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