

GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS IN VENEZUELA - OCTOBER 2017

Regional elections in Venezuela are the electoral process that allows the reelection of 23 governors and 237 deputies to Regional Legislative Councils. According to the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, governors govern in four-years terms. Hence, if they were elected in 2012, they had to be reelected through an election in December 2016. Notwithstanding, and without any explanation, this election did not take place in 2016.

In October 2016, the National Electoral Council (CNE), the state body in charge of calling for and organizing elections in Venezuela, made a first announcement publishing an elections calendar that included the holding of regional elections at the "end of the first semester of 2017. " This date was not met. Instead, the process to legitimize political parties began in February 2017, and it was overlapped by the fraudulent election of the National Constituent Assembly (ANC) on July 30th, 2017.

Within this framework, CNE made a second announcement setting the date for the regional elections for December 10th, 2017—one full year after they were due. CNE, however, blatantly subduing its powers to those of the ANC, approved the proposed date for regional elections made by ANC on August 14th. This is stated in Official Gazette 41.213, where the ANC, an illegally formed body, ordered the rescheduling of gubernatorial elections for October 2017.

The gubernatorial elections of 2017 demonstrate a series of actions and procedures that mark the undermining of the electoral structure in Venezuela, and that led to the weakening of citizen participation in electoral processes.

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