

Profile of the country and political background



The Republic of Peru is a country in western South America. It is bordered on the north by Ecuador and Colombia, on the east by Brazil, on the southeast by Bolivia, on the south by Chile, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean.

Peru is a representative democratic republic divided into 25 regions. It is a developing country with a market-oriented economy; its 2010 per capita income is estimated by the IMF at US\$5,195 and it has a high Human Development Index score of 0.723 based on 2010 data. Its main economic activities include agriculture, fishing, mining, and manufacturing of products such as textiles. The Peruvian population, estimated at 29.5 million, is multiethnic, including Amerindians, Europeans, Africans, and Asians. The main spoken language is Spanish, although a significant number of Peruvians speak Quechua or other native languages.

Political background

Peru returned to democratic leadership in 1980, but experienced economic problems and the growth of a violent insurgency. In 1990, Peru general elections had two main candidates, the now Nobel laureate writer Mario Vargas Llosa as candidate of the Democratic Front and former minister of economy Luis Alva Castro, running for APRA, the party then in power. A couple of weeks before election, a politically unknown candidate, Alberto Fujimori managed to force a second round of elections and defeated Vargas Llosa. The decade of Fujimorismo meant the end of the economic model ran by the state since the reforms promoted by the military; the economy was opened to international markets and the privatization of state companies reduced the state intervention in the economy.

Fujimori won a third mandate in 2000 but a series of scandals involving the bribing of opposition congressmen and businessmen to support the government precipitated the end of his regime.

Fujimori

went into exile, and a caretaker government oversaw new elections in the spring of 2001, which led to

Alejandro Toledo Manrique as the new head of government - Peru's first democratically elected president of Native American ethnicity.

The presidential election of 2006 saw the return of Alan García Pérez. On 10 April 2011, three elections took place simultaneously; the election of the president of the republic and two vice-

presidents, the election of 130 members to the National Congress and the election of 5 deputies and 10 reserve members to the Andean Parliament.

The results of presidential elections gave 31,6% of the valid votes to Ollanta Humala, from Gana Perú, and 23,5% to Keiko Fujimori, from Fuerza 2011. None of them was able to attain an absolute majority to be elected in the first round. Ollanta Humala and Keiko Fujimori race for a second round to the presidential elections, which will be held on the 5 June 2011.

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