

Trump's Far-Right Ally Wins Colombian Elections



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Four years of Colombia's "anti-imperialist" government changed little. Now it has elected a Trump-backed far-right president.

Details. Abelardo [de la Espriella](#) of the far-right "Defenders of the Homeland" defeated [Iván Céspedes](#) of the left-wing "Historic Pact" by [49.7% to 48.7%](#) respectively.

► Former President Gustavo Petro [argued](#) that the results were [fraudulent](#), while Céspedes [contested](#) the preliminary results, preferring to await a more detailed vote count. After his victory, de la Espriella [accused](#) both of attempting to undermine Colombian institutions.

► US President Donald Trump [celebrated](#) and took credit for de la Espriella's victory, having previously [called](#) him a "Smart, Strong, and Tough Leader" while [labelling](#) Céspedes a "radical left Marxist."

► De la Espriella [promised](#) to combat crime "with an iron fist," halt all negotiations with armed militia groups, lower corporate taxes, and build mega-prisons modelled after those in El Salvador, which are described as [torture-like](#).

► In contrast, Céspedes [called for](#) the continuation of peace talks with armed militia groups, higher taxes on the wealthiest, and increased public spending. He was expected to [follow](#) Petro's course of "peacefully" reforming capitalism.

Context. Other "left-wing" countries in Latin America have also experienced a rightward shift. Venezuela began greater [market liberalisation](#) following direct US intervention. In Bolivia, 20 years of [reformist](#) Movement for Socialism rule [ended](#) in 2025 with the election of Christian democrat Rodrigo Paz. On June 18, the Cuban parliament's [reforms](#) officially restored capitalism. [Colombia](#), [Venezuela](#), [Bolivia](#) and [Cuba](#) all had close economic ties to China and, to a certain extent, Russia.

► This rightward shift is a clear reflection of the US's [renewed focus](#) on securing "its hemisphere." The so-called "[Donroe Doctrine](#)," formulated by pro-Trump media, proposes an imperialist strategy to aggressively pressure or intervene in nearby countries to seize control of oil and other valuable resources, install US-friendly governments, and weaken rival Chinese imperialist influence.

► During his presidency, Petro employed outspoken "[anti-imperialist rhetoric](#)" and was explicit in [criticising](#) US domestic and foreign policy. His government achieved [limited success](#) in pro-labour reforms and was labelled Colombia's "first left-wing" government. This success was [minor](#): after four years in office, inequality dropped by only 3%, yet Colombia remains South America's most unequal country. A large budget deficit also slowed or halted further reforms.

► Despite this "anti-imperialism," Colombia deepened its economic dependency on China by [joining](#) the [Belt and Road Initiative](#). Like all left-leaning governments of the "pink wave," reformists diverted workers from building socialism by claiming capitalism could be peacefully fixed through reforms. As a result, workers were left disoriented and susceptible to far-right influence.