

**OCCASIONAL REPORT ON VENEZUELA'S  
POLITICAL ELECTORAL CONTEXT**

**2015 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS  
PREPARATION FOR PRIMARY ELECTIONS  
IN THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL CONFLICT**

*Executive Summary*

National and international reactions to President Barack Obama's executive order, which, in addition to sanctioning Venezuelan officials for alleged human rights violations, declares Venezuela a threat to the national security of the United States, dominated the political context in Venezuela throughout the reporting period covered in this bulletin. Characterizing this decree as an act of <sup>3</sup>aggression'





manifested their solidarity with Venezuela.<sup>4</sup> The Chilean Foreign Ministry spoke out against unilateral measures, pledging its firm support of dialogue among the political actors in Venezuela ([see note](#)). The Colombian foreign minister, meanwhile, stated that the United States should apply the same philosophy in Venezuela being followed by Obama with respect to Cuba, according to which both nations had begun to resolve their differences ([see note](#)).

The US government defended the White House's decision through various spokesmen. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roberta Jacobson expressed her disappointment that other countries were defending the sanctions, which, in her opinion, were not intended to harm Venezuelans or the Venezuelan government overall, but rather to target individual officials. Jacobson criticized statements of Latin American leaders as demonizing the United States, as if it were



Added to these demands by Venezuelan Progressive Movement Secretary General Simón Calzadilla were regulation of blanket presidential broadcasts, the presence of international observers during the elections and activation of additional voter registration sites throughout the country, among others ([see note](#)).

***PARLATINO deputies to be picked by the National Assembly***

Compounding the controversy over having no date scheduled for parliamentary elections is a request to eliminate elections for deputies to the

Rondón. Violating them, he added, may limit the political rights of citizens, particularly the right to vote ([see note](#)).

### ***Organizing the elections***

Even though the CNE had yet to announce the date of parliamentary elections at the time this report was released, it continued its work on organizing them. On March 9, the CNE announced completion of its audit of software to be used in the public drawing of citizens to serve on subordinate electoral bodies rendering electoral service in 2015. The process of selecting these members was conducted on March 19 with the participation of political party representatives and the presence of media outlets ([see note](#)).<sup>16</sup>

*Electoral districts.* The parliamentary elections preparation process was marred, however, by the CNE's decision to modify the number of seats up for election in each electoral district. At a press conference on April 15, CNE President Tibisay Lucena said that even though these districts would remain as they were in 2010, the electoral body had decided to change the number of representatives to be elected in each district based on recent changes in the population, according to estimates issued by the National Statistics Institute (INE) ([see note](#)).

While the Executive Secretary of the MUD applauded the decision to leave electoral districting design unchanged, he also denounced the CNE

Prior to this, CNE Rector Socorro Hernández had announced a joint review of issues



Although opposition parties had not applied gender and age quotas,

GPP).<sup>28</sup> So far, parties in this alliance have sought to negotiate participation in the next Assembly by means of the 52 deputy positions to be selected by the party-list proportional method, thereby bypassing the primaries<sup>29</sup> ([see note](#)).

The names of the contenders winning the highest number of votes at each UBCH assembly will be entered in

