



CIRCULAR FOR P&I CLUBS

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ELECTIONS IN VENEZUELA - CURRENT SITUATION

Venezuela held a presidential election last Sunday 28 July 2024, with incumbent President Nicolás Maduro seeking his re-election for a third consecutive term, while former diplomat Edmundo González Urrutia represented the Unitary Platform (PUD), the main opposition political alliance. All throughout the day Venezuelan citizens turned out peacefully and in large numbers to the voting centers to express their will.

Despite reports of restrictions on access to many centers for domestic observers and opposition party witnesses and incidents of tension or violence reported in some localities, voting took place in a generally civil manner. However, voters' efforts were later on undermined by the National Electoral Council (CNE) complete lack of transparency in announcing the results.

"The tallies in possession of the opposition showed a total of 2.75 million votes for Maduro and 6.27 million for his rival, former diplomat Edmundo Gonzalez, Machado said...."

The country's electoral authority said just after midnight on Monday that Maduro had won a third term with 51% of the

vote, ahead of Edmundo González with 44%. However, the electoral authority has so far failed to publish detailed official voting tallies, which the opposition says show that the result the CNE announced was fraudulent despite multiple exit polls which pointed to an opposition wide win.

Adding to that the Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado said on Monday that opposition's witness participating in voting centers and a wide net of 60,000 plus supporters had compiled more than 70% of the official "actas de votación" - the final vote counts provided by polling stations - upon the conclusion of voting on Sunday.

The tallies in possession of the opposition showed a total of 2.75 million votes for Maduro and 6.27 million for his rival, former diplomat Edmundo Gonzalez, Machado said. The numbers were sharply different to the 5.15 million votes the electoral authority said Maduro had won, compared to 4.45 million for Gonzalez.

The Carter Center as the only independent observer monitoring the polls in Venezuela said in an official Statement that Sunday's vote for president did not meet international standards of electoral integrity and cannot be considered democratic, and

the electoral authority's failure to announce disaggregated results by polling station constitutes a serious breach of electoral principles.

Protesters gathered in towns and cities across Venezuela on Monday, including near the presidential palace in Caracas, with the Venezuelan Conflict Observatory saying it had registered 187 protests in 20 states. Human rights groups, government officials and family members of victims said that more than 700 arrested and 13 people had died amid protests.

It is difficult to foresee the evolution of the protests at this very moment which tend to decrease in a tense calm and resurge depending on developments. In the meantime, countries around the world are taking different positions such as recognizing the official results, rejecting the same and asking the CNE to disclose and publish detailed official voting tallies in support of its figures.

Despite the above situation it must be said that in the maritime side hasn't been affected so far, most port terminals are state-owned or managed by the government, commercial ports like Puerto Cabello are state-owned entities whose control have been given to the military authorities being that the main reason by which they are still working normally, as a matter of fact the main port areas like Puerto Cabello, La Guaira, Amuay, Guaranao or Jose terminal have not been affected much by the protests.

The main issue has to do with the operational side, specially related to road traffic attending the ports, as the situation is affecting trucks availability to vessel operations, especially dry bulk cargoes could be disrupted or stopped in some cases.

As a general advice we highly recommend that ship's crew take the necessary security steps, remaining on board at all times if possible. Close contact with agents and local correspondents is also advisable, to monitor and update the situation in a particular port or marine terminal. As this is a matter in motion the situation may change suddenly, and so we are monitoring developments to update it as it might be necessary.

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