

# Keiko Fujimori declares herself president-elect of Peru as dictatorship looms

César Uco  
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Keiko Fujimori, the far-right candidate favored by the bourgeoisie and US imperialism, proclaimed herself president-elect of Peru Monday after the ONPE (National Office of Electoral Processes) announced that 100 percent of votes had been counted. Fujimori's declaration came days before the official announcement by the JNE (National Jury of Elections), which must still resolve challenged ballots before the Special Electoral Juries. The JNE is expected to proclaim the winner as soon as Friday, July 3, in a proclamation that cannot be appealed.

The results give Fujimori (Fuerza Popular) 50.135 percent, a razor-thin lead over her rival Roberto Sánchez (Juntos por el Perú) with 49.865 percent. The difference is 49,641 votes out of more than 18 million cast, less than 0.20 percent of the electorate.

This is Fujimori's fourth presidential bid. In 2021 she lost to Pedro Castillo by an even narrower margin of 44,263 votes. If confirmed, she will become Peru's ninth president in 10 years, continuing a protracted crisis of bourgeois rule.

That the last two elections were decided by less than 0.20 percent reveals a country deeply divided.

Immediately after her self-proclamation, congratulations poured in from US imperialism and far-right South American presidents: José Katz of Chile, Javier Milei of Argentina, and president-elect Abelardo de la Espriella of Colombia. Each is pursuing a fascistic program of subordination to US imperialism and war on the working class.

Trump has trampled South American sovereignty across the continent: offering explicit support to Cepeda, Katz and Milei; dispatching his ambassador in Peru, Bernie Navarro, to visit the ONPE before the second round to demand "clean" elections; and placing a legal team at Jair Bolsonaro's disposal to free him from prison after his conviction on the charge of inciting a coup after losing the 2022 election to Lula da Silva of the Workers Party. Providing his backing for Brazil's October 2026 elections, Trump met recently at the White House with Flavio Bolsonaro who is running as his jailed father's surrogate.

Washington's systematic violation of South American sovereignty is aimed at eradicating Chinese influence from the continent and, more broadly installing far-right, puppet governments tasked with crushing any opposition from the working class and oppressed masses. These are considered necessary preparations for a war against China, which has already overtaken the US in electric vehicles, high-speed magnetic rail, and other advanced technologies.

Peru has become a key arena of US-China rivalry due to China's dominant economic presence, prompting escalating US pressure that is now beginning to roll back Chinese control over strategic infrastructure like the Chancay megaport. The pressure is bearing fruit: on July 1, it was announced that regulatory oversight of the Chancay megaport would be transferred from China's Cosco Shipping to Ositran, a Peruvian government agency.

Before the ONPE completed its count at over 99 percent, Fujimori was still uncertain of victory. Her rival Sánchez had declared he would not recognize a Fujimori government, denouncing irregularities in overseas voting, particularly from the US. He called "three weeks of marches" in central Lima.

The government responded by reinforcing the repressive apparatus, closing the city center last weekend and mobilizing 7,000 police, a large contingent of *Serenazgo* (municipal cops) and intelligence personnel, with 50 drones patrolling the skies. Under these conditions, Fujimori made an audacious claim: that she had won thanks to 95,000 votes in Puno, a department bordering Bolivia and, with its Quechua and Aymara population, a bastion of opposition to Fuerza Popular. The lie is exposed by the record: in 2021, Fujimori was overwhelmingly rejected in Puno with just 10.44 percent; in 2026, she managed only 13.59 percent.

However, Sánchez then abandoned his fraud claims and conceded—allowing Fujimori to proclaim herself president-elect. The fear that protests might spiral into a national insurrection outweighed his presidential ambitions. This is the historic role of the bourgeois left and the trade union and Stalinist bureaucracies: to suffocate the masses' struggle

against the corrupt bourgeois state.

### **An electoral process plagued by irregularities**

The entire electoral process in Peru has been plagued by glaring irregularities. In the first round, ballot boxes never reached working-class districts in Lima's Cono Sur. Ballots were found in a Surquillo garbage dump, and ONPE negligence disenfranchised 52,000 voters. These irregularities forced the resignation of ONPE president Piero Corvetto, whose home was raided by prosecutors investigating collusion and dereliction of duty.

In a violation of national sovereignty, US Ambassador Bernie Navarro presented himself at the ONPE to demand a "clean" second round. Given Washington's open favoritism toward Fujimori, the intervention aimed to pressure the electoral body against Sánchez.

Last week, ONPE Secretary General Elar Juan Bolaños Llanos—in the post since 2020—resigned after discovering documents on his computer that he had never produced but appeared under his name. His resignation letter warned that the violation "incapacitates the institution to carry out the upcoming regional and immediately opened disciplinary proceedings against him.

The question that remains to be answered is how far has corruption penetrated the ONPE? Did it extend to the manipulation of votes—precisely what Sánchez had alleged in his multiple challenges, particularly regarding overseas ballots?

Sánchez's concession, clearing the path for Fujimori to take power on July 28, follows the collapse of the so-called "pink tide" and "21st century socialism," whose principal representatives were Hugo Chávez of Venezuela and Evo Morales of Bolivia. In Brazil, the founder of the Workers' Party recently declared before the IMF and the G7: "I was never left-wing."

Keiko Fujimori served as first lady from August 1994 until November 2000, when her father, dictator Alberto Fujimori, fled to Japan. She replaced her mother, Susana Higuchi, after the latter was abducted for having denounced before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights that donations from the Japanese people were being sold by relatives of her husband. She was held captive in the Government Palace and tortured. Peru's Documentation and Research Center concluded that "Fujimori violated human rights by attempting to murder his wife." Keiko learned from her father how to govern. She founded and leads Fuerza Popular despotically.

The objective force driving an impending social explosion in Peru is staggering inequality. It makes democratic governance and respect for the vote impossible—which is precisely why Peruvian elections are riddled with irregularities. The purpose of a Keiko Fujimori government can be defined in a single sentence: to preserve her father's 1993 Constitution, the foundation of Peru's vast social inequality, through increasingly dictatorial forms of rule.

At one pole of Peruvian society, there has been the accumulation of enormous wealth. Led by Eduardo Hochschild (\$5.2 billion), 17 family clans control Peru's economy in alliance with transnational corporations, amassing a combined fortune of \$35 billion. Among them are a dozen billionaires, while between 165 and 300 families possess \$50 million or more each. At the other pole, nearly nine million Peruvians live in poverty and just under two million in extreme poverty.

The business elites see Fujimori as necessary to continue doing business in "peace." As she proclaimed during her 2021 campaign: "Peru needs not democracy but *demodura*"—a euphemism for dictatorship or *dictadura*

The bourgeoisie's fear of a revolutionary uprising against the state is well founded. Since last year, a dozen successful 24-hour public transport strikes have enjoyed overwhelming popular support. In the first five months of this year alone, 64 drivers have been murdered. Working people are fed up with living in cities that are unaffordable and overwhelmed by criminality.

The bourgeoisie, congressmen and prosecutors know this well. For them, it is like the pandemic: a necessary evil to live with. The mafias controlling working-class districts continue collecting extortion payments and murdering innocent drivers with impunity.

Trade union leaders, mostly representing private transport companies, act in complicity with the police to contain the strikes and protests, assuring that they never threaten the despised bourgeois state.

The collapse of the bourgeois nationalist establishment and threat of fascism poses urgently the need for the working class to take up the fight to build the party of world socialist revolution across Latin America. This means the establishment of sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International—the Socialist Equality Parties.



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