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**Guillermo Lasso**  
A victor of circumstances  
And  
Curtailment of the **Pink Tide**  
in Ecuador



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**SANTOSH CHOUDHARY**

# Latin America

## Political Position of Leading Political Party, 2015

(approximate, impressionistic designations)

Left --- Right

**Pink tide** (Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela) or **turn to the left** was a political wave and perception of a turn towards left-wing governments in Latin American democracies straying away from the neoliberal economic model at the start of the 21st century.

They allegedly ignored international sanctions against Iran.

GeoCurrents  
Map



# Why in NEWS?

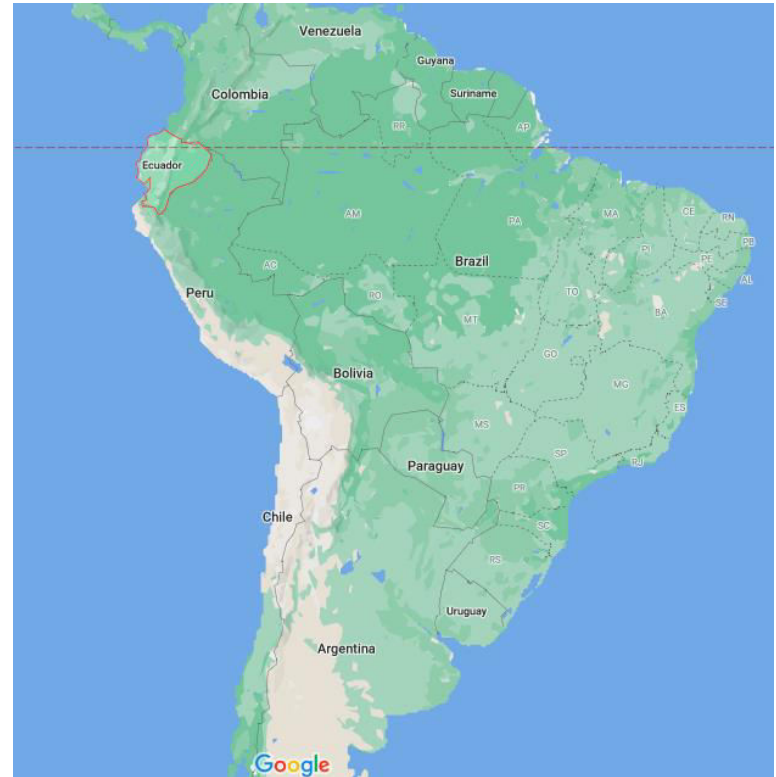
In a turnaround of sorts, Guillermo Lasso became the President-elect of Ecuador following a run-off second round vote in presidential elections in the Latin American country.

Mr. Lasso, a former banker who belongs to the Centre-Right Creating Opportunities (CREO) party, won 52.4% of the vote in the run-offs, defeating his opponent Andres Arauz of the leftist Union of Hope coalition, who secured 47.7% despite leading in the first round with 32.7% over Mr. Lasso's 19.7%.



The country's name means "Equator" in Spanish, truncated from the Spanish official name, República del **Ecuador**.

Ecuador is a country straddling the equator on South America's west coast. Its diverse landscape encompasses Amazon jungle, Andean highlands and the wildlife-rich **Galápagos Islands**. In the Andean foothills at an elevation of 2,850m, **Quito**, the capital, is known for its largely intact Spanish colonial center, with decorated 16th- and 17th-century palaces and religious sites, like the ornate Compañía de Jesús Church



- This was Mr. Lasso' first presidential victory in three campaigns since 2013 but it did not come easily.
- In the first round, not only was his vote share some distance behind Mr. Arauz's, but it was also barely more than that of third place candidate Yaku Perez of the indigenous coalition Pachakutik.
- Mr. Perez won 19.4% and fell short of second place by just 32,115 votes and went on to challenge the results.
- Both Mr. Aruaz and Mr. Perez's coalitions belong to the left side of the political spectrum as opposed to Mr. Lasso's centre-right and traditionalist platform.



# Radical trident

- He also formed a radical trident of sorts in alliance with Venezuela's Hugo Chavez and Bolivia's Evo Morales by forming regional coalitions.
- Initially, Mr. Rafael Correa Mr. (popular ex-President) promised the recognition of rights and interests of the indigenous people, but they fell out with the government over issues such as the policies of mineral extraction from protected areas.

- With Mr. Correa using strong-arm measures to quell protests by indigenous groups during his tenure, a clear contradiction emerged between what some scholars call the politics of "left in power" and "left in resistance" represented by Mr. Perez and other indigenous organisations.
- Mr. Perez called on his supporters to return invalid ballots instead of voting for either Mr. Arauz or Mr. Lasso and in the second round, nearly 18% of the ballots were indeed rendered invalid.
- This reduced the threshold for Mr. Lasso to win a majority of the remaining votes.

- Besides, the fourth-placed candidate, Mr. Xavier Hervas of the "Democratic Left" party, a social democratic outfit that thrived in the old polity before Mr. Correa's coming to power, also endorsed Mr. Lasso.
- Ecuador has been ravaged by COVID-19 with the GDP shrinking by 7.8%. As many as three Health Ministers resigned recently, for being unable to implement a proper vaccine distribution system to stem the effects of the pandemic.
- More than 17,500 deaths have been registered for a high 5% case fatality rate (among the highest in Latin America).

- The outgoing President Lenin Moreno was also a handpicked choice of Mr. Correa, but who disavowed his own policy platform after coming to power and undertook severe austerity measures that led to denunciation by Mr. Correa and protests across the country.
- Mr. Lasso will, however, have a tougher time in the presidency as the CREO only has 12 seats in the 137-member National Assembly with the Union for Hope and Pachakutik controlling 76 seats together.
- But for now, his win will curtail the pink tide in Ecuador even further.

Thank you 🌞

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