

# *Preliminary reports show Evo Morales as the winner!*

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Still lacking the reports from Rural Bolivia, urban voters gave President Evo Morales a decisive push in the first round of the Presidential elections held this Sunday in that Andean nation, although experts note the possibility of a second and decisive voting round against the opposition candidate Carlos Mesa, on December 15th next.

The whole Bolivian nation is pending the counting of votes in the remotest areas, where voters tend to support the Government party, Movement for Socialism, led by President Morales. However, Bolivia's intricate mountainous geography tends to slow down the arrival of final results.

With close to eighty seven percent of votes counted, the first Indian born Head of State of Bolivia enjoyed almost 46 per cent of the votes, while his opponent had received close to thirty eight percent.

According to Bolivia's electoral law, a candidate may proclaim himself as a winner in the first round of election if he or she receives fifty percent plus one of the votes, or if he-she receives forty percent of the votes with at least a ten percent lead over his hers closest opponent.

The Bolivian governing party was only four point twenty five percentage points short of proclaiming its victory.

At a gathering with his supporters, President Morales voiced his confidence in the rural vote and recalled that in his first Presidential contest, back in 2002, he won the election precisely due to the support he received in rural areas.

Should the Government candidate need an electoral decision next December he will have to face a stronger opposition forged by the right wing alliance fostered by Washington.

It will then be a new opportunity to remind the Bolivian electorate of the disaster in which right wing governments sunk Bolivia in the past, and in handing over to the transnational concerns sunk Bolivia, despite its immense resources, into dire poverty for its people, who became one of the poorest in this Hemisphere.

Thanks to the wise leadership of President Evo Morales, Bolivia today exhibits very favorable economic and social growth indicators, which have allowed Bolivia to emerge from the depths of dire poverty into an environment of economic growth and social advancement.

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