

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Date of Elections: 16 May 1986

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament on the normal expiry of the members' term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of the Dominican Republic, the Congress, comprises the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.

The Chamber of Deputies consists of 120 members elected for 4 years by the people of the provinces and the National District in the proportion of one for every 50,000 inhabitants or fraction thereof greater than 25,000; in no case, however, are there fewer than two Deputies from a province.

The Senate consists of 30 members (formerly 27) elected for 4 years in the proportion of one for each province and one for the National District.

Electoral System

All citizens who are at least 18 years of age or those who are or have been married have the right to vote, with the exception of members of the armed forces and the police. This right is lost in the event of an irrevocable conviction for treason, espionage or conspiracy against the Republic, or for taking up arms or lending aid or participating in any attack against it; it is suspended in cases of irrevocable sentence to criminal punishment (until rehabilitation), legally declared judicial interdiction (while it is in effect) and acceptance, while in Dominican territory, of an office or employment from a foreign Government without prior authorization from the executive power.

While the electoral register is regularly revised every 10 years, the Central Electoral Board may order a revision any time. Voting is compulsory for all citizens.

To be eligible for either Chamber, a citizen must be at least 25 years of age, have full enjoyment of his civil and political rights and be a native of the territorial district that elects him, or have resided therein for at least five consecutive years. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with any other public office or position.

Candidates must be nominated by a political party recognized by the Central Electoral Board; they are chosen by a convention of their party, which then submits these names to the competent electoral board. Independent candidates may only stand if they are backed by a political group which has an organization and a programme similar to that of a political party.

Deputies are elected in the provinces and the National District on the basis of a closed party-list system, with proportional distribution of seats according to the d'Hondt method. Senators, on the other hand, are elected from single-member constituencies via simple majority vote.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The congressional elections were held simultaneously with those for President of the Republic and municipalities. The three-month campaign was marred by sporadic violence.

Main contenders for the presidency were Mr. Joaquin Balaguer of the Social Christian Reform Party (PRSC), who had formerly held the same post; Mr. Jacobo Majluta Azar of the ruling Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), President of the Senate; and Mr. Juan Bosch of the leftist Dominican Liberation Party (**PLD**), who had also been President for several months in 1963. All three candidates pledged to revive the country's economy (saddled especially by a large foreign debt and high unemployment) and to lower prices on certain basic foods such as sugar and rice, as well as on petrol.

The vote count was suspended following a challenge by Mr. Majluta. On 27 May, he conceded the race to the conservative Mr. Balaguer, who obtained 41.56% of the suffrage to Mr. Majluta's 39.46%. PRSC also triumphed in the enlarged Congress, capturing a total of 77 seats.

Mr. Balaguer was inaugurated as President on 16 August and named his Cabinet the same day.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Congress

Number of registered electors. 3,040,000 (approx.)
 Voters. 72% (approx.)

Political Group	Number of Seats in Chamber of ^{^^} Deputies	
Social Christian Reform Party (PRSC).	56	21
Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD).	48	7
Dominican Liberation Party (PLD).	16	2
	120	30