

## PERU

**Date of Elections:** 14 April 1985

### **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 Peru, the Congress, consists of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

The Senate is composed of 60 elected members. In addition, former constitutional Presidents of the Republic are Senators for life.

The Chamber of Deputies comprises 180 elected members.

All members of Congress have a term of office of 5 years.

### **Electoral System**

All Peruvian citizens at least 18 years of age and in full possession of their civil and political rights are entitled to vote. Disqualified are persons under judicial interdiction, those under sentence which deprives them of their freedom, and members of the armed forces and police on active duty. Voting is compulsory until the age of 70.

Qualified electors who are at least 25 years of age may be candidates for the Chamber of Deputies, while 35 is the age requirement for the Senate. The office of parliamentarian is incompatible with a number of public positions (except Minister of State and participation in certain special committees of an international character), active membership of the armed and police forces, and certain posts in State-connected enterprises.

Candidates for Congress are nominated by political parties or alliances of parties.

Members of Congress are elected according to a party-list system of proportional representation, Senators being elected on a regional basis and Deputies on the district level, the constituency of Lima having the most Deputies (40).

Congress seats which become vacant between general elections are filled by alternate candidates in the order in which they appear on the respective party lists.

### **General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

The congressional elections were held simultaneously with those for President of the Republic.

Primary contenders for the presidency were Mr. Alan Garcia Perez of the centre-left American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), Mr. Alfonso Barrantes Langan of the United Left (IU) front, Mr. Luis Bedoya Reyes of the conservative Popular Christian Party and Mr. Javier Alva Orlandini of the ruling Popular Action (AP), headed by the outgoing President, Mr. Fernando Belaunde Terry. The APRA and United Left groups formed a leftist coalition.

The dominant campaign issue was the country's ailing economy (foreign debt, unemployment, inflation) and consequent social problems such as a falling standard of living, which had been aggravated by leftist guerilla activity, floods and strikes. The two coalition partners favoured a reduction of repayments on Peru's foreign debt of some US\$13.5 billion, an increase in taxes on foreign oil companies and a raise of tariff barriers to protect industry. Some 1400 candidates vied for the 240 congressional seats.

On polling day, Mr. Garcia, aged 35, gained 45.7% of the vote but fell short of the required absolute majority. He therefore faced a runoff with Mr. Barrantes, but the latter withdrew from the contest on 26 April, thus assuring the election of Mr. Garcia. In the congressional races, APRA also came out ahead of the six parties comprising the United Left, capturing 32 seats in the Senate and 107 in the Chamber of Deputies. The overall result marked a turning point in Peru's recent history, since the conservative forces that traditionally ruled the country were rejected and APRA led a national government for the first time in its 61-year history. President-elect Garcia took office on 28 July, the same day that a new Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Luis Alva Castro was sworn in.

## Statistics

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

Voters . . . . .	7,557,182
Blank or void ballot papers . . . . .	.1,087,976
Valid votes . . . . .	6,469,206

Political Group	Number of Seats in	
	Chamber of Deputies	Senate
APRA . . . . .	107	32
IU . . . . .	48	15
Democratic Convergence	12	7
AP . . . . .	10	5
National Left . . . . .	1	1
Independents . . . . .	2	
	180	60