



## Elections in Argentina: A historic milestone for the socialists

Daniel Yates, an expert in Latin American affairs, analyzes the result of the elections in Argentina as well as the significant result yielded by the Frente Amplio Progresista.

All the media agreed on the fact that, there would be no surprise in the general elections of Argentina, and that Cristina Fernández would win. A favorable international economic situation but also a politician who has been able to combine economic growth, distribution and social policies, increasing the purchasing power, decreasing unemployment rates, poverty and exclusion, are already a sign that they will not even need a second round. But indeed, there were surprises on Sunday, October 23. The Argentinean socialists, led by Hermes Binner and their allies of other political force of the Frente Amplio Progresista, became the second most voted political force. It is a historical milestone.

In periods of democracy in Argentina, governments were shared by the Peronists and the radicals. Within both organizations, totally opposed political coexist. So, in the Peronist group, Cámpora governed and opened the way to the return of Perón y María Estela Martínez who, together with López Rega, promoted the Triple A and state terrorism; Saul Menem who practiced a purely neoliberal orthodoxy and Néstor Kirchner and engulfed the country into the progressive trend which today is majority South America. As for the radicals, there are Illia and Frondizzi; Balbín and Alfonsín (senior); or De la Rúa and Franja Morada who left the government together with the Frepaso, accusing them of continuing to apply the neoliberal recipes of Menem.

Now, a small, big Socialist Party, which has its bastion in the Province of Santa Fe, for the first time took the leap into national politics, to another project and another way of doing politics, led by Hermes Binner, a doctor and a socialist who has been Mayor of Rosario, national MP and Governor of the province of Santa Fe. The project is based on the idea that a better country is possible. It is necessary to recover the values where dialogue and participation play a fundamental role in order to listen to each other and understand each other, recover federalism, improve the quality of the democratic institutions and put an end to the tension and the lack of dialogue.

In the short term, in Argentina there will be a majority progressive-Peronist political force and as a second most voted political force a progressive-socialist front. There will necessarily be another way of doing politics; the





## ANALYSIS AND OPINION ARTICLE

November 2, 2011

**Daniel Luis Yates**

Director of the Pablo Iglesias  
Institute  
Fundación IDEAS



Government will be faced with a strong, critical but constructive opposition just like the PS have been doing so far. An opposition based on dialogue and specific alternatives and not like the previous one, which even with a majority at the parliament, was not able to promote its own initiatives.

In the long term, the Peronist experiences generally have an expiration date, that of their leader in power. One of the characteristics of Perón and his successors is that there is no party structure. In the Peronist movement, the charismatic leader has direct relations with his followers. This also happens with the Frente para la Victoria del Pueblo. What would happen to the FPV after Cristina Fernández? It is too early to know, but it may change into a Party, but surely they will lose a lot of votes, representation and power without the President.

On the contrary, the PS, which is a historical Party, was founded in 1896 going through periods of triumphs, growth, defeats, and internal divisions but has always been able to overcome adversities and taken steps forward. In 1987, Guillermo Estévez Boero was elected national MP for Santa Fe. Since then, this province has become a fiefdom of Argentinean socialism, first by conquering the town of Rosario in 1989, where they are still governing. After that, in 2007, they conquered the province with the triumph of Hermes Binner, putting an end to 24 years of Peronist government.

With the appointment by the Socialist Party of Hermes Binner as a presidential candidate, the Frente Amplio Progresista has taken the decision of supporting change in the whole country. AS any project of change, it is not a short-term solution. On Sunday October 23, Argentineans have decided to forge, step by step, another Argentina.

