



THE LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN PROGRAM

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## Key Program Achievements 2016–2017

**Friends of the Inter-American Democratic Charter:** The Carter Center held two meetings of the Friends of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, one of the steering committee in July 2016 and one of the general membership in July 2017. Participants assessed ongoing and developing crises in the Western Hemisphere, reviewed the hemispheric agenda, and devised strategies and a roadmap of initiatives to be undertaken by the Friends to strengthen democratic values in the region. Members of the Friends participated or consulted as experts in the Carter Center’s high-level political delegations to contentious elections, including Peru (2016), Nicaragua (2017), and Honduras (2017), meeting with key stakeholders to encourage adherence to the principles of the charter and promote electoral stability.

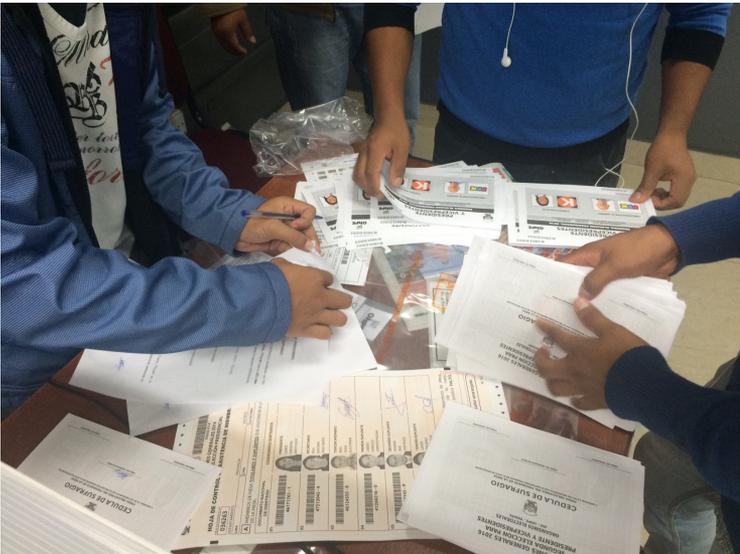
**Contentious Issues in Democracy:** In 2016, The Carter Center produced and disseminated an annotated compendium, “Political Finance and Campaign Regulations in Latin America,” to support electoral reform based on international best practices and to promote equity and competitiveness of electoral processes. The Center led an international seminar on electoral reform in Argentina in December 2016, featuring experts from five countries in the region, including members of the Friends of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

**Peacebuilding in Colombia:** In March 2016, The Carter Center organized the “On the Road to Peace” conference for senior government officials and the government’s peace negotiators, attended by President Juan Manuel Santos. The result was a request from the government for Carter Center assistance with the preparation of legislative reforms that would be required by the forthcoming peace accord. Carter Center staff supported a technical secretariat to assist the minister of the interior and the Congress with these reforms.

**Collaboration with the Organization of American States:** OAS Secretary-General Luis Almagro met with President Carter and program staff in September 2016, and with the Friends of the Inter-American Democratic Charter in July 2017, to assess political crises in Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Haiti, as well as the peace accords in Colombia. The Carter Center issued joint statements following the meetings. In October 2016, The Carter Center and the OAS Department for Sustainable Democracy and Special Missions held a series of public events to commemorate 15 years of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, at which panels of experts provided analysis to strengthen OAS’s defense of representative democracy.

## Strategic Initiatives Planned for 2018

- Monitoring and implementation support for the Colombian peace accords
- Technical assistance for Colombia's national human rights strategy
- Peace education in Colombia
- Electoral study missions to Colombia and Mexico
- Mapping of the human rights institutional framework in Mexico
- Citizen security and human rights in Mexico and the Northern Triangle (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador)
- Technical support for electoral and political reform in Honduras
- Activities for inclusive citizen participation in Nicaragua
- Coordination of an anti-corruption experts group for the Summit of the Americas
- Support for the Civil Society Summit in parallel with the Summit of the Americas
- Monitoring the dialogue efforts in Venezuela toward possible election
- Study of the impact on democracy of China's economic interests in Latin America



*Election workers count ballots in Peru's 2016 presidential runoff. Members of the Friends of the Inter-American Democratic Charter participated in the limited study mission.*