

HISTORICAL OAS DELEGATE GUIDECACMUN CONFERENCE: APRIL 7TH- 10TH 2010COMMITTEE: **HISTORICAL OAS**CHAIR: JUAN FRANCISCO ARISTIZABAL
FEDERICO MAXIMILIANO OSORIOTHEMES: **1954 Guatemalan Coup d'état**
2009 Honduran Constitutional Crisis

Delegates,

We welcome you to the Model of United Nations conference hosted by the Anglo Colombian School taking place the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th of April, 2010. Furthermore, we welcome you specifically to this risk taking, challenging, interesting and delightful committee: Historical OAS, where we will be debating, discussing, analyzing and working with some of the most important issues and events which have taken place throughout history in America. We expect you delegates to be exploiting all your potential, and enjoy during these 4 days the entire conference by adequately participating, helping and working to acquire substantial and interesting knowledge regarding multiple relevant aspects, such as the topics which will be dealt in this committee during this conference. Following are multiple background information concerning two topics: **1954 Guatemalan Coup d'état** and **2009 Honduran Constitutional Crisis**. We expect you to be suited for the conference, and we suggest you to appropriately study analyze and acknowledge the following information for an adequate delegate preparation. Thank You

1954 Guatemalan Coup d'état**Date of Session: June 20, 1954****INTRODUCTION:**

The **1954 Guatemalan coup d'état** was a covert operation organized by the United States Central Intelligence Agency to overthrow Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, the democratically-elected President of Guatemala. Arbenz's government put forth a number of new policies, such as seizing and expropriating unused, unfarmed land that private corporations set aside long ago and giving the land to peasants, that the U.S. intelligence community deemed Communist in nature and, suspecting Soviet influence, fueled a fear of Guatemala becoming what Allen Dulles described as a "Soviet beachhead in the western hemisphere".Dulles' concern reverberated within the CIA and

the Eisenhower administration, in the context of the anti-Communist fears of the McCarthyist era. Arbenz instigated sweeping land reform acts that antagonized the U.S.-based multinational company United Fruit Company, which had large stakes in the old order of Guatemala and lobbied various levels of U.S. to take action against Arbenz. Both Dulles and his brother were shareholders of United Fruit Company.

The operation, which lasted from late 1953 to 1954, planned to arm and train an ad-hoc "Liberation Army" of about 400 fighters under the command of a then-exiled Guatemalan army officer, Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, and to use them in conjunction with a complex and largely experimental diplomatic, economic, and propaganda campaign. The operation effectively ended the experimental period of representative democracy in Guatemala known as the "Ten Years of Spring", which ended with Arbenz's official resignation.

The operation was preceded by a plan, never fully implemented, as early as 1951, to supply anti-Arbenz forces with weapons, supplies, and funding, Operation PBFORTUNE. Afterwards there was an operation, Operation PBHISTORY, whose objective was to gather and analyze documents from the Arbenz government that would incriminate Arbenz as a Communist puppet.

BACKGROUND:

Under the regime of General Jorge Ubico, and Ubico's predecessor Manuel José Estrada Cabrera, Guatemala was widely opened up to foreign investment, with special favors being made from Ubico to the United Fruit Company (UFC) in particular. The UFC responded by pouring investment capital into the country, buying controlling shares of the railroad, electric utility, and telegraph, while also winning control over the majority of the country's best land and de facto control over its only Atlantic port facilities. As a result, the Guatemalan government was often subservient to the UFC's interests.

In the "October Revolution" of 1944 General Jorge Ubico was overthrown. Juan José Arévalo Bermejo was elected. A new constitution allowed for the possibility of expropriating land. This, as well as Arévalo philosophy of "spiritual socialism", alarmed Guatemala's landed elite who began to accuse Arévalo of supporting Communism. In 1947 he signed a labor protection law that implicitly targeted the UFC. The American Embassy in Guatemala sent alarming messages that Arévalo was allowing Communists to organize and had reputedly provided known Communists with support. Arévalo supported the Caribbean Legion, a group of ostensibly reformist Latin Americans who plotted to overthrow dictatorships in the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. A 1949 CIA analysis described it as a "destabilizing force."

Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, who as an army Captain had played an important role in the "October Revolution" of 1944, won 65% of the vote in the 1950 election.

SEE ALSO (In order to accede to the following links; press **CTRL + Right Click** to follow the hyperlink)

- [Guatemalan Civil War](#)
- [History of Guatemala](#)
- [Covert U.S. regime change actions](#)
- [Timeline of United States military operations](#)
- [Covert operations, coups, military advisors etc.](#)
- [Operation WASHTUB](#)
- [Operation Kufire](#)
- [Operation Kugown](#)
- [National Committee of Defense Against Communism](#)
- [Operation PBHISTORY](#)
- [Operation PBFORTUNE](#)
- [Banana republic](#)
- [Plausible deniability](#)
- [Church Committee](#)

USEFUL LINKS: (In order to accede to the following links; press **CTRL + Right Click** to follow the hyperlink)

1. Cullather, Nick (1999). *Secret History: The CIA's classified account of its operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954*. [Stanford University Press](#). pp. 17. ISBN [0-8047-3311-2](#).
2. *Crisis in Central America on PBS Frontline*, [The New York Times](#) April 9, 1985, p. 16.
3. Shea, Maureen E. (2001). *Culture and Customs of Guatemala*. *Culture and Customs of Latin American and the Caribbean Series*, Peter Standish (e.) London: Greenwood Press. ISBN [0-313-30596-X](#).
4. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,890902,00.html>
5. La Feber, Walter (1993). *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*. Norton Press. pp. 116–117. ISBN [0-393-03434-8](#).
6. [Foreign Relations, Guatemala, 1952-1954: Introduction](#)
7. [US State Department document](#)
8. [CNN Cold War: Interview with Howard Hunt](#)

9. Spartacus biography <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/JFKdroller.htm>
10. http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/forces_cold.htm#table6 ;see entry #29.
11. <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB4/>
12. Cullather, Nick (1999). *Secret History: The CIA's classified account of its operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954*. Stanford University Press. pp. 90. ISBN [0-8047-3311-2](https://www.isbn-international.org/product/0-8047-3311-2).
13. [Report on the Guatemala Review](#) Intelligence Oversight Board. June 28, 1996.

EXTERNAL LINK (In order to accede to the following links; press **CTRL + Right Click** to follow the hyperlink)

[CIA.gov](#) - CIA's declassified documents on Guatemala CIA Documents Chronicling the 1954 Coup

[US State Dept. site](#) - Foreign Relations, 1952-1954: Guatemala

[American Accountability Project](#) - The Guatemala Genocide

[Guatemala Documentation Project](#) - Provided by the National Security Archive.

[Video: Devils Don't Dream! Analysis of the CIA-sponsored 1954 coup in Guatemala.](#)

[The Guatemala 1954 Documents](#)

[From Arbenz to Zelaya: Chiquita in Latin America](#) - video report by *Democracy Now!*

2009 Honduran Constitutional Crisis

Date of Session: July 1st, 2009

INTRODUCTION

The **2009 Honduran constitutional crisis** is an ongoing political dispute over plans to rewrite the Constitution of Honduras, which culminated in the forcible removal and exile of Honduran President Manuel Zelaya by the Honduran military, preempting a poll whether to hold a referendum to convene a constituent assembly to change the constitution. Opponents called these plans a veiled attempt to unconstitutionally eliminate presidential term limits and usher in

Chavez-style socialism. Zelaya and his supporters claim that he was attempting to modernize the Honduran Constitution to better serve the country, noting that any reforms would be enacted after Zelaya's term. The Honduran Supreme Court had upheld a lower court injunction against the 28 June poll, and on 26 June – while Zelaya ignored the injunction – it issued a secret order for his detention.

On the morning of 28 June 2009, approximately one hundred soldiers stormed the president's residence in Tegucigalpa and flew him to San José, Costa Rica, actions which he immediately called a "coup" upon his arrival there. Later that day, the National Congress voted to remove Zelaya, having read without objection a letter of resignation that Zelaya says was forged. Roberto Micheletti, the Speaker of Congress and next in the presidential line of succession, was sworn in as Interim President. A "state of exception" suspending civil liberties was declared on 1 July by Micheletti's government.

On 21 September 2009, Zelaya returned in secret to Honduras, after several attempts to return had been rebuffed. It was announced that he was in the Brazilian embassy in Tegucigalpa. The following day five constitutional rights were suspended for 45 days by the Honduras government.

International reaction to the 2009 Honduran military coup was universally negative with widespread condemnation of the events as a coup d'état. No foreign government recognized Micheletti as president. The United Nations, the Organization of American States (OAS), the United States, and the European Union condemned the removal of Zelaya as a military coup. The OAS suspended Honduras on Saturday, 4 July, after the caretaker government refused to reinstate President Zelaya. Domestic opinion remains very much divided, and there have been demonstrations for and against Zelaya.

Efforts by Costa Rican President Óscar Arias and the United States to produce an effective diplomatic solution between Micheletti and Zelaya ultimately failed, the two parties unwilling to come to any lasting agreement. Zelaya also insisted that he would not recognize the elections of 29 November as a precondition to returning to power.

Honduran leaders refused to reinstate Zelaya before the elections, and international support for the elections remained scant leading up to the polls. Many Hondurans sought to move past the crisis with the elections, which had been scheduled previous to Zelaya's ouster. While Zelaya had urged abstention from the vote, initial returns indicated a larger than usual turnout, around 60%, a figure which was subsequently revised downward to 49% Zelaya also disputed those figures at the time. Some Honduran activists have ended daily protests demanding the reinstatement of Zelaya since he was ousted in a coup, saying they're moving on now that Congress has voted to keep Manuel Zelaya out of office.

BACKGROUND

The political and socioeconomic divide in Honduras

Two-thirds of Honduras citizens live below the poverty line, and unemployment is estimated at 28%. It has one of Latin America's most unequal distributions of wealth: the poorest 10% of the population receives just 1.2% of the country's wealth, while the richest 10% collect 42%. Approximately twenty per cent of the nation's GDP comes from remittances of workers from abroad. The BBC describe the huge wealth gap in a poor country as one of the reasons why the relations between the president and the other institutions were so strained and that his leftward movement alarmed certain sectors. Zelaya pushed for a referendum, insisting that Honduras' grinding poverty stemmed from a constitution — written in 1982 at the height of that country's brutal repression of leftists — that rigs the game for the most powerful families and interests.

Zelaya supporters, largely from labor unions and the poor, claim conservative business leaders are actually concerned because Zelaya had sharply increased the minimum wage. Víctor Meza, formerly Zelaya's interior minister, stated that: "The impression that stuck with the traditional political class and with the most conservative business leaders of the country was that Zelaya had taken a dangerous turn to the left, and therefore that their interests were in jeopardy." "We underestimated the conservatism of the Honduran political class and the military leadership." According to John Donaghy, of Caritas, the real conflict in Honduras is between the poor and wealthy: "It's a system that has kept the poor down for years." To some members of Honduras's small upper class, Zelaya was ousted because of his blossoming leftist alliance with President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela which they recognized as a threat to their interests. To the working-class, it appears Zelaya was ousted because the elite felt threatened by his efforts to improve their lives — most notably with a 60 percent increase in the minimum wage to about US\$9.60 a day from about \$6 a day. Some who protested in support of Zelaya had never voted for him.

Zelaya Presidency

Manuel Zelaya, a businessman born into a wealthy Honduran family, was elected in 2005 as the candidate of the country's historically powerful Liberal Party. Since taking office, Zelaya's economic and social policies earned him praise from labor unions and civil society groups, but alienated him from parts of his own party, which were particularly upset by Zelaya's forging a regional alliance with the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), established by Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez and other leaders in Latin America as a counter to the trade and security policies sponsored by the United States. Zelaya also planned to convert the Soto Cano Air Base ("Palmerola"), where one of the three United States Southern Command Task Forces is located, into a civilian airport (it is already in use for many civilian flights because of safety concerns about Toncontín International Airport), partly using financing from ALBA and Petrocaribe. *The New York Times* reports that much of Zelaya's support is derived from labor unions and the nation's poor, while the middle and upper class fear Zelaya is seeking to establish Hugo Chávez's type of socialist populism with a powerful leader in the country.

Zelaya's government was accused of harassing journalists"Journalist murdered following threats, government harassment of critical radio station". International Freedom of Expression Exchange. 2007-10-19. Retrieved 2009-08-12.</ref> and also accused by The Organization of American States (OAS) of imposing "subtle censorship" in Honduras.

According to *The Economist*, "Mr. Zelaya's presidency has been marked by a rise in crime, corruption scandals and economic populism." By April 2009, a Mitofsky opinion poll showed that, of those consulted, only one in four respondents approved of Zelaya - the lowest approval rating of 18 regional leaders.

Alliance With ALBA


On July 22, 2008, Zelaya revealed that he was seeking to incorporate the country into the ALBA, an organization founded by Hugo Chávez. In fact, he said that the country had been an "observer member" "four or more months".


Other leaders of ALBA have successfully sought to eliminate their term limits. According to National Party analyst Raul Pineda Alvarado, Zelaya's attempt to modify constitution was a "carbon copy" of what has happened in Venezuela, Ecuador and Nicaragua. US Republican Newt Gingrich wrote in the Washington Examiner that Chavez has used ALBA to create "a tide of incipient dictatorship" flowing out of Venezuela into other countries in Latin America. He noted that Chavez has subverted democracy in Venezuela to ensure his rule will be uncontested for decades, and "one-by-one, each of the members of ALBA have followed Chavez's lead and changed their constitutions to remove limits on the number of terms their presidents can serve.". However, the notion of extending term limits in Latin America is not unique to ALBA countries, as efforts in Colombia have been made towards allowing President Álvaro Uribe to seek reelection.


INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS


No foreign government has recognized Micheletti as president- US President Barack Obama, along with leaders and officials of governments throughout the hemisphere and the rest of the world, has condemned the forced ouster of President Zelaya as undemocratic and called the action taken against him a coup d'état.

Americas-based international organizations such as the Organization of American States, Mercosur, and the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas have also condemned the events. Over ten Latin American countries, as well as all European Union countries, agreed to withdraw their ambassadors from Honduras until Zelaya is returned to power.

*  United Nations: A one-page resolution, passed by acclamation in the 192-member body, condemned the removal of Zelaya as a coup and demanded his "immediate and unconditional restoration" as president. The resolution calls "firmly and categorically on all states to recognize no government other than that" of Zelaya.


*  Organization of American States: The OAS called for an emergency meeting on Sunday, where it approved a resolution demanding "the immediate, safe and unconditional return of the constitutional president, Manuel Zelaya." Secretary General José Miguel Insulza called the situation "a military coup." On 4 July 2009, the OAS carried out a prior ultimatum by unanimously suspending Honduras.

*  United States: The United States condemned the ouster of Zelaya and recognizes him as the only constitutional president of Honduras. Although U.S. officials have characterized the events as a coup, suspended joint military operations and all non-emergency, non-immigrant visas, and cut off certain non-humanitarian aid to Honduras, they have held back from formally designating Zelaya's ouster as a "military coup", which would require them to cut off almost all aid to Honduras. The United States subsequently warned the Micheletti government that it might not recognize the results of the November 29 elections if Zelaya was not allowed to return to power first, and ultimately indicated that the November election *would not* be recognized, persuading the Micheletti regime to refer Zelaya's return to the Honduran Congress.



*  European Union: The European Union called on the Honduran military to release the president and restore constitutional order. All EU ambassadors left the country.

*The World Bank: World Bank President Robert Zoellick stated that the World Bank has "paused" all lending for development programs to Honduras, said to be around US\$80 million for the next fiscal year.

*The nine members of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas announced in a joint statement that they would not recognize any new government in Honduras.

*  Caribbean Community: In a press release, CARICOM denounced the coup and voiced its concern over the treatment of Honduran and diplomatic officials during the coup. "The Caribbean Community condemns the military action which has interrupted the democratic process in Honduras and which contravenes the principles of the Inter-American Democratic Charter. The Community therefore calls for the immediate reinstatement of President Zelaya."

*The Association of Caribbean States condemned the coup in a statement and called for Zelaya's reinstatement. Additionally it stated, "we highlight our condemnation of the brutal treatment that Honduras military personnel gave to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Patricia Rodas as well as the Ambassadors of Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela. This situation is a serious violation of International law, and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations."

*  [Mercosur](#) and  [Paraguay](#): President of Paraguay and current president pro tempore of Mercosur Fernando Lugo condemned the coup and said that no member state of Mercosur will recognize a Honduran government that is not led by Manuel Zelaya. Lugo also called for those behind the coup to be punished by serving prison sentences.

*  [Union of South American Nations](#) and  [Chile](#): Chilean president Michelle Bachelet, speaking on behalf of her government and UNASUR, condemned the coup.

*The [Inter-American Development Bank](#) (IADB): IADB President Luis Alberto Moreno stated that the IADB is pausing all new loans to Honduras until democracy is restored.

*The [Central American Bank for Economic Integration](#): Central America's development bank says it is provisionally freezing credits to Honduras.

EXTERNAL LINK (In order to accede to the following links; press **CTRL + Right Click** to follow the hyperlink)

- [Honduran Constitution](#) (in Spanish)
- [Supreme Court documentation of Zelaya prosecution](#) (in Spanish)
- [Armed Forces of Honduras Timeline of events with many scanned documents \(in Spanish\)](#)

Images

- [Slideshows](#) by the Verdad en Honduras
- [Unrest in Honduras](#) slideshow by the *Los Angeles Times*
- [Honduran Military Launches Coup](#) by the *Washington Post*
- [Honduras Coup Photos](#) from *Daylife*
- [Military Coup In Honduras](#) slideshow by *CBS News*
- [In Pictures: Honduran President Ousted](#) by *BBC News*
- [Honduras: Protests Against Presidential Coup](#) slideshow by *The Huffington Post*

Video

- [Democracy is Alive and Strong in Honduras](#), giving a version of events alleged to have led to Zelaya's removal from office
- [The Real News Network report with video](#) featuring Zelaya stating: "The only position in Honduras that cannot be reelected is the president. But, reelection will be a topic of the coming National Constitutional Assembly." (subtitled, from 10:04-10:22)

- [Surveillance camera footage](#) showing how \$2 million in cash was transported from the Central Bank of Honduras to the office of Zelaya's chief of staff
- The Real News network interviews with Honduran Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) members on election day 2009 alleging that the TSE had invented fake participation figures in those elections.

Analysis

- [21st Century Socialism Comes to the Honduran Banana Republic](#), Council on Hemispheric Affairs, May 25, 2009
- [Crisis in Honduras - What was really behind the removal of President Manuel Zelaya, and is he likely to be reinstated?](#), *Poder* magazine's October 2009 issue
- [Mel fought the law, and the law won](#), a timeline of events by F.W. Blake on the *Honduras Weekly*
- [In a Coup in Honduras, Ghosts of Past U.S. Policies](#) by Helene Cooper, *The New York Times*, 29 June 2009.
- [Totalitarian Rightists Put Orwellian Spin on Honduras Coup](#) by John Nichols, *The Nation*, 2 July 2009
- [Honduras' non-coup - Under the country's Constitution, the ouster of President Manuel Zelaya was legal](#), Miguel A. Estrada, Miguel A. Estrada, Los Angeles Times, July 10, 2009
- [Understanding The Mess In Honduras](#) by William Ratliff, *Forbes*, September 28, 2009
- [In Honduras Coup, the Truth is as Strange as any 'Banana Republic' Fiction](#) by Philip Sherwell, *Daily Telegraph*, 5 July 2009
- [Why Honduras Sent Zelaya Away](#) by Mary Anastasia O'Grady, *Wall Street Journal*, 13 July 2009
- [Waiting for Zelaya](#) by Greg Grandin, *The Nation*, 28 July 2009
- [The Millennium Challenge Corporation and Economic Sanctions: A Comparison of Honduras With Other Countries](#), *Center for Economic and Policy Research*, August 2009

- [HONDURAS: CONSTITUTIONAL LAW ISSUES](#), U.S. Congress, The Law Library of Congress, Directorate of Legal Research for Foreign, Comparative, and International Law, August 2009