



Dear {{FirstName or 'WOLA Supporter'}},

As a Venezuelan citizen abroad who has been unable to vote in over a decade, I am happy to share that I voted last weekend in the primary elections organized by members of the opposition in Venezuela. I voted because I believe that, in doing so, I was exercising a political right, one that supports the restoration and reconstruction of democracy, something Venezuelans aspire to.

It may be optimistic to think that there could be free and fair presidential elections next year in Venezuela, but [renewed negotiations](#) between the Maduro government and the Unitary Platform allow me to at least be hopeful that there is a window of opportunity to achieve a democratic and peaceful transition to democracy.

My focus this week has therefore been on the many elections taking place in the region.

As Program Assistant, Kelsey Kotts, [wrote this week](#), Colombians head to the polls on Sunday in regional and local elections that are likely to reflect on the administration of Gustavo Petro, a year into his presidency. Members of the international community, and particularly U.S policymakers may want to [pay close attention](#) as many of these elected officials could prove to be key players not only for the implementation of the Peace Accords but in addressing regional migration, particularly in cities such as Bogotá, Cúcuta, Medellín and Necoclí.

On that note, this week Adam Isacson, WOLA's border security expert, and Laura Dib, our Director for Venezuela, are in the Darién region of Colombia to meet with local partners and see first-hand how migration is impacting the region.

Looking ahead to next year, El Salvador, Mexico, Venezuela and the U.S, among others, will be holding general elections. And if all goes well in Guatemala, president elect Bernardo Arévalo will take office in January. Elections alone cannot guarantee the respect for human rights but they are a key stepping stone towards building a healthy democracy.

Thank you for your support as WOLA continues to keep an eye on elections and human rights in the region.

Best,



Carolina Jiménez Sandoval
WOLA President



WOLA's Adam Isacson and Laura Dib in Necoclí, Colombia on their field trip to the Darién (left) and meeting partners in Apartadó. (Photo credit: Sergio Ortiz Borbolla)

STAND WITH US IN DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS

- 🇨🇴 Colombians will be voting in regional and local elections on October 29. The results will be key for the implementation of the Peace Accords and for the success of migration programs. Learn more [here](#).
- 🇲🇷 Alongside civil society collective, La Justicia Que Queremos, WOLA [denounces](#) the Mexican government's latest attack on the judicial branch: cuts to the judiciary's budget.
- 🇲🇷 In a recent episode of the [Modern Mexico Podcast](#), Director for Mexico, Stephanie Brewer, speaks about the ongoing issue of militarization in Mexico.





Listen to this special greeting from partners Cristosal and Acción Ciudadana from El Salvador to commemorate WOLA's 50th (Turn on CC for English subtitles)

WOLA IN THE NEWS

DESPACHO
505

" We worry that releasing them from prison and forcibly sending them into exile in another country is becoming common practice."

This quote has been translated as the article is in Spanish.

Carolina Jiménez Sandoval, President

– **Despacho 505**, [Excarcelación y destierro, el método perverso de Ortega que organismos de derechos humanos ven con preocupación](#)

EFECTO..COCUYO
PERIODISMO QUE ILUMINA

"The renewed dialogue and negotiations on Venezuela and the agreements signed on October 17, 2023 between the opposition's Unitary Platform and the Venezuelan government represent a crucial first step towards a peaceful and democratic solution to Venezuela's deep political and humanitarian crises. The Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) welcomes this progress."

This quote has been translated as the article is in Spanish.

WOLA

– Efecto Cocuyo, [WOLA llama al Gobierno a levantar inhabilitaciones, liberar presos políticos y no intervenir en primarias](#)

Miami Herald

"It reflects the Mexican government's desire to project an image of being aligned with Latin American countries, to show a network of solidarity among Latin American and Caribbean countries, rather than just responding to the interests of the United States."

Stephanie Brewer, Director for Mexico

– *Miami Herald*, [Mexico is hosting several countries to discuss regional migration. The U.S. is not among them](#)

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