

Short biography: carlos flores

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My name is Carlos Roberto Flores Facusse and I am the presiding President of the Liberal Party. I was born on March 1, 1950 in the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa to Oscar A. Flores and Margarita Facusse Flores. I am a graduate from LSU, getting an undergraduate in industrial engineering and a master degree in international trade and finance. While at LSU, I developed my leadership qualities by becoming the President of the Honduras Student Association and chartering the first and only Hipic fraternity on campus known as Phi Iota Alpha.

Outside of academics, I would also find my future wife Mary Flakes at LSU; soon after receiving my master's degree, we got married in 1974. After getting married, my wife and I returned to Honduras where I began participating in private and public committees such as the Honduran Central Bank and the Institute of Social Security. Additionally, I went to work at La Tribuna, the largest newspaper in Honduras that my father co-founded. During the 70's, I became part of political life, joining the Liberal Party.

I would become a congressman, representing the department (similar to a province) of Francisco Morazan. This experience served as a stepping stone to my later success in the party as I became Minister of the Presidency (equivalent to Vice President) under the rule of liberal president Roberto Suazo from 1982 to 1984. In 1994, I became President of the Congress; four years later, I was nominated and eventually became the President of Honduras.

During my presidency's infancy, I was hit with the huge challenge: Hurricane Mitch. Hurricane Mitch killed thousands of people, displaced millions more, and destroyed the national economy; Honduras was looking at a minimal of

20 years to recover from what little we had. I orchestrated the successful raising of over \$600 million of international aid from financial institutions and countries and these funds were directed at rebuilding Honduras' infrastructure, agricultural and industrial economic sectors.

My presidency was also marked by strengthening of the constitution, reducing the power of the military in the political operations of the country, and passing a new penal code, which in part created a new, independent Supreme Court. As to the issues at hand, I am deeply concerned with the road that President Zelaya is on. Although on the surface he portrays a people-oriented, country-enhancing dogma to his constituency, the actions President Zelaya are making forecast a different vision entirely – one that Latin American countries have seen all too well.

From siding with ALBA soon after his presidency began to economic and social policies that hurt not only his party but the Honduran people to siding against the United States (one of our trusted allies), President Zelaya's work so far should remind even the highest supporters of Zelaya of Venezuela and their woes with Hugo Chavez. As the head of his party, I and the Liberal Party have been weary of where his loyalties lie and his true motives as president as he consistently alienates his party " supporters" by doing things almost unilaterally.

Now, with these new developments of " polling" the country in order to change the constitution and consider " re-elections" is absurd. We as a party, a people, and a country cannot stand to watch Honduras become Venezuela when we have been democratic for so long; thus, I, along with others I hope, will do what is necessary within our respective areas to not

only prevent this “ poll” from happening but to reign in Zelaya in order to remind him that he is in fact the President of Honduras and not the President of himself.

In the same vein, fixing the power struggle between the three branches of government can be done with functioning parts, starting with the President. If the President and the Congress are unwilling, for whatever reason, to communicate, compromise, and collaborate when necessary, then all that can be accomplished is a war between the abusive power of the President versus the manipulation of the law by those who write it. When I was the President of Honduras, I made some changes in the way the legislative, judiciary, and executive branches worked together in order to get the most order in the country.

I moved judicial and penal reforms forward, established an anticorruption commission, and got the passage of a new penal code based on the oral accusatorial system and a law that created an independent Supreme Court. I did this in the hopes of creating a ground work for more accountability toward the stronger legislative and executive parts of our country. Additionally, while still being loyal to my party, I have respected both sides of the isle in policy making and debate to ensure that the best laws were written and discussed for the sake of the people.

Unbalance of power starts with an open President who doesn't have himself as number one. It quickly branches outward to demanding the respect of the Congress and receiving due communication between the President and the other two branches of the government. Lastly, each branch has to be strong independent of the others and able to work independently of the other parts

while cognizant of how their actions affect the other branches. When we are able to enact a plan like this, then and only then will see the cohesiveness of a people and a country of Honduras.

The foreign policy of Honduras and the problems thereof are strongly tied to the problem of our President. Because of his actions, our relationship with the United States is weakening while our bond to Venezuela and to a lesser extent Cuba are becoming not only more evident but stronger. This problem in my eyes is relatively simple: cut the source to kill the head. We as a body need to find creative and advantageous ways to remove the ties to Hugo Chavez and remind our President that he presides over Honduras the democratic country and not Venezuela the dictatorial country.

By aligning ourselves with the U. S. , we are able to not only keep the freedoms we have but able to prevent jeopardizing our country's international image by associating with a volatile government as Venezuela's. As we say in Spanish, “ Dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres” (Rough English translation: Birds of a feather flock together); Honduras would be much better off flying with the United States. Although there are few specific actions that can be considered “ mine” in any of the topics, I am highly aware of the power I hold and the actions I am able to produce.

As the leader of the Liberal Party, I am able to lead 48. 5% of the Congress in order to make decisions not only about our President's “ queries on constitutional reformation” but also about rebalancing our branches of government and to a lesser extent Honduran foreign policy. Additionally, I believe that my work in the private and the public sector and my previous presidential role allows me to communicate and work with business sectors

and the legislative and military sectors via prior experience to help any other situations that might arise.