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Region Elects Panamanian President Of Parlacen

by LADB Staff

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The Central American Parliament, Parlacen, has elected Julio Palacios of Panama as its new president for 2005-2006. Palacios, of the Partido Revolucionario Democratico (PRD), won over Dayra de Carrizo of the same party, 54-47.

Palacios said his first act upon assuming office on Oct. 28 would be to work for reform of the Tratado Constitutivo del Parlamento Centroamericano. "We want to raise the profile of the parliament so that its resolutions are linked to the decisions that the governments adopt," he said. Palacio contested only Panamanians for the office because it is that country's turn at the helm. The presidency rotates annually among the member states.

The new president takes over from Nicaragua's Fabio Gadea. Past presidents and vice presidents revert to serving as deputies for a five-year period. Palacios said he would also work for the inclusion of Costa Rica and Belize in the organization. The current membership includes Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and the Dominican Republic as a nonvoting member. Countries with observer status are Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Taiwan.

As president, Palacio heads a 12-member junta directiva composed of five elected vice-presidents, five secretaries, one designated vice president, and one secretary from the Dominican Republic, and himself. The elected vice presidents are Aquiles Linares of Guatemala, Julio Cesar Grijalba of El Salvador, Nelson Licona of Honduras, and Leopoldo Navarro of Nicaragua. The secretaries are Stephanie Rost of Guatemala, Douglas Valasco of El Salvador, Luis Lagos Acosta of Honduras, Jacinto Suarez of Nicaragua, and David Arce of Panama.

The adjunct vice president from the Dominican Republic is Miriam Cabral. The adjunct secretary is Rafael Gamundi.

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