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## **Peru: Writer Vargas Llosa Backs Out Of Presidential Race**

*by John Neagle*

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In a letter made public late June 21, Mario Vargas Llosa said he was withdrawing his name as presidential candidate of the conservative Democratic Front (FREDEMO) coalition in the 1990 elections because of differences between the alliance's Popular Action (AP) party and the Popular Christian Party (PPC). The 52-year-old writer had officially announced his candidacy on June 4. Leaders of coalition's constituent parties were meeting late on the same day in an attempt to resolve their differences and persuade Vargas Llosa to reconsider his resignation. FREDEMO spokespersons told reporters that Vargas Llosa might agree to stay in the electoral competition if the AP and the PPC immediately reached an accord. Vargas Llosa's letter of resignation was addressed to former president and AP party president Fernando Belaunde and PPC leader Luis Bedoya Reyes, whose parties were disputing the selection of FREDEMO's candidate for Lima's mayoral race in the November municipal elections. Vargas Llosa had suggested that AP select the candidate for the Lima mayoral contest and that the PPC choose the mayoral candidate for the nearby port of Callao. Both parties refused to accept such an agreement. In his letter, Vargas Llosa said, "The collapse of the FREDEMO can open the doors of the government to marxism or to military adventure." He urged Belaunde and Bedoya to resolve their differences so that "this dark view does not prevail in Peru." Vargas Llosa asserted that FREDEMO could win the 1990 presidential race, but that the internecine dispute would impede "the profound transformation needed to pull Peru out of the abyss." Recent opinion polls indicated Vargas Llosa ahead in the race, with a 41% approval rating, compared to 22% for the United Left party and 7% for the ruling American Revolutionary Popular Alliance (APRA). (Basic data from AFP, 06/21/89)

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