Preparations For Chilean Elections

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Preparations For Chilean Elections

by John Neagle

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On Oct. 30, Juan Ignacio Garcia, director of Chile's Electoral Service, announced that a total of 69,006 voting places would be set up throughout the country for the Dec. 14 elections for the presidency, and members of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. A total of 7,442,856 Chileans are registered to vote, or 90% of the electorate. Presidential candidates are Patricio Aylwin of the Rally for Democracy coalition; former Finance Minister Hernan Buchi; and, businessperson Francisco Javier Errazuriz. Under Chilean law, a candidate must capture 51% of the direct vote to be elected president. If no one candidate receives a simple majority of all ballots cast, a runoff between the two leading candidates must take place within 55 days after Dec. 14. Voting is mandatory for Chileans who have registered to vote. (Minimum voting age is 18.) Persons who fail to vote must pay a fine equivalent to slightly less than $US100. (Basic data from Xinhua, 10/30/89)

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