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Aylwin Wins Presidency In Chile: Summary Of Election & Related Developments

by John Neagle

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Dec. 14: Late Thursday, pro-government candidate Hernan Buchi conceded defeat to opposition candidate Patricio Aylwin. Official election results from 69% of 23,002 polling places showed Aylwin with 2.64 million votes, or 55.5%. According to Interior Ministry statistics, Buchi captured 1.39 million votes, or 29.3%. Francisco Errazuriz had 726,267 votes or 15.3%. The Ministry said there were 114,000 null and blank ballots. Motorists honked their horns and Aylwin supporters rushed into the streets of Santiago to celebrate. Aylwin is to take office for four years beginning March 11. Voters also elected 38 Senators and 120 House of Deputies members. The Senate will also include nine members appointed by the current regime. According to AP, police said a gunman fled after killing a 23-year-old officer guarding a polling station in Joao Goulart, a working-class district in southern Santiago. AFP reported the death of 17-year-old Jose Manuel Pena in the same incident. The Chilean Communist Party (PCC) denied any responsibility for the killing, attributed by police to "terrorist groups." Earlier, police reported that unknown gunmen opened fire on 40 peasants who were on their way to a polling station in San Francisco de Mostazal, 70 km. south of Santiago. No casualties were reported. Aylwin invited Chileans to join him in a huge victory rally in Santiago on Friday. Dec. 15: Of the total 7 million votes cast Thursday, Aylwin won 55.2%; Buchi, 29.4%; and Errazuriz, 15.4%. At a press conference, Aylwin said he will exert his authority over the military and Gen. Augusto Pinochet, who intends to continue as commander-in-chief of the army. The president-elect said he would meet with military commanders to establish a working relationship. "Chile is effectively moving back to democracy. There will be no puppet democracy, and there will be no extra-democratic control over my government," Aylwin said. [Under the new government, the military will have a majority on a National Security Council empowered to "represent" its views to the government. Next, a bill currently under discussion by Pinochet's junta would give the armed forces substantial autonomy under civilian governments.] In reference to investigation of human rights abuses under the Pinochet regime, Aylwin said, "We don't have a wish of revenge, but of truth and justice." He added that anyone who committed abuses may be brought to justice, including Pinochet. In downtown Santiago, scores of young leftist Aylwin supporters, led by a group from the State University of Santiago, were dispersed with water cannon and tear gas. Demanding the immediate release of political prisoners, the demonstrators blocked traffic on Santiago's main artery, O'Higgins Avenue, for several hours. Waving red flags, the leftist militants threw stones at police cars. Human rights groups say there are still 500 political prisoners in Chilean jails. The Interior Ministry has said there are no political prisoners: "They are delinquents who have perpetrated subversive acts and who were prosecuted by the judicial power." AFP reported that Aylwin's coalition, the 17-party Rally for Democracy, failed to win a two-thirds parliamentary majority needed to pass through constitutional reforms that would limit military power. Official results of the polls for 120 deputies and 38 senators indicated the alliance gained 71 deputy seats, while the right won the other 49. In the Senate, Aylwin's coalition and leftist parties outside the alliance won 22 seats (58%) and the right, 16. The new government will therefore control the Chamber of Deputies. Since the Pinochet government will appoint nine senators, the

right will dominate the more powerful Senate. The Christian Democrats will be the dominant party when Congress convenes in March. The second largest grouping will be the National Renovation Party, a moderate rightist party which supported Buchi's presidential candidacy. At his victory rally, Aylwin asked for "prudence and collaboration" from all parties. Organizers said a million people were in attendance. In his opening remarks, Aylwin recognized those "who have fallen along the way...who have suffered persecution, degradation or death." The president-elect turned his gaze to a group of 100 women dressed in mourning, seated in the guests of honor section. The women carried photographs of disappeared husbands and sons. (Basic data from several reports by AP, AFP, DPA, Notimex, 12/14/89, 12/15/89)

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