

Beat: Politics

## Alvaro Uribe, a great colombian?

### His compatriots do not think so

Tunja, 17.07.2013, 03:21 Time

**USPA NEWS** - More than two months of online voting on a survey mixed with a symbolic contest, organized by History Channel and Colombian newspaper "El Espectador" allowed Colombian ex-president Álvaro Uribe Vélez become "The greatest Colombian". His victory arrived from 1,132,183 votes submitted by viewers.

Even though the official numbers let Uribe winning, the figures seem to be far from his 5 million votes to become for the first time Colombian president, and 7 million for his reelection. Numbers do not lie, but his symbolic recognition as the most important historical dignitary did not make Colombians happy at all.

In this opportunity, against all predictions, Uribe got another media victory because this popularity contest with a national merchandising project, it was nothing but the read back of two hypotheses: either this is a schizophrenic country, as Colombian journalist María Jimena Duzáin declared, or former president put his "hard hand" to work in order to have History Channel's web site updated and vote, vote, and vote for himself

More paradoxical than results, was the face to face encounter with the second opponent: murdered journalist and comedian Jaime Garzón, Uribe's critic and the hardest accuser "always with humor- of many politicians of old, new and eternal political theater world.

30, 3% for Uribe; 17, 5 for Garzón; followed by pathologist Manuel Elkin Patarroyo, who created the world's first attempt of a synthetic malaria vaccine, and Nobel Prize-winning Gabriel García Márquez. Laugh and horror met in a scenario that the experts defined as "two Colombias", that is, two nations without convergence because at this moment there is no balance between those opposites.

It seems there is no balance among what we are, what we hate, what we would like to be, and what we will never have. Two media powers met face to face again, after many years: the first one, Uribe, the most prolific user of Twitter in Colombia; the second one, a death body killed by paramilitaries, missed by lots of citizens.

"Uribe is one of the greatest Colombian politicians of the last 25 years. He is the first media president, not only for the way he handled mass media in Colombia, but because its use let him give convincing messages in a complex country, such as: "I am the father of the nation, there is an enemy named FARC, if we destroyed it the country will be different", said María Jimena Duzáin during live broadcast.

With Uribe's popularity and the result of what became a reality show, no matter if it was true or false, History Channel opens a new debate for Colombia: What is this country? What does it choose? What does it prefer? What kind of memory citizens have? Where does it break its heart? Where does it find its pieces? How does it think and who thinks for its people?

Two Colombias are still divided, between humor and pain, between the power of life and death, and the ex-president ends up crushing again current Colombian history, as well as many years of work of other memorable men and women of this great nation.

Sports commentator Javier Hernández Bonnet, affirmed that if Colombian people vote this way in real elections, Uribe and its political party could win, due to "sympathy" and "eligibility".

Colombian citizens are not happy with this result. Actually, director of El Espectador journal said that Uribe represents nobody but himself and that this enterprise did not support that election.

People tend to say that Colombia is a country without memory. I do not believe it. This is simply another country. That is all.

**Article online:**

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-1260/alvaro-uribe-a-great-colombian.html>

**Editorial office and responsibility:**

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Helena Sanchez, colombian journalist

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619