

DR LEONEL ANTONIO FERNANDEZ

President of the Dominican Republic



Professor of several generations of journalists and communicators from the State University (UASD), he taught subjects related to media law, history, sociology of communication, and international relations. He also taught at the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO). For his contribution to political science, President Fernandez has been distinguished by the following renowned universities with the title of Doctor Honoris Causa: University of La Sorbonne and Harvard University in 1999, Universidad Nacional Pedro Henriquez Urena (UNPHU) and Sector Hall University in 2000, state University of Santiago de Chile in 2002, Stevens Institute of Technology in 2004, Nova Southeastern University, University of Massachusetts and the University State of Panama in 2005, and the Chinese Cultural University in Taiwan and Hankuk University in 2006.

The Dominican Head of State joined the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD) in 1973. In his early college years Dr Fernandez was part of the student movement of the 1970s and served as general secretary of the Student Association of the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences of the UASD. In 1985, he was elected to the Central Committee of the PLD and 1990, a member of the Political Committee. He also served as Secretary for International Affairs of that organization and as editor of the *Journal of Political Theory and Action*.

In 1994, he was selected vice presidential candidate of the Republic, as running mate to Professor Juan Bosch. By the end of 1995, he was proclaimed presidential candidate for the election of 16 May 1996, and overcame the challenge of being chosen as the

president of the Dominican Republic for the period of 1996–2000. President Fernandez was the first Head of State from the PLD and one of the youngest presidents in Latin America.

As President of the Republic during the period 1996–2000, Fenandez Reyna developed a dynamic foreign policy to rescue the Dominican Republic from its traditional isolation. In that context, he participated in international forums of vital importance, such as the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Central American Summit of Heads of State, and the Summit of the Americas.

Following the completion of his administration in 2010, Dr Fernandez continued his contributions to the development of the country and Latin America as president of the Fundacion Global Democracia y Desarrollo (FUNGLODE), a non-profit institution dedicated to study of national and international issues, the development of innovative proposals of strategic nature, the design of public policies, the improvement of the quality of national debate, and the training of human resources.

In 2004, against a background of crisis coloured by bank failures, the devaluation of the Dominican peso, high inflation, rising interest rates, the loss of thousands of jobs, and the bankruptcy of hundreds of businesses and companies, Dr Fernandez opted for the Presidency of the Republic once again, and was chosen to a popular vote of 57%.

Further to his academic responsibilities, professional and political career, President Fernandez has worked extensively as an essayist. He is the author of the following titles: *Raices de un Poder Usurpado*, *Los Estados Unidos en el Caribe: De la Guerra Fria al Plan Reagan*, *La Republica Dominicana Hacia el Nuevo siglo*, *La globalizacion y la Reublica Domincana*, and *Nuevo Paradigma*. President Fernandez speeches have been compiled into *Themes of Campaign I and II*, and *Speeches I, II, III, and IV*.