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زبانهای اروپایی

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## Chile's Constitutional Convention Elects Mapuche President

For Loncón, this is an opportunity to build "a plurinational Chile, an intercultural Chile that does not violate the rights of women, a Chile that takes care of Mother Earth."



*In the historic installation session of the Constitutional Convention of Chile, Elisa Loncón, a Mapuche professor, was elected, with 96 votes, as president of the assembly that will draft the country's new Constitution.*

Elisa Loncón, 58, a native of Traiguén, located in the south of the country, of Mapuche origin, is a professor of linguistics at the University of Santiago. The elections were held in two rounds.

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Because no candidate managed to gather enough votes among the 155 voters to assume the presidency in the first round: the advantage went to Elisa Loncón, with 58 votes, followed by the right-wing deputy Harry Jürgensen, with 36 votes. Therefore, a second round of voting was necessary to validate Loncón's election. During her speech, Loncón thanked the support of the different coalitions that supported her and that "trusted their dreams and marked their conviction in the call expressed by the Mapuche nation to vote for a Mapuche person, a woman, to change the course of the history of this country."

For Loncón, this is an opportunity to build "*a plurinational Chile, an intercultural Chile that does not violate the rights of women, a Chile that takes care of Mother Earth.*"

The Mapuche professor also stated that the presidency of the Convention would be rotating to offer space to various sectors of indigenous peoples, with the aim of "refounding Chile".

On this occasion, Loncón referred to the recent tragedy experienced by Canada's indigenous peoples, where more than 1,100 remains of indigenous children were discovered on land that formerly housed a boarding school for indigenous children called Saint Eugene's Mission

The Cowessess First Nation Indigenous organizations and the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous First Nations (FSIN) in Saskatchewan reported the discovery of the graves. |

*Photo: CBC*



Outside the Congress building in Santiago, hundreds of mostly Mapuche protesters awaiting the end of the elections were violently assaulted by President Piñera's police forces. Fuerzas who did not hesitate to make massive use of tear gas and water cannons against the demonstrators, offering a sad illustration of the confrontation between a 'Pinochetist' past and future prospects more in line with the popular plurality of this country.

violences further delayed the conclusion of the initial session of the Constitutional Convention, which had been suspended at the request of right-wing elected members.

Pedro Da Nóbrega for La Pluma, July 5, 2021 Translated by María Piedad Ossaba [Original](#)