

BOLIVIA: Social Movement Democracy

AUGUST 14-24, 2009



On January 25 62% of the people of Bolivia voted to approve a new Constitution, a demand first raised by the indigenous movements in the early 1990s. It was a key promise of the successful 2005 election campaign of the country's first indigenous president, Evo Morales. Now, having seriously challenged a virulent minority opposition, Bolivians are poised to refound their country.

Delegation itinerary:

Department of Santa Cruz:

We will meet with the main opposition to Morales and hear about land use, ownership issues, and the autonomy movement. We will also meet with representatives of the landless movement and progressive NGOs close to the Morales government.

Western highlands and Cochabamba:

Meet with leaders of the Water War of 2000 who are now calling for dramatic economic policy changes to benefit the poor and middle classes as well as with progressive intellectuals.

La Paz and El Alto:

Meet with government and MAS party leaders, experts and activists. Also meet with the US Embassy.

Our final weekend takes us to the coca growing area of Los Yungas, the current focus of the US war on drugs in Bolivia



Some highlights:

Meet internationally acclaimed author and Nobel Peace Prize finalist Domitila Chungara, who wrote "Let Me Speak," a testimony of a woman of the Bolivian mines.

Meet with Leonida Zurita, Senator, #3 in the MAS political party structure and national president of the women's peasant Federation "Bartolina Sisa."

Meet with other members of the government as per delegation interests.

Meet representatives with the committee to extradite Goni (President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada). Travel to the incredibly beautiful Yungas, the main coca-growing region.

Our guide:

Georg Ann Potter is an author and researcher on the "War on Drugs," economic globalization and the poor, and peasant women's movements in Bolivia. She is currently an advisor to the Six Coca Federations in the Chapare and the national women's peasant federation, Bartolina Sisa. She lives in Cochabamba.

Cost:

\$1350 includes hotels, most meals and all in-country travel (two flights), honoraria to social

movement speakers and groups. It does not include: international airfare, Bolivian visa or the required Yellow Fever vaccination. Partial scholarships considered.

Information:

For more information and an application contact: Dale Sorensen, 415-924-3227 or geodale1@earthlink.net.