

Oswaldo Hurtado

Oswaldo Hurtado (1939) manages CORDES, a nonprofit corporation in Quito that studies the economic, political and social problems of Ecuador, to which he contributes with his studies and publications. He also gives lectures and writes newspapers and magazines articles.

He studied Law, Political and Social Science at the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador. He taught Political Sociology at the above-mentioned university and at the Andean Center of the University of New Mexico. He has written many essays and several books about Ecuadorian Politics, Sociology and Economy. Of special importance is *El Poder Político en el Ecuador* (Political Power in Ecuador) published in Spanish (1977, sixteen editions), English (University of New Mexico Press, 1980 and Westview Press, 1985) and Portuguese (Paz e Terra, 1981). *Los Costos del Populismo* and *Las costumbres de los ecuatorianos* are his most recent publications.

His academic work about Latin America has been gathered in several books published in collaboration with other authors in Germany, Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Spain, the United States of America, France, Italy, Mexico, Peru and Switzerland.



Foto: Pablo Corral

He presided over the Commission (1977) that prepared the Referendum, Elections and Parties laws, which laid the legal base for reestablishing democracy in his country (1979).

He was Vice-President (1979-1981) and President of Ecuador (1981-1984), and President of the National Constituent Assembly that approved the new Ecuadorian Constitution of 1998.

During his government, the Latin-American economic debt crisis (1982) started. In Ecuador, this crisis was exacerbated by economic problems accumulated during the previous military dictatorships (1972-1979) and the floods caused by El Niño. Despite the adverse political environment, he implemented policy measures that allowed to restore stability and to regain economic growth.

His government contributed to the strengthening of democracy, showing respect to institutions and the law, preserving public liberties as well as an appropriate and tolerant exercise of authority. Additionally, he promoted important social progress, achieving a significant reduction of illiteracy among others.

At the end of his government, he was invited to participate in private international organizations, such as Inter-American Dialogue (Washington), where he was the co-president of the Board of Directors; The Carter Center (Atlanta), presided by former US President Jimmy Carter; The Club of Madrid (Club de Madrid); Biarritz Forum (Foro de Biarritz); Emerging Markets Forum (Washington); and, Ibero-American Forum (Foro Iberoamericano).

He was part of the commission that prepared the environmental reports *Nuestra Propia Agenda* (1990), *Amazonía Sin Mitos* (1992) and *Amanecer en los Andes* (1997), as a request of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

He has five children: Sebastián, Andrés, Cristina, Felipe and Isabel.

Tennis and gardening are his hobbies.