

■ **1998:** Chavez elected president with 56% of vote, inaugurated Feb 99

■ **1999-2001:** Uses groundswell of support to pass new constitution that boosts executive power

■ **2002-03:** Survives military coup and two-month national strike that cripples oil industry

■ **2003:** Starts massive social spending campaign offering education, health and low-cost food to poor majority

■ **2004:** Wins recall referendum on whether he should serve out rest of his term

Key events in Hugo Chavez's presidency



■ **2005:** Signs decree on land reform aimed at eliminating large estates

■ **2006:** Wins third term as president with 63%

■ **2007:** Referendum on proposals to extend his powers narrowly rejected

■ **2009:** Wins referendum that lifts term limits on elected officials, allowing Chavez to stand again when current term expires in 2012

■ **2010:** Chavez party wins majority in National Assembly elections but opposition gets around 40% of seats