

# CLAUDIA LÓPEZ

b. March 9, 1970

# MAYOR OF BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

*“Today was the day of the woman.”*

**She is the first female and first openly gay mayor of Colombia’s capital and largest city.**

Claudia López is the first woman and the first openly gay person to be elected mayor of Bogotá, Colombia. She holds the second most important political office in the country.

López was raised with her five younger siblings in the working-class neighborhoods of Bogotá. She discovered her passion for politics in college as part of the mass student movement La Séptima Papeleta (The Seventh Ballot). The movement came about following the assassination of Colombia’s president. It demanded the formation of a National Constituent Assembly to modify the Colombian Constitution.

López landed her first political position as an assistant to Enrique Peñalosa’s 1995 campaign for mayor of Bogotá. After Peñalosa was elected, López directed his

Community Action Administrative Department and launched a career as a newspaper columnist, becoming one of Colombia’s most respected political analysts.

In 2005 López began exposing the infiltration of paramilitary groups in some of the highest levels of government. Her research and reporting on the parapolítica network triggered a national scandal that led to the prosecution of more than 60 congressman—greater than one third of the Congress.

In 2008 López joined a think tank, New Rainbow Corporation, as coordinator of armed conflict research. Her work led to a 2013 publication that established ties between Francisco Gomez, the former governor of La Guajira province, and a major drug trafficker. Gomez was investigated and sentenced to 55 years in prison. López received death threats and was forced to flee the country. Despite this, she returned to Colombia the following year to run for the Senate.

As a senator, she co-led a ballot referendum to reduce corruption. She resigned from the Senate to run as vice president to Sergio Fajardo in Colombia’s 2018 presidential election, but Fajardo was defeated.

Thereafter, López began her mayoral campaign, running on a platform of improving public education, supporting infrastructure and fighting corruption. She won the election in October 2019 by a narrow margin. Her win as a woman and a lesbian made history in the conservative country. In her victory speech, López declared it “the day of the woman,” crediting the unity of her diverse constituency for her success.

In December 2019, López married Representative Angélica Lozano Correa. López took office on January 1, 2020.



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