

= Ricardo Arias Calderón =

Ricardo Arias Calderón (born 4 May 1933) is a Panamanian politician who served as First Vice President from 1989 to 1992 . A Roman Catholic who studied at Yale and the Sorbonne , Arias returned to Panama in the 1960s to work for political reform . He went on to become the president of the Christian Democratic Party of Panama and a leading opponent of the military government of Manuel Noriega . In 1984 , he ran as a candidate for Second Vice President on the ticket of three @-@ time former president Arnulfo Arias , but they were defeated by pro @-@ Noriega candidate Nicolás Ardito Barletta .

Following an annulled 1989 election and the US invasion of Panama later in the same year , Arias Calderón was sworn in as First Vice President of Panama under President Guillermo Endara . After growing tensions in the ruling coalition , Arias resigned his position on December 17 , 1992 , stating that the government had not done enough to help Panama 's people . He continued to be an active voice in Panamanian politics following his resignation , supporting the Panama Canal expansion project and opposing the extradition of Noriega .

= = Background = =

Arias ' maternal family was from Nicaragua , having left during political upheaval there before Arias ' birth . One of Arias ' great uncles ran for president in Panama , while another was a supporter of the Nicaraguan revolutionary Sandino , a family history that gave Arias an early interest in politics . His father , an engineer , died when Arias was two years old , and he was raised primarily by his mother , aunt , and grandmother . His mother later remarried to a Panamanian ambassador to the United States .

Arias studied at Culver Military Academy in Indiana in the US . He later majored in English literature at Yale University and philosophy at Paris @-@ Sorbonne University . A Roman Catholic , Arias was heavily influenced by Catholic French philosopher and ethicist Jacques Maritain . Aesthetic , publicly stiff , and accused of aloofness , Arias would later be nicknamed " Arias Cardinal Calderón " during his political career .

= = Early political career = =

Arias returned to Panama in the early 1960s to work for political reform , soon joining the small Christian Democratic Party of Panama . In 1972 , he left Panama for some time with his family , becoming a dean and later vice president at Florida International University in Miami , Florida in the US . In 1980 , however , he declined an offer to become provost , and instead returned to Panamanian politics .

During the rule of military leader Manuel Noriega , Arias was an opposition leader as the president of the Christian Democratic Party of Panama , a member party of the Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance (ADOC) . He ran on the ticket of three @-@ time former president Arnulfo Arias (no relation) in the 1984 election as the National Alliance of Opposition 's candidate for Second Vice President . Arnulfo Arias was narrowly defeated by Noriega ally Nicolás Ardito Barletta Vallarino , and the opposition stated that the election had been fraudulent .

In February 1988 , plainclothes police officers forced Arias Calderón and his wife onto a plane to Costa Rica at gunpoint , and the couple spent a month in exile in Miami . Arias returned to Panama in March , calling openly for Noriega 's ouster on arrival at the Omar Torrijos International Airport . In Panama 's May 1989 elections , Arias stood as a candidate for First Vice President with the ADOC , with Guillermo Endara as the presidential candidate and Guillermo Ford as the candidate for Second Vice President . However , Noriega 's government annulled the election before voting was complete . Days after the completion of voting , Endara , Arias , and Ford were attacked on camera by Noriega supporters while security forces observed and refused to intervene . In October of that year , Arias was briefly arrested for urging citizens not to pay taxes to his government .

= = Vice presidency = =

Following Noriega 's fall in the December 1989 US invasion of Panama , Arias was certified as vice president of Panama under President Endara and inaugurated on a US military base .

Arias was put in charge of reforming the Panamanian police forces , putting them under civilian control . He controversially employed former members of Noriega 's Panamanian Defense Forces , stating that he trusted them with his own security and that it was " time to look to the future " . His defense of former PDF soldiers split supporters of the coalition government , and in May 1990 , sparked rumors that he and the CDP were attempting a coup while Endara was out of the country . The presidential offices were occupied by Endara loyalists with submachineguns , who accidentally shot and killed one of Endara 's staff members .

In early 1991 , the ADOC coalition began to unravel as Endara , Arias , and Ford publicly criticized one another . On April 8 , accusing Arias ' Christian Democrats of not rallying to his support during an impeachment vote , Endara dismissed Arias from the cabinet .

Arias resigned from the vice presidency on December 17 , 1992 , stating at a news conference that Endara 's government " does not listen to the people , nor does it have the courage to make changes " . Endara responded that Arias ' resignation was " demagoguery " and " merely starting his 1994 political campaign ahead of time " .

= = Later activity = =

Arias was an opponent of the post @-@ invasion US presence in Panama before the December 31 , 1999 handover of the Panama Canal to the Panama Canal Authority . Arias was criticized in 1998 by Endara 's successor , Ernesto Pérez Balladares , as " immoral " for having claimed almost \$ 100 @,@ 000 in salary from his time as vice president despite having resigned . Arias subsequently challenged Pérez Balladares to a debate over the morality of the latter 's plans to amend the constitution and seek a second term .

In 2001 , Arias released a book , Democracy without an Army : The Panamanian Experience , arguing that the nation must keep its security forces depoliticized . That same year , he allied with Democratic Revolutionary Party , the former party of Noriega . He later pressed criminal defamation charges against La Prensa cartoonist Julio Briceño for a cartoon of Arias standing besides the Grim Reaper , representing the new alliance . Arias additionally asked for a million dollars in damages , stating " That cartoon made me an accomplice of a crime ... That was a defamation I could not accept or tolerate . I was the one who denounced those crimes at the time of the dictatorship . " In 2006 , he supported a project to widen the canal , calling it " historical suicide " not to do so .

Arias opposed the 2011 extradition of Noriega from France to Panama , warning that the former dictator could institute a " demagogic populism " similar to that of Venezuela 's Hugo Chávez .

= = Personal life = =

Arias has a Cuban @-@ born wife , Teresa , whom he married in 1964 and with whom he has four children . In the 1960s , she broke new ground for political spouses by attending political rallies and campaigning actively for her husband . Because Endara was a widower , she also acted as Panama 's First Lady until Endara remarried to Ana Mae Diaz Chen in 1990 .