

Letter to the European Parliament on the current Human Rights Situation in Peru

14th of April 2023

The [EU-LAT Network](#)¹ and [PEP](#)² continue to observe with great concern the deterioration of democracy that is taking place in Peru as well as the repression with which the government has responded to the mobilisation of citizens. Therefore, we call on the European Parliament to continue to closely monitor the human rights situation in Peru.

According to the National Human Rights Coordinator (CNDDHH), at least 49 people were killed in extrajudicial executions and due to the excessive use of force during the repression of protests. In addition, the Defensoría del Pueblo (Ombudsman's Office) has reported 1335 people injured (civilians and police) in protests between 8 December 2022 and 10 March 2023. Following his mission to Peru in mid-January, the vice-president of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) Stuardo Ralón condemned the "excessive use of force by the security forces" and the "strong stigmatisation based on ethnic, racial and regional factors by some authorities who have referred to all indigenous and peasant people as terrorists, guerrillas, rebels, or Indians, among other derogatory terms". Amnesty International also warned that this violence has been directed primarily against the Aymara and Quechua indigenous population, who to this day continue to mobilise to demand a reform of the authorities as they feel marginalised and excluded. Moreover, he pointed out that the security forces indiscriminately used lethal weapons against the demonstrators, which can be linked to the systemic racism that has been ingrained in Peruvian society and its authorities for decades. In addition, between the outbreak of the protests and 10 January 2023, the National Association of Journalists (ANP) also registered at least 72 cases of violations of media work and attacks on journalists. Most of these attacks were perpetrated by the police and the army.

Peruvian civil society organisations, indigenous organisations, and human rights defenders monitoring abuses during the crisis have been confronted with harassment and attacks from extremist groups linked to the political extreme right. Meanwhile, they report that the authoritarian attitude of the government in recent months is increasingly endangering democracy. In this context, they fear that the democratic space of civil society will be subjected to further pressure and intimidation, also pointed out by the [Defensoría del Pueblo](#) and the [Supreme Court](#). At the same time, the newly appointed prosecutors withdrew from cases in the regions of Ayacucho, Puno and Apurímac in order to concentrate solely on cases in Lima, undermining the rights of immediacy and the principles of due diligence.

This closure of civic and democratic space has also been observed by the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which voiced its concern regarding the reports of abuses and limitations of rights, and asked the Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations offices in Geneva to provide, within a period of no more than 60 days, concrete information on the serious acts reported to that office linked to human rights violations, violations of the rights of the indigenous population, excessive use of force, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, stigmatisation of protest, harassment of human rights

¹ The EU-LAT Network is a recognised network of more than 40 European organisations that advocates for European policies towards Latin America. It promotes, inter alia, respect for human rights, the protection of human rights defenders and the environment in Latin America, so that these are prioritised in the EU's political dialogue, cooperation and trade with the region.

² The Plataforma Europa-Perú (PEP) is a network of 15 European human rights organisations working for the protection of human rights in Peru: Perú Support Group, 11.11.11, Commission Justice et Paix, Entraide et Fraternité, CATAPA, Broederlijk Delen, FOS, Informationsstelle Perú, Centro de Investigación y Documentación Chile-América Latina, Campaña Perú País Minero, Secours Catholique, Perú Kommitten for MR, Entrepueblos, Asociación pro Derechos Humanos de España, ASTM.

defenders and journalists, as well as the abusive use of the term "terrorism". In a more recent [statement](#), OHCHR experts point to the specific impact of the repression on human rights defenders and indigenous communities, demanding accountability from the Peruvian government.

Given the documentation of human rights violations by official and civil society organizations, and the statements of the EU Delegation and EEAS itself, **we urge the European Parliament to join the call for accountability of the Peruvian Government and demand that the Parliament:**

- Expresses its concern about the regressive legislative offensive conducted by the Peruvian authorities at a time when the legitimacy of the institutions is being called into question by the majority of the population.
- Expresses its concern about the decisions of the Constitutional Court favouring the Congress to the detriment of the balance of powers, to restore the independence of the judiciary and the legislative branch to the electoral system.
- In the framework of the Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders, requests the EU Delegation in Peru, in coordination with the OHCHR and the rest of the international community, to conduct field visits to the provinces that have been most affected by the repression, to maintain a dialogue with civil society organisations and to continue to publicly support dialogue and the end of the use of violence.
- Continues its work of observation, analysis and evaluation, monitoring the current human rights crisis situation based on its obligations under the Trade Agreement with Peru.

In its exchanges with the Peruvian government, emphasise the need to:

- Set up an independent commission to assess the Peruvian state's disproportionate use of force and ensure that they comply with the recommendations in this regard.
- Put an end to the criminalisation of protests by politically using criminal law, to the point of using terrorism as a criminal offence, in order to guarantee the full exercise of human rights for society as a whole.
- Conduct impartial, diligent, exhaustive and transparent investigations that clarify the facts and establish criminal responsibilities thereof, with follow-up of key mechanisms.
- Ensure full reparation for victims of serious human rights violations.
- Put an end to the stigmatisation and racial discrimination of people actively demonstrating and accusations of "terrorism", and attend to and protect the indigenous population, while respecting their individual and collective rights and commitments to their inclusion in the country's development.
- Insist that the Prosecutor's Office allocate sufficient staff to carry out all proceedings thoroughly and promptly, and guarantee security conditions for witnesses and victims' families.

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