



International Statement of Solidarity with Peruvian Indigenous Peoples During the Political Crisis

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12TH 2020

The undersigned organizations, allies of the Peruvian indigenous movement for decades, previously concerned about the COVID-19 situation in the Peruvian Amazon and today alerted to the political situation in Peru, respectfully address public opinion and Peruvian authorities to state the following:

1. We are concerned with the situation of political instability in Peru. Within a short time the Government has named three Presidents and has elected two parliaments. All of this in the midst of a global pandemic that has meant enormous human and material costs. Peru is one of the countries most negatively affected by COVID-19 which faces great challenges in the immediate future.
2. In this situation, indigenous peoples are one of the most affected sectors and the least attended to. Through much advocacy work and protests, by developing their own strategies for defense and intercultural health, indigenous peoples are facing the pandemic with very little support from the State.
3. The Parliament's recent decision to impeach President Vizcarra (six months out from the upcoming general elections that are being convened) was justified by accusations of corruption during his term as a Regional Governor. These are being analyzed by the Attorney General of the Nation. The Inter-American Commission of Human Rights has questioned the legitimacy and constitutionality of this parliamentary decision and the

Peruvian Constitutional Tribunal has yet to clarify the constitutional foundation of the parliamentary accusation of “permanent moral incapacity.” Street protests have not stopped since Monday with many citizens denying the legitimacy of the government of Manuel Merino. Diverse high-level public functionaries have resigned in protest against the process being carried out by the parliament.

4. In this context, we would underscore the statement of AIDSESEP and the Wampis Territorial Government, indicating the illegitimacy of the current government and openly denouncing the Prime Minister who was just named, Antero Flores Araoz, who has characterized his long political history with many authoritarian and racist statements, and for vilifying Peru’s indigenous peoples whom he has publicly referred to as “llamas and vicuñas”. As an ex-minister, his legacy is also stained for having been part of the Cabinet that generated the “Bagua” massacre in 2009.

Given all this, we:

- Express our solidarity with the protests of all Peruvian citizens and in particular the expressions of rejection as manifested by indigenous peoples. We demand respect for the human rights of all citizens and that Police forces should not exercise indiscriminate repression, as has been seen in recent days.
- We call on Mr. Manuel Merino, who has been acting as president since November 10, and on the Peruvian Congress that created this situation, to listen to the voice of the Peruvian people and put aside their short-term political interests, by correcting the decisions made. A constitutional solution which respects the institutions and guarantees free and fair elections as soon as possible is urgent.
- We respectfully suggest that the politicians that are put in charge of the work of redirecting this institutional crisis should be those who can generate a consensus and who understand that Peru is a diverse country, including rural and urban areas, Andean and Amazonian regions, mestizos and indigenous peoples.

No more repression! No more Baguazos! No more structural racism in Peru!