



JOINT STATEMENT

THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION MUST DENOUNCE VIOLENT REPRESSION IN PERU

In just one month since the Dina Boluarte government came to power, at least 48 civilians have been killed in the context of social protests, 41 of them as the result of wounds caused by gunfire. Human rights groups have sharply criticized Peruvian security forces, which appear to be responsible for most of the deaths, for using lethal force indiscriminately against civilians.

Since the beginning of Peru's current political crisis, top Biden administration officials from the US Embassy, State Department, and National Security Council have shared reiterated public expressions of support for Peruvian President Dina Boluarte and her government. To date, however, Biden administration officials have made no public statements indicating specific concerns over the government's response to protests and the serious human rights violations that have resulted from excessive use of force. One tweet by Ambassador Lisa Kenna on January 10th in response to the latest killings stated that "it is urgent that measures be taken to stop this painful situation of violence and avoid the loss of more human lives".

Such a vague statement contrasts with comments made by international institutions such as the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) which have publicly expressed their deep concern, as have governments including the UK, Canada, and the EU.

As international human rights and environmental organizations, we call upon the U.S. government to urgently express its unambiguous rejection of disproportionate and excessive use of force against protestors and arbitrary detentions in Peru. Also, the U.S. should condemn the use of stigmatizing language against protestors, which creates the enabling environment for security forces to use indiscriminate deadly force. We urge the Biden administration to add its voice to calls from the international community for the Boluarte government to ensure impartial and independent investigations led by civilian institutions, and to explicitly reject the use of military jurisdiction for investigations. Additionally, it should offer public support for the important work of the National Ombudsperson (Defensoría del Pueblo), which is under political pressure for its role in documenting and disseminating information about the numerous human rights violations.

Whether or not the Biden administration is already privately expressing these concerns to President Boluarte's government, it is past time that U.S. officials speak out publicly. Further failure to speak out against human rights violations perpetrated by Peruvian security forces risks the perception that the U.S. government is unconcerned with the risks that these repressive tactics represent to Peruvian democracy.