

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

Index: AMR 28/006/2012
19 September 2012

Ecuador: Amnesty International urges for a meaningful consultation with Indigenous peoples and expresses concern about unfounded prosecutions

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Ecuador

Amnesty International welcomes Ecuador's acceptance of recommendations to adopt and/or strengthen mechanisms for consultation with Indigenous peoples on issues that impact on their human rights.¹ The organization urges Ecuador to ensure that these are meaningful processes that are carried out in accordance with international human rights norms.

In particular, Amnesty International urges the government to ensure that any laws, policies and measures that may affect Indigenous and *campesino* communities undergo a process of consultation with those communities affected. Communities must be provided with full and objective information and be consulted before any decision is made. Having robust mechanisms in place will be especially crucial for consultations that the government will carry out in the South-East region in upcoming months.

Although Ecuador considers recommendations on the right of human rights defenders to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly to have been implemented or be in the process of implementation,² Amnesty International has concerns in this regard.

In July 2012, Amnesty International launched a report that documents the cases of 24 Indigenous and *campesino* leaders who have faced unfounded charges and arbitrary arrest for opposing government proposed laws and policies in an apparent attempt to prevent them from voicing dissent.³

Amnesty International calls on Ecuador to take measures to fully implement recommendations on around this issue, and ensure that no criminal provisions – such as those regarding terrorism, sabotage and blocking roads – are used to punish the legitimate exercise of human rights.⁴

Moreover, Ecuador must hold to account those responsible for bringing unfounded charges against leaders, thereby demonstrating that such misuse of the judicial system will not be tolerated in the country.

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Ecuador on 19 September 2012 during its 21st session. Prior to the adoption of the review outcome Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above. Amnesty International had

¹ A/HRC/21/4, paragraph 135.57 (Hungary, Malaysia, Morocco, Norway).

² A/HRC/21/4, paragraphs 135.37 (Canada), 135.39 (Canada, Germany, Holy See), 135.44 (Slovakia, Spain, United Kingdom, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria),

³ Amnesty International, 'So that no one can demand anything' - *Criminalizing the Right to Protest in Ecuador?*, Index: AMR 28/002/2012, July 2012.

⁴ A/HRC/21/4, paragraphs 135.37 (Canada), 135.39 (Canada, Germany, Morocco, Holy See), 135.40 (Latvia, Luxembourg, Australia, Austria), 135.42 (Norway), and 135.44 (Slovakia, Spain, United Kingdom, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria).

earlier submitted information on the situation of human rights in Ecuador:
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR28/010/2011/en>

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