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**Peru: The Peruvian State's withdrawal from the Inter-American human rights system is a disgrace**

Peru's withdrawal from the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights is a disgraceful attack on the human rights of the inhabitants of Peru, Amnesty International said today.

"When it accepted the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court in 1981, the Peruvian State gave the population crucial access to an independent tribunal in cases of human rights violations. Congress' passing of this bill, which was drawn up by the Executive, is a retrograde step which denies victims and their relatives the right to appeal to an international independent tribunal," the organization stressed.

Important rights enshrined in the American Convention on Human Rights are regularly violated in Peru where thousands of people have been subjected to unfair trials and hundreds are still in prison falsely charged with terrorist related offences under the 1992 anti-terrorism legislation.

The 1995 amnesty laws legalized impunity since they closed off the possibility of bringing those who committed human rights violations between 1980 and 1995 to justice. Although there has been a decrease in the number of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions since 1993, thousands of cases have still not been clarified. Torture remains systematic and journalists, opposition members and human rights defenders receive frequent threats.

"The voices of the victims, their relatives and human rights defenders are hardly ever heard in Peru. This decision is just one more slap in the face for them and has closed yet another door in their struggle to defend rights that should be guaranteed to all of us," Amnesty International said.

"The Peruvian State has failed in its moral duty to reject what is clearly an attack on human rights in the country," Amnesty International concluded.

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