

# URGENT ACTION

## DOZENS INJURED AT NATIONWIDE PROTESTS

**Dozens of people have been injured, including police officers, amid clashes between the security forces and protestors in nationwide demonstrations in Ecuador. Many have been detained. As demonstrations continue there is a risk of more injuries and detentions.**

The injuries and arrests have taken place in several towns in Ecuador following days of mass protests against current government policies. Amnesty International has received reports of excessive use of force by police and the military during the attempted dispersal of protests, as well as clashes between protesters and security forces. There have been allegations of indiscriminate use of tear gas against protestors and inside nearby homes. One protestor has reportedly lost the use of one eye as a result. Organizations offering legal representation to detainees have received reports of ill-treatment. They estimate that over 50 of those detained remain in pre-trial detention.

On 2 August protestors started marching from Zamora Chinchipe in the south towards the capital Quito, which they reached on 13 August. That night police in Quito dispersed protestors gathered in a central public square, reportedly using excessive force. Over 30 people were detained.

On 17 August a joint police and military operation dispersed a road block in the town of Saraguro (Loja province), allegedly using tear gas indiscriminately and raiding homes and communal land without arrest or search warrants and without evidence of people committing a crime. Protestors were reportedly beaten and dragged through the streets.

On 19 August in the town of Macas (Morona Santiago province), there were clashes between the police and protestors. According to the Ministry of the Interior, 8 police officers were injured when protestors attempted to break a police cordon around the local offices of the Ministry of Education and two other public buildings were surrounded by protestors. On 20 August, protestors in Ambatillo (Tungurahua Province) reportedly held a military convoy, releasing everybody unharmed a few hours later.

### **Please write immediately in Spanish, English or your own language:**

- Acknowledging that while the state has a duty to maintain public order, it should never use excessive force and must guarantee the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.
- Ensure urgent measures are taken so security forces comply at all times with human rights standards on the use of progressive, selective and proportionate force when policing protests;
- Calling for prompt and impartial investigations into all allegations of excessive use of force, arbitrary detentions, and ill-treatment in police custody, and for those found responsible to be brought to justice

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 OCTOBER 2015 TO:**

President of Ecuador  
Rafael Correa Delgado  
Presidente de la República  
García Moreno N10-43 entre Chile y  
Espejo, Quito, Pichincha, Ecuador  
Twitter: @MashiRafael

**Salutation: Dear President / Señor  
Presidente**

Minister of Justice  
Dra. Ledy Zúñiga Rocha  
Ministra de Justicia, Derechos humanos  
y Cultos  
Av. Colón entre Diego de Almagro y  
Reina Victoria. Edif Torres de Almagro.  
Quito, Ecuador

**Salutation: Dear Minister/ Señora  
Ministra**

### **And copies to:**

INREDH  
Avenida 10 de Agosto N34-80 y  
Rumipamba. Piso 1  
(Frente a la parada El Florón, del  
Trolebus)  
Quito, Ecuador

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 2 August a march organized by different social movements and groups, including Indigenous People's organizations, departed from Zamora Chinchipe, in the south of the country, towards Quito, the capital. For 10 days people marched in protest against a range of government policies, including those on use of natural resources, the agreed Free Trade Agreement with the European Union and proposed constitutional amendments that will enable the indefinite re-election of the President and other public positions.

Amnesty International has raised concerns in the past about Ecuadorian authorities' efforts to clamp down on protests and using unfounded criminal proceedings against those who voice criticism against government policies, as they seem to be a deliberate attempt to curb the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly and affect the ability of communities to ensure that their rights are respected. Amnesty International has documented cases of Indigenous and campesino leaders in Ecuador who have faced unfounded charges, criminal prosecutions, arbitrary arrests and stringent bail conditions in an attempt to discourage them from voicing their opposition to government laws and policies (See *Amnesty International Report: Ecuador: "So that no one can demand anything": Criminalizing the right to protest in Ecuador?* Index: AMR 28/002/2012, July 2012. <https://www.amnesty.org/es/documents/amr28/002/2012/en>)

Amnesty International recognizes that the state has a duty to maintain public order, apprehend suspects and protect public safety, however security forces may use force only when strictly necessary and proportionate to a legitimate purpose. Violence from some protesters should not be used to quell the right to peaceful assembly of the majority and authorities should ensure that those who are protesting peacefully are able to continue to do so.

Name: Protestors at nationwide demonstration in Ecuador

Gender m/f: Both

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