

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL - PUBLIC STATEMENT

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# PERU: HUMAN RIGHTS CANNOT BE SACRIFICED IN THE POLITICAL CRISIS

In view of the political and social crisis that Peru has been thrown into since the country's Congress yesterday voted to [oust Martín Vizcarra from the Presidency due to allegations of corruption](#), the country's authorities must place respect for human rights at the heart of their immediate response and public policies. The authorities must send a clear message: the role of the security forces is to protect the population, respecting the right to peaceful protest and the right of the judiciary to investigate any act of violence and to establish the corresponding criminal responsibility.

Since the announcement of President Martín Vizcarra's impeachment, a series of demonstrations have taken place around the country in protest at the actions of Congress, particularly in Lima. These heightened today during the inauguration of the President of Congress, Manuel Merino, as President of the Republic. It is important to note that the Constitutional Court has yet to resolve the constitutional scope of this congressional power, which is subject to dispute.

Amnesty International has received photographs and videos showing National Police officers displaying firearms and firing tear gas and ammunition at demonstrators and journalists, apparently injuring them. The organization has also received allegations of arbitrary arrests, excessive use of force and ill-treatment by security forces during the protests in Lima.

Amnesty International notes that an excessive use of force in controlling demonstrations is unacceptable and in violation of Peru's human rights obligations, which should be respected by all the country's authorities. When faced with possible violence from protesters, the authorities should take all necessary measures to prevent this while ensuring that those who are exercising their right to peaceful demonstration are able to continue to do so.

Against this backdrop, the organization is also concerned at a number of statements from members of Congress who have suggested an amendment to the Constitution and the denunciation of the American Convention on Human Rights in order to "[reinstate the death penalty for all these corrupt presidents and senior officials](#)".

Finally, the organization calls upon the authorities to put an immediate stop to the repression of demonstrations and guarantee the human rights of all people.