

# The nonviolent struggle in Peru

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Peru is a country of immense wealth in every respect, both in terms of its cultural diversity and its environmental biodiversity. Instead of celebrating this wealth and embracing it as a great opportunity for our well-being and development as a country, we find ourselves mired in a deep crisis and violence in every sphere.

For more than two decades, this situation of crisis and violence has been growing increasingly severe. At the political level, many leaders look out only for their own personal or partisan interests, discriminating against those who do not belong to their social class. Human dignity is constantly trampled upon and disregarded.

Our environment is being invaded by large mining companies that are destroying and violating our territories. Rural and farming communities are treated as second- and third-class citizens, to the point of being subjected to offensive remarks claiming that “we don’t think straight because, due to the altitude, oxygen doesn’t reach our brains.” As I write this short story, I cannot help but feel a deep sadness at the discrimination faced by the vast majority of Peruvians.

The education sector is receiving an increasingly smaller share of the budget. Many young people used to have access to benefits such as the *Beca 18* scholarship, but even those programs have been scaled back, while the government allocates millions to the purchase of military aircraft.

In recent months, we have been going through an election season fraught with uncertainty. The national elections were held on April 12, and as of now, the final results of the presidential runoff have not been officially announced. There is intense tension and electoral violence because one of the defeated candidates refuses to accept the results and alleges fraud, claiming he received no votes in rural areas. However, one might ask: How did he expect to receive support from a population he has constantly insulted and discriminated against?

On the other hand, we once again see Fujimori’s daughter as one of the candidates advancing to the runoff. For much of the Peruvian population, his presence is a nightmare, as Fujimorism has maintained a strong influence in Congress for more than 15 years, and, as a result of the political crisis, Peru has had 8 presidents in recent years. Since it is Congress that has been in power.

In the face of all this, our hope remains with the organizations of rural communities, which, despite the neglect and mistreatment they endure, continue to fight nonviolently for dignity, justice, and the defense of life.