

Peru | Justice delayed by decades is justice denied

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Peru is undergoing its third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review while it suffers one of the gravest political crises since its return to democracy. ISHR and the National Coordinator for Human Rights exhort the Peruvian government to implement the necessary recommendations to protect human rights defenders.



Today saw the presentation of the report on the results of the third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Peru - where the progress and setbacks in human rights since the last cycle were evaluated, and the government had the opportunity to present its reaction to the recommendations made by other States.

In a [statement](#), ISHR and the National Coordinator for Human Rights (CNDDHH) highlighted what the recommendations from several States also emphasised: the position of human rights defenders is becoming increasingly precarious and the wounds of the past remain have yet to heal.

As Jorge Bracamonte of CNDDHH explains, the situation has been aggravated due to the pardon issued to the ex-President of Peru Alberto Fujimori, perpetrator of atrocious human rights violations during his regime.

'We worry that the current crisis and weakening of democracy in Peru is driving us towards a greater vulnerability of human rights defenders,' Bracamonte says.

Citing the case of Napoleón Tarrillo, a defender from the communal Reserve of Chaparrí who was tortured to death on 30 December last year, the statement declares that these situations are increasingly frequent among defenders of land, forests, the environment, unions, and indigenous communities, among others.

In [#Peru](#) the criminalisation of social protest means that the work of human rights defenders can be penalised with up to 30 years of imprisonment, says [@cnddhh](#) [#HRC37](#) [#HRDs](#) [#UPR](#) [#UPR28](#) <https://t.co/A10qr7UIIdQ>

— Helen Nolan (@Helen_ISHR) [March 16, 2018](#)

Helen Nolan from ISHR explains that these acts are further shielded by the State's lack of action, a situation also observed by other States.

'The Peruvian State still has not instituted a policy for the recognition and protection of human rights defenders, breaking commitments made to mechanisms such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights,' Nolan explains.

Paradoxically, explains Bracamonte, there is an intensified use of a punitive mechanism against human rights defenders.

'The criminalisation of social protest means that the work of human rights defenders can be penalised with sentences of up to 25 or 30 years of imprisonment,' he adds.

Finally, ISHR and CNDDHH express the pressing need to guarantee justice and reparation for the victims of the *Barrios Altos* and *La Cantuta* cases as well as the hundreds of families who were victims of the Grupo Colina, a criminal organism created by the Fujimori dictatorship.

Formal acceptance of the UPR recommendations is not enough,' says Nolan. 'We call on the State to implement them practically and effectively.'

In particular, ISHR and CNDDHH echo the concerns they raised in their [joint report](#), and urge the government of the Republic of Peru to:

- **End the political use of institutions and mechanisms**, which, as in the case of the pardon, affects the rule of law, the separation of powers, and the legitimacy of democracy.
- **Facilitate processes and remedies that guarantee**, within reasonable time limits and decent conditions, access to justice, to reparations and the closing of the cycle of pain experienced by the victims of the armed conflict.
- **Develop, adopt and implement a public policy for the protection of human rights defenders**, as well as concrete and immediate measures to reduce the risk they face due to the work they undertake.
- **Revise, amend or repeal policies and regulations that restrict and criminalise the work** of human rights defenders.

The full intervention can be found [here](#).

Watch the statement here:

Photo Credit: CNDDHH

ISHR