

Peru: People's Summit Begins Against Neoliberal 'Counteroffensive'

10/04/2018



The Peoples' Summit is an alternative to the Summit for the Americas in which social movements and progressives gather to counter neoliberal policies.

The **Peoples' Summit** was set to start Tuesday in **Lima** as the region's **social movements**, progressive political parties, Indigenous peoples, students and workers gather in a parallel summit to the high-level **VIII Summit of the Americas**.

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Between April 10 and 14, they will discuss how to confront neoliberal policies and discourse, the role the United States plays in the region, and the future for regional integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This year's agenda is focused on several issues, among them the court's decision to imprison former Brazilian president and Workers' Party candidate for the 2018 presidential elections Luiz Inacio [Lula](#) da Silva, U.S. economic and diplomatic [hostilities](#) against Venezuela, and Honduras' post-electoral crisis, among others.

"We are facing a strong neoconservative counteroffensive from the continental right-wing

promoted and financed from the U.S. empire. The traditional economic and political elites impose austerity measures of a frontal attack against our rights,” the People Summit’s official declaration states. Argentina and Brazil are currently facing harsh austerity measures after progressive governments were defeated or illegally removed.

Geronimo Lopez, Secretary General of Peru’s General Confederation of Workers and one of this year’s organizers, told Cuban press the event will be “a great act of continental solidarity.” He also announced they will issue a statement in support of Lula, explaining the sentence against Lula is part of a strategy by the U.S. “to stop the achievements by Latin American countries during progressive governments.”

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Costa Rican intellectual, Jorge Coronado, said the summit will also discuss the situation in “Honduras, where there is a government as a result of electoral fraud, recognized by the Organization of American States (OAS) and that is not included in the agenda of the VIII Summit of the Americas.”

The Summit has also organized an anti-imperialist march for April 12, hours after U.S. President Donald Trump was scheduled to arrive under the banner “Trump, Get Out of Peru.” However, Washington announced later Tuesday that Trump [will not go to Lima](#), saying the U.S. president will remain in the White House to oversee U.S. response to Syria.

In 2005, the Peoples’ Summit led by former Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, former Argentine President Nestor Kirchner and former Brazilian President Lula, defeated the reiterated attempts by the U.S. of create the Free Trade Area of the Americas, opposed by social movements in the region.

Today, country’s delegations to the alternative summit “will stimulate the rearticulation of popular struggles in the continent, militant solidarity, and the confluence of left-wing and progressive forces in the region, in order to stop neoconservative counteroffensive, defeat it and reopen a transformative perspective for the benefit of the excluded majorities.”
