

Lasso, Strategic Ally of the United States

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This is how Marco Rubio described the president of Ecuador, Guillermo Lasso, during his recent visit to the South American nation, where the unpopularity and rejection of a president involved in large cases of corruption grow by the day, and who keeps the country spinning in a negative spiral regarding health, education, roads, security, and social issues.

The United States is doing with Lasso -through its ambassador in Lima- what it has done with the illegitimate interim president of Peru, Dina Boluarte, legalizing everything illegal through the corrupt Prosecutor's Office and fueling excessive repression of the gendarmerie and army trained by North American military instructors.

"As Latin America and the Caribbean shifts towards left-wing anti-North American governments, Ecuador continues to be a strategic and important ally both for our country and for the stability of our region," reiterated the office of the Republican senator for the State of Florida with ill-fated Cuban origin.

In December last year, Rubio applauded the inclusion of the bipartisan US-Ecuador Association Act into the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The bill, co-led by another anti-Cuban, Democratic Senator Bob Menéndez, and Republican Jim Risch, involves a comprehensive diplomatic strategy to strengthen cooperation between the United States and Ecuador.

**WORST POSSIBLE TIMING!**

The encouragement for Lasso comes at a time when he is showered by continuous accusations of corruption and of once again mocking the indigenous masses for breaching agreements and the murder of the aboriginal leader Eduardo Mendúa, who was in charge of territorial defense in the midst of the conflict generated by the public company PetroEcuador.

Mendúa, responsible for International Relations of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (Conaie), was assassinated this Sunday by hitmen who entered his home, the Conaie is made up of the Confederation of Nationalities and Indigenous Peoples of the Ecuadorian Coast (Conaie), the Confederation of Peoples of the Kichwa Nationality of Ecuador (Ecuarunari) and the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (Confeniae).

Previously, the Conaie CEO, Leónidas Iza, had denounced that "there is monitoring and surveillance of indigenous leaders."

According to Telesur, Mendúa, a member of the Kofán de Sucumbíos nationality, in the Amazon region (north of the country), "was on his farm when hooded men shot him."

The crime takes place at a time when Conaie has broken the agreement signed with Lasso, due to its breach of more than 90% of the agreements in this regard, while it has called for a new mobilization, because the government "has continued advancing with their neoliberal policies, which violate our rights".

## **ONTO A POLITICAL TRIAL**

The highest indigenous organization in the country also urged the National Assembly to promote a political trial against Lasso, after the investigation undertaken in a multi-party commission that analyzes cases of corruption in the Government.

In addition to declaring itself in permanent mobilization in each of its territories, the entity announced that it will radicalize its fight against mining and in defense of its historical demands.

"We declare ourselves on alert regarding any dictatorial act or decision taken by the President of the Republic. We will not allow them to try to dissolve state functions and govern by decree," Iza said.

"The peoples and nationalities, the social organizations and the Ecuadorian people won't allow a dictatorship. If any initiative of any kind happens, we will immediately declare the uprising and the national strike in Ecuador," he asserted.

The vice president of Conaie, Zenaida Yasacama, told a local radio station that the indigenous movement is fed up with the lies and deceit of the Executive, especially when nine people were murdered during the national strike in June 2022.

He rejected that Lasso broadcast that 90% of what was agreed was fulfilled, and expressed that "there's no will on behalf of the government to solve the problems that are being faced at the national level, not only with the indigenous sector, but for all citizens who work and earn a dollar a day to bring bread to the table".

Yasacama also referred to the "Encuentro" or "Gran Padrino" case, about corruption in the Lasso Executive body. She made it clear that Conaie is not interested in using force measures, and for this reason she has always resort to the dialogues; nor in accessing the Executive

Power, but that the country's problems be solved.

In this regard, she said that the Government should step aside to allow other people to run the country properly, but this, of course, differs from the opinion of Marco Rubio and all the reactionary retinue that continues to encourage what they consider a stronghold of the Empire.

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