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## **PERU: Proposal to legalize impunity even further is unacceptable**

The Peruvian government's proposal to "perfect", "update" and "give constitutional status" to the 1995 Amnesty Laws demonstrates once again its lack of commitment to protect and promote human rights.

"Laws such as the 1995 Amnesty Laws, which halt investigations and judicial proceedings into cases of human rights violations, are in breach of international law as well as an affront to the victims and their relatives," said Amnesty International.

The 1995 laws legalized impunity for human rights violations committed in Peru between 1980 and 1995. Now the government intends to broaden the scope of legal impunity so that it applies up to the year 2000. It also plans to extend the scope of the 1995 laws by proposing a blanket amnesty for human rights violations committed in the context of the war on drug trafficking, as well as those carried out in the course of counter-insurgency.

"This is totally unacceptable," said the human rights organization. "All those accused of human rights violations, such as former National Intelligence Service adviser Vladimiro Montesinos and the former head of the National Intelligence Service, Julio Salazar Monroe, should be brought to justice. We have today informed the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations, which is currently reviewing Peru's fourth periodic report in Geneva, Switzerland, of these alarming developments, calling on the Committee to strongly urge the Peruvian government to reconsider its position on this worrying proposal," said AI researcher Guadalupe Marengo.

Bringing the perpetrators of human rights violations before the courts sends a clear and unequivocal message that these violations will not be tolerated and that those who commit them will be held to account without exception. "It is high time that the government of President Alberto Fujimori gave a serious commitment to respect and promote human rights in Peru," said the organization.

Crimes against humanity have been committed in Peru for the last 20 years. Up until 1993, "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions were carried out systematically by the security forces. Despite being made a criminal offence in 1998, torture continues to be widespread. "Such crimes are not subject to statutes of limitation. Amnesty or immunity laws cannot and should not be invoked to justify impunity," said the organization.

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