

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 30, 2023

President Joseph R. Biden
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20006

Dear President Biden:

We write with grave alarm regarding the human rights violations committed by Peruvian state security forces in responding to countrywide protests with indiscriminate violence and the consistent use of excessive force over the past several weeks. These actions have resulted in at least 47 civilian deaths and hundreds of injuries. In light of the worsening political and human rights situation, we implore you to publicly denounce these ongoing human rights violations and apply pressure on the Peruvian government to uphold the rights to peaceful protest and due process. We also urge your Administration to temporarily halt all Title 10 and Title 22 security assistance funding from the United States to the government of Peru until your Administration can confirm to members of Congress that this pattern of repression has ended and that Peruvian authorities are taking effective steps to ensure justice and accountability on behalf of victims and survivors.

Since protests began after the impeachment and arrest of former President Pedro Castillo and following former Vice President Dina Boluarte's rise to the presidency, sustained unrest has spread across Peru. Protests that began with calls for the release of the former President have broadened to demands for far-reaching political changes, including constitutional reform. In response to this massive mobilization, primarily led by low-income and indigenous Peruvians in rural areas, Peruvian security forces have responded to largely peaceful protests with arbitrary and disproportionate use of force.

Among the most recent examples of these actions was a violent, arbitrary raid on student dormitories at San Marcos University in Lima on January 22—an unprecedented action in Peru's recent democratic history. Numerous publicly-available reports document violations of due process and the use of disproportionate force—underscoring the urgent need for a strong response by the United States. While we recognize that a small number of protestors have participated in violent acts, the Boluarte government has a responsibility to distinguish criminals from peaceful protestors and to protect those participating lawfully. Instead, security forces have indiscriminately responded with almost no regard for protestors' human rights. Rather than working to deescalate tensions, the Boluarte government has substantially increased tensions—including classifying protestors as “terrorists” and limiting citizens' right of movement.

We join leading human rights organizations in strongly condemning state security forces' indiscriminate and excessive use of force against civilians. As Amnesty International's Americas Director [wrote](#) on January 10, “The high number of deaths, including 18 people in the last 24 hours, and the gravity of the events require that the authorities be held accountable to the highest levels.” Other major international institutions and leaders have made public statements clearly denouncing the Boluarte government's repressive reaction to the protests, including the [UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights \(OHCHR\)](#) and the [Inter-American Commission on Human Rights \(IACHR\)](#), as well as high-ranking officials in the [European Union](#) and several governments across Latin America, such as [Chile](#) and [Colombia](#).

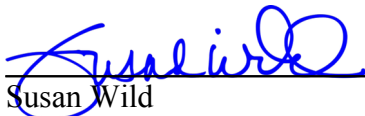
Given the rapidly deteriorating political and human rights context, we strongly urge your Administration to condemn these human rights violations and to call for an end to this excessive use of violence, as well as justice

and accountability for the victims. These conditions appear necessary for the eventual establishment and success of a process of open dialogue and inclusive political reconciliation and reform.

We are concerned that, in the current context, statements by U.S. officials in support of the Boluarte Administration or [calling](#) for “peace on all sides” send an ambiguous message. We are particularly concerned by Ambassador Lisa Kenna’s [recent meeting](#) with the Peruvian Minister of Defense and [announcement](#) of \$8 million in further U.S. funding for CORAH, a Peruvian government coca eradication program, which includes funding for forces involved in the egregious human rights violations that are currently taking place. We urge your Administration to immediately suspend U.S. security assistance to Peru until the violent repression of protests ends and steps are taken by the country’s authorities to investigate human rights crimes and prosecute those responsible.

We appreciate your Administration’s attention to the issue and calls for “immediate and impartial investigations,” but believe the U.S. government can and must do more. We believe our proposed actions would send a powerful signal in support of fundamental rights and help promote effective engagement for a political resolution. We look forward to working with you on ensuring the protection of democracy and human rights in Peru and in the rest of the hemisphere.

Sincerely,



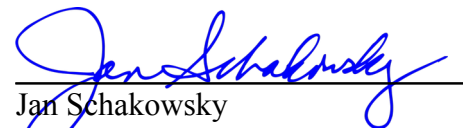
Susan Wild
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



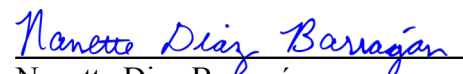
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



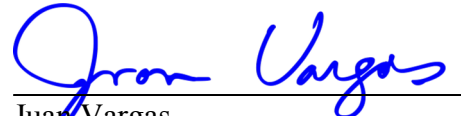
James P. McGovern
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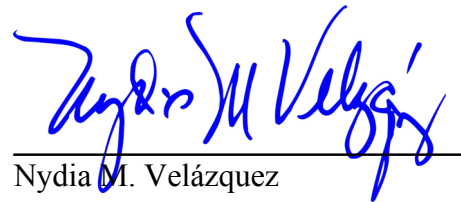
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
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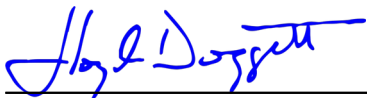
Adriano Espaillat
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Cori Bush
Member of Congress



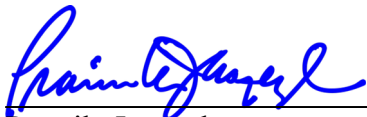
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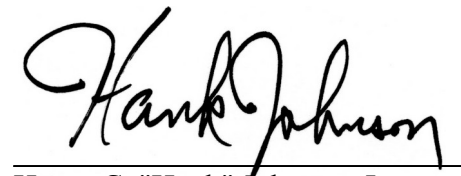
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



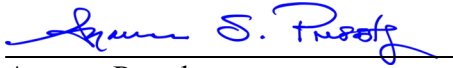
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