



## **CIDSE STATEMENT**

### **ALERT ABOUT APCI LAW RESTRICTING THE FREEDOM AND RIGHTS OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN PERU**

20 March 2025

CIDSE\*, the international alliance of Catholic organisations for social justice, is extremely concerned about the approval of legislative measures in Peru that jeopardise the support for the poorest and most vulnerable peoples and populations and undermine access to justice in cases of violations of human rights and collective rights.

The Peruvian Congress recently approved amendments to the Law of the Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation (APCI) with the aim of improving transparency and accountability. However, these measures increase government control and impose unjustified restrictions on civil society organisations, including church organisations, working in essential areas such as the promotion of human rights, social justice and sustainable development and the improvement of living conditions. They include requirements for prior approval of international cooperation projects, prohibition of legal advice and defence, the risk of censorship and arbitrary sanctions that could be used to silence critical voices, including the closure of institutions.

CIDSE warns of this serious setback that limits civic space and imposes undue control over civil society, weakening democracy and citizen participation, and increasing the risk of impunity in Peru. These measures could affect freedom of expression and association, the right to defend human rights and to oversee the actions of the State, and the collective rights to prior consultation and to decide the forms of development that the people choose. The law could severely limit the effective functioning of civil society organisations and their capacity to support the most vulnerable sectors of the country, further limiting access to legal advice and defense, development projects and humanitarian aid.

We share the concern expressed by various national and international organisations, including embassies of cooperating countries and United Nations human rights special rapporteurs, who have warned of the importance of these reforms not unjustifiably restricting the work of civil society and the right to operate in a favourable environment. Democracies are fairer and more prosperous when civil society is fully empowered to protect human rights and respond to citizens' needs.

CIDSE urges the Peruvian authorities to reconsider these measures and respect international commitments on human and collective rights, favouring a broader and more transparent review in dialogue with civil society actors. Likewise, we call on the international community to continue to show solidarity with and support the peoples and populations whose rights are at risk, and the work of organisations that fight for justice, the environment and human dignity in Peru.

We reaffirm our commitment to human rights, transparency and democracy in Peru. We stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable communities and organisations affected by these worrying decisions.

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\*[CIDSE](#) is an international family of 18 Catholic social justice organisations. We work with global partners and allies to promote justice, harnessing the power of global solidarity to achieve transformational change for people and the planet. For decades, we have been accompanying communities and organizations in Peru in their efforts to build a democratic society, with social justice and the exercise of human rights.