

18 January 2023

## **CIDSE ALERTS OVER THE VIOLENCE AND CALLS FOR DIALOGUE IN THE FACE OF CITIZEN DEMONSTRATIONS IN PERU OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUÉ**

**As CIDSE member organisations<sup>1</sup> we express our deep concern about the alarming increase in violence and the deterioration of the human rights situation and the rule of law in Peru, in the face of the serious crisis and social protests in the country following the removal of former president Pedro Castillo on 7 December 2022.**

The Peruvian government has declared a state of emergency and curfew in several regions in response to citizen protests. So far, 50 people have been killed since Dina Boluarte took office, several of them minors, most of them victims of firearms projectiles in clashes with the police. In addition, more than 600 people have been injured, including civilians and members of the National Police. Against this backdrop, the demonstrators have called for, among other demands, the dismissal of President Boluarte, the closure of Congress, new elections and the appointment of a transitional government.

CIDSE deeply regrets the unacceptable deaths in the context of citizen protest in the country, and we stand in solidarity with all the victims, their families, and those injured and criminalised.

We express our rejection of all acts of violence, human rights violations, and attacks on physical security and life. We condemn the excessive and disproportionate use of public force against demonstrators and journalists to control social protests, which has only exacerbated conflict and tension.

We support the call of the Ombudsman's Office, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the bishops in Peru, urging the authorities to conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the deaths, acts of violence and human rights violations that have occurred during the demonstrations in different regions. It is essential to ensure justice and to determine responsibilities for these serious events, including of those responsible for the misuse of force. We call for the urgent establishment of an independent Commission of Inquiry.

We demand the immediate cessation of human rights violations, respect for international human rights treaties and standards to which Peru is a party, and that measures be taken to ensure the respect and protection of life, integrity, and human rights, especially the freedoms of expression, press and peaceful protest. Given the continuity of the mobilisations in the country, we reaffirm that peaceful protest is a fundamental democratic right recognised by national and international standards that must be respected, without stigmatising and criminalising the population that mobilises. The demands of the population reflect a deep accumulated dissatisfaction with the institutions and politics in the country and must be heard.

We join our voice to Pope Francis' call for dialogue and an end to violence, and to all national and international initiatives aimed at guaranteeing life, security and the protection of human rights in Peru. We support the search for a way out of the crisis that puts the common good above all else and seeks peaceful and dialogue-based solutions where all sectors of society feel represented.

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<sup>1</sup> CIDSE is an international network of 18 Catholic social justice organisations from Europe and North America working in 120 countries. For decades, many of its members have been accompanying communities and organisations in Peru in their efforts to build a democratic society, with social justice and for the exercise of human rights.