

Peruvian President Pedro Castillo Ousted and Jailed in Political Coup

Legislative body revokes own constitutional laws in order to keep left-wing leader in indefinite detention

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Global Research, December 13, 2022

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Theme: [History](#)

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*In a highly controversial move in the South American state of Peru, **President Pedro Castillo** was impeached and later placed in a detention facility after he called for the dissolution of the legislature in order to stave off a political coup.*

Castillo was elected in a runoff election during 2021 to the astonishment of millions within Peru and around the world.

The actions of the parliament represented the third attempt to overthrow the government of Castillo who has been accused of corruption and violations of the constitutions. The ouster of Castillo has created even more divisions within the country and throughout Latin America.

With the coup against Castillo, Peru has witnessed the rise and fall of six presidents in five years. This phenomenon of political instability is clearly a by-product of underdevelopment and the role of imperialism.

Many remain supporters of the former president who was an educator and union leader for decades. After gaining the candidacy for president on the Peru Libre party ticket, he ascended to office promising reforms which would benefit the farmers and workers of the mineral-rich state where the majority of the people remain mired in poverty.

The election of President Castillo represented a leftward trend within politics throughout the region. United States involvement in South America, Central America and the Caribbean has served as a major impediment to the transformation of these societies from neo-colonialism to non-capitalist and socialist development.

United States imperialism has vehemently opposed any move towards the rejection of Washington and Wall Street's hegemony throughout the region. Since the early 1960s, the U.S. has maintained a blockade against the Republic of Cuba due to its socialist and anti-

imperialist domestic and foreign policy.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has been subjected to extreme measures involving attempted coups, efforts to isolate the socialist government internationally and the outright theft of national assets such as resources from the oil industry which rightfully belong to the government and people of Venezuela.

In Bolivia, democratically elected **President Evo Morales** was overthrown in a similar fashion as Peru when in November 2019, he was forced to resign amid pressures from the right-wing elements within the security forces and military. Morales was a staunch ally of former Venezuelan **President Hugo Chavez**, a revolutionary leader who defied U.S. imperialism while seeking to build Latin American and international solidarity.

Imperialists and Oligarchs to Benefit from the Coup

Image: Peru workers in support of Pedro Castillo after coup



In Peru rival political interests have held demonstrations against the former president amid the post-coup process. **Vice-President Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra**, who had served under the administration of Castillo, was immediately sworn in as his successor after the majority within the national assembly voted to remove the president from office. Castillo after leaving the presidential office was pulled over and arrested by the Peruvian security forces. Later an attempt to have him released under the laws of the constitution was rejected after legal machinations by the national assembly resulted in his continued incarceration.

[An article published by Telesur](#) on the situation in Peru reported on the parliamentary action aimed at denying Castillo a political trial, noting:

“In this way, right-wing lawmakers ensured that former President Castillo remains in jail since his seven-day detention will expire on Dec. 14. In an unusual plenary meeting held early Monday (Dec. 12) morning, the Peruvian Congress removed the ‘special immunity’ from former President Pedro Castillo, who has remained under arrest since he was ousted on Dec. 7. Approved with 67 votes in favor and 45 votes against, the parliamentary resolution prevents Castillo from being subjected to a political trial and directly opens the way for the Prosecutor’s Office to extend his detention on charges of rebellion.

In this way, the lawmakers ensured that the former Peruvian president remain in jail since his seven-day preventive detention will expire on Wednesday, Dec. 14.”

In light of the current political situation in Peru, ousted President Castillo has requested political asylum from the Mexican government of **President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador**. The Mexican administration has called for respect for the human rights of former leader Castillo.

In Honduras, the left-wing government of **President Iris Xiomara Castro Sarmiento** has strongly supported the former President Castillo. In a statement from the government, it emphasizes that:

“The Honduran foreign ministry energetically condemns the coup d’etat in Peru, which is the result of a series of events meant to erode democracy and the sovereign will of the people represented by President Pedro Castillo.” (See [this](#))

In 2009, the Honduran government of **President Emanuel Zalaya** was overthrown at the aegis of the administration of former U.S. President Barack Obama. Today, **President Joe Biden**, who served as Vice-President for Obama, maintains similar foreign policy imperatives as Obama and even his predecessor, President Donald Trump. Throughout successive U.S. administrations, whether Democratic or Republican, the economic and military interests of imperialism have not wavered. Since the ascendancy of Biden to the presidency, the U.S. has provoked a proxy war with the Russian Federation in Ukraine which has prompted widespread economic distress and threats of a nuclear war in Europe.

The newly installed President Boluarte during her first public appearance stood side-to-side with the Peruvian military. Just two days after the political coup against President Castillo, Boluarte wanted to send a signal to the right-wing of Peru and U.S. imperialism that the military was supporting her tenure in office. Although opposition politicians have called for early elections, Boluarte has insisted that she should remain in office to serve out the 3-and-one-half- years term of ousted President Castillo.

[According to a report by the Associated Press:](#)

“Peru’s first female president appeared in a military ceremony on national television on Friday (Dec. 9) in her first official event as head of state, an attempt to cement her hold on power and buck the national trend of early presidential departures. Boularte addressed members of the armed forces during a ceremony marking a historic battle. Boularte, flanked by the leaders of the judiciary and Congress, sat among lawmakers who had tried to remove Castillo from office. ‘Our nation is strong and secure thanks to the armed forces, the navy, the air force, and the army of Peru,’ Boularte said before hundreds of members of the armed forces in Peru’s capital. ‘They give us the guarantee that we live in order, respecting the constitution, the rule of law, the balance of powers.’”

Yet, the overall economic crisis impacting South America has not escaped the people of Peru. One of the important factors leading to instability in Peru is the rate of inflation which has worsened the social conditions of workers and farmers inside the country.

In the same article from the Associated Press, it also points out:

“In the streets, small demonstrations by Castillo supporters continued in the capital and other parts of Peru, including Tacabamba, the district capital closest to Castillo’s rural home. Protesters demanded that the ousted leader walk free, rejected Boluarte as

president and called for Congress to be closed. In Lima, protesters trying to reach the Congress building have clashed with police, who used sticks and tear gas to push them back, and more protests were planned for Friday. 'The only thing left is the people. We have no authorities, we have nothing,' said Juana Ponce, one of the protesters this week. 'It is a national shame. All these corrupt congressmen have sold out. They have betrayed our president, Pedro Castillo.'"

Peruvian Instability Requires Unity of Left Forces

The failure of the Peru Libre Party, which both Castillo and Boluarte ran on their national slate during 2021, to remain united has played an important role in the continuing instability of the country. Both Castillo and Boluarte were forced out of the left-wing party while the right-wing backed by the military and the oligarchy were able to seize the political initiative.

Since March of 2022, the local monied interests in conjunction with imperialism has not refrained from its destabilization efforts in Peru. At present the prospects for renewal of a progressive trajectory presupposes the formation of a united front among the Left along with elements in the working class and farmers.

[Internationalsocialist.net website](https://internationalsocialist.net) advanced its own analysis of the situation in Peru saying:

"It was clear then (March 2022) that the Peruvian oligarchy was regaining its initiative, after its electoral defeat, with the intention of using this crisis to overthrow the Castillo government, with a view to limiting possible reforms for the benefit of the Peruvian working masses, and above all, fearing that the masses would push for changes more profound than those proposed by Castillo's timid institutional agenda. Since the beginning of Castillo's government, the oligarchy has not concealed its coup efforts. On the contrary, even before Castillo was sworn in, the oligarchy and the Peruvian capitalists threatened to prevent him from taking power. Only the fear that the mobilizations of support would get out of hand persuaded the right wing to follow this path. But what, then, has changed?"

Despite the internal divisions among the people of Peru, the antiwar and anti-imperialists forces in the western capitalist states must oppose any external interference in the domestic affairs of the country. The people of Peru have their own inherent right to self-determination and those social forces fighting for national sovereignty and non-capitalist development must be defended by all internationalists throughout the world.

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