

# Washington Wants “Regime Change” in Ecuador: “What is the CIA Planning before Ecuador’s 2017 Elections?”

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*In relation to recent developments in Brazil and Venezuela, it should be understood that Washington seeks regime change in all Latin American countries which do not conform to US demands. This article by Timothy Guzman originally published in September 2015 focusses on Washington’s resolve to implement regime change in Ecuador.*

*“The United States does not lack institutions that continue to conspire, and that’s why I am using this gathering to announce that we have decided to expel USAID from Bolivia” Bolivian President Evo Morales*

Washington wants **Ecuador’s President Rafael Correa removed from power**. Washington says it is concerned about the freedom of the press in Ecuador because their non-government organization ‘Fundamedios’ funded and supported by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and Freedom House among others is in the process of being shut down by the Correa government. According to Telesur’s report on September 10th “Fundamedios engaged “partisan political activities” by sharing material on its social media accounts, publishing articles unrelated to its stated mission and inserting itself into political debates in the country” which according to the National Secretariat of Communication or ‘Secom’ is prohibited under Ecuadorian law. The White House released a press statement on the same day:



We are very concerned about the increasing restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of association in Ecuador, particularly the Ecuadorian government’s September 8 decision to initiate legal steps intended to dissolve Fundamedios, a non-governmental organization that monitors and defends press freedom.

An active civil society and tolerance of dissenting views are vital components of any democracy. We share international concern over the Ecuadorian government’s efforts to silence critical voices and deny its citizens access to a diversity of information and ideas. Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, the Committee to Protect Journalists, among others, have all spoken out in opposition to the government’s latest action against Fundamedios.

According to *TeleSur* ‘Fundamedios’ is funded by the NED and USAID:

The work of the organization mostly consists of issuing “alerts” regarding alleged attacks against journalists in Ecuador. The organization is funded in part through a US\$84,000 grant from the U.S.-funded National Endowment for Democracy. U.S. Ambassador to Ecuador Adam Namm told El Telegrafo that Fundamedios received US\$300,000 in 2012 from USAID, which receives its funds from the U.S. government

USAID and NED are in the business of “*Democracy Promotion*” which uses public money (from U.S. taxpayers) for secretive operations with the intention to support pro-U.S. governments with the help of political and social movements abroad. The goal is regime change.

### **Why Washington wants Correa Removed from Power**



Since 2009, the world has seen what the Obama administration has done to sovereign nations in the name of democracy. Libya, Honduras and the Ukraine are some of the recent examples of U.S. foreign policy that has only proved to be disastrous on many levels. Ecuador would be added to Obama’s list of countries ripe for regime change.

First, Correa is a staunch ally of Latin America’s leftist governments of Bolivia, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Argentina and Brazil who are critical of U.S. Foreign policy. What makes matters worse for Washington was the closure of the Manta Air Force Base in 2009, a promise made by Correa in a 2006 campaign.

Washington wants a new government in Ecuador to reopen the Manta Air Force Base for surveillance and the so-called “*War on Drugs*”. In 2008, the New York Times reported that President Correa fired high ranking military officials who were loyal subjects of Washington:

Mr. Correa — who this month dismissed his defense minister, army chief of intelligence and commanders of the army, air force and joint chiefs — said that Ecuador’s intelligence systems were “totally infiltrated and subjugated to the C.I.A.” He accused senior military officials of sharing intelligence with Colombia, the Bush administration’s top ally in Latin America

The New York Times admitted that Correa’s administration is a challenge for U.S. policy makers regarding the “*War on Drugs*” and its presence in Latin America:

The gambit also poses a clear challenge to the United States. For nearly a decade, the base here in Manta has been the most prominent American military outpost in South America and an important facet of the United States’ drug-fighting efforts. Some 100 antinarcotics flights leave here each month to survey the Pacific in an elaborate cat-and-mouse game with drug traffickers bound for the United States.

But many Ecuadoreans have chafed at the American presence and the perceived challenge to the country’s sovereignty, and Mr. Correa promised during his campaign in 2006 to close the outpost

Reuters’ also reported in 2007 what Correa had said about the possibility of renewing the lease to the U.S. military “*We’ll renew the base on one condition: that they let us put a base*

*in Miami — an Ecuadorean base,” Correa said in an interview during a trip to Italy. “If there’s no problem having foreign soldiers on a country’s soil, surely they’ll let us have an Ecuadorean base in the United States.”* Correa did make a good point.

Another reason Correa is on Washington’s “hit list” involves Wikileaks. Its founder Julian Assange was granted political asylum in an Ecuadorian embassy in London because he feared that if he ended up in U.S. custody over the secret files he released from Chelsea Manning to the world, could have him face an unfair trial in a U.S. courtroom. Ecuador granted Assange political asylum status where he still remains to this day. Neoconservative and former Presidential contender Sarah Palin said that Assange is an “*anti-American operative with blood on his hands...Why was he not pursued with the same urgency we pursue al Qaeda and Taliban leaders?*” Palin was saying that Julian Assange is in the same league as Al Qaeda so killing him is justified. Ecuador did take a stand to protect the life and liberty of Julian Assange, something Washington does not take lightly.

### **Ecuador’s Lawsuit against Big Oil**

Litigation and various lawsuits against Chevron-Texaco has been going on for more than two decades which oil drilling operations which occurred between 1972 and 1990 in the Amazon as *RT News* reported in 2013:

Ecuador’s foreign ministry announced on Friday that the US has seemingly denied visas to a delegation that was set to travel to the UN General Assembly in New York to present their case regarding an ongoing dispute against Chevron-Texaco. According to the ministry’s official announcement, the visas for the five Ecuadorian nationals were returned by the US Embassy in Quito “without any explanation.”

That group was to present testimony during a special event at the UN regarding the ecological impact caused by Chevron-Texaco’s oil operations in the Amazon rainforest region of Ecuador – which contaminated two million hectares, according to the country’s government. At stake is a US\$19 billion judgment awarded by an Ecuadorean court against Chevron for cleanup and ecological damage, which is currently being fought at The Hague.

### **Correa in Washington’s Crosshairs**

✘ From alliances with anti-Washington governments to the closure of the Manta Air Force Base, to protecting Julian Assange and a lawsuit against Chevron-Texaco for environmental damages to the Amazon, Correa is a target for regime change. Just remember back in history when the CIA orchestrated a coup against Ecuadorian President Carlos Julio Arosemena simply because he criticized the U.S. government and supported the Cuban revolution led by Fidel Castro. Correa has done a lot more to diminish U.S. power in Latin America than any other president in its current history.

Correa has accused the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) earlier this year of “*being increasingly involved in the political opposition with the avowed aim of dragging the country into chaos*” and weaken the Ecuadorian government by “*a series of coordinated nationwide protests.*” Something Correa should be familiar with, after all the CIA attempted a coup in 2010 under Obama’s watch. One of the key reasons of the attempted coup by the Ecuadorian police was the Public Service Organic Law signed in 2010. It was designed to place regulations on public service workers namely the police and military and create a

standard base of compensation instead of receiving their bonuses from foreign sources (the U.S. government) under Ecuadorian law. The main problem before the law was passed was that the police of Ecuador was receiving bonuses from the US embassy to spy on Ecuadorian politicians and others who were considered opponents of Washington.

Interestingly, Presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton was in Ecuador in June of that year to convince Correa to join the “*Dark Side*” but ultimately failed. U.S. Ambassador at the time was Heather Hodges who was assigned to disrupt and weaken the Correa government through USAID which contributed \$40 million. The Ecuadorian police, military officials, USAID, NED, the CIA and a former president and a puppet of Washington during the Bush years, Lucio Gutiérrez who was ousted by the Ecuadorian people who demanded his resignation were all behind the coup plot.

### **Obama has 16 Months Left in Office**

Will the Obama administration authorize another coup between now and 2016? It is Obama’s last 16 months in office since the first coup attempt. Correa knows he is on Washington’s “*hit list*” following his actions on Fundamedios who claim the freedom of speech is threatened as Washington threatens Julian Assange for exposing their crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq by killing of tens of thousands of civilians, which they tried to keep secret. Washington is consistent when it ignores the sovereignty of nations and bypasses international law on a regular basis.

Recently, the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (Conaie) and various trade unions called for a nationwide strike against the government, but many indigenous organizations opposed it. Telesur reported that WikiLeaks published diplomatic cables from the U.S. embassy in Ecuador from 2005 and 2006 that suggest members of CONAIE were interested in talking to U. S. Representatives within their own ranks including Vice President Santiago de la Cruz and Congressman Jorge Guaman who according to one cable “*expressed interest in open dialogue.*” Members of CONAIE also “*asked the U.S. government to intervene with the president to get Conaie representatives back in these government institutions.*” De La Cruz is described as “*very interested in the possibility of visiting the U.S. on an exchange program,*” and that he “*appeared eager to engage in dialogue*” with the U.S. Wikileaks also released documents on Auki Tituana, a member of Pachakutik who also seemed interested.

Although representatives in both organizations have shown an interest in meeting with U.S. officials, other members are not so keen on the idea including Luis Macas, head of CONAIE. This is a positive sign that members within these indigenous organizations do not want to meet with U.S. diplomats. Macas “*has advised his organization to avoid dialogue with the U.S. government.*” According to the cables “*There appears to be division within the ranks of Pachakutik and (Conaie) on the level of interaction they should have with the Embassy.*”

In 2007, Correa was an anti-neoliberal advocate was voted into power and has brought Ecuador political and economic stability. One other issue Washington is concerned about is what Correa said about the “*Dollarization*” of the Ecuadorian economy; he said it was a “*technical error*” after pro-US president Jamil Mahuad adopted the U.S. dollar in 2000. Correa did acknowledge that it is a difficult process to move out of the U.S. dollar at this time, however, he does support a regional South American currency that would allow Ecuador to move out of the dollar which is something U.S. officials’ do not like to hear especially when the dollar is about to lose its reserve currency status.

What is the CIA planning before Ecuador's elections in 2017?

It is important to note that if a presidential recall vote were to take place in Ecuador today at least 60% of the people would vote for Correa according to the main-stream media's 'CNN Spanish' poll this past June. Correa proposed constitutional reforms including two bills that would increase inheritance and capital gains taxes on the ultra-wealthy. Anti-government protests followed, which later turned violent. That is something Washington wants to see more of right before Ecuador's 2017 presidential elections.

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