



PERU SUPPORT GROUP STATEMENT
9th APRIL 2009

FUJIMORI GUILTY OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS & SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS IN JAIL

The Peru Support Group (PSG) would like to express its support of the Peruvian judiciary, specifically the Supreme Court's Special Criminal Court, for its unanimous ruling and sentencing of former Peruvian president, Alberto Fujimori, to 25 years in jail for crimes against humanity committed during his time in office (1990-2000). We would also like to congratulate the Judiciary for its fair and just handling of the trial, and in particular its attention to full respect for due process and the rights of all parties involved. The conclusion of this trial as part of the search for truth and justice is of the highest significance for all Peruvians but especially for the victims and the families of victims in these cases.

The former president was found responsible for the Barrios Altos (1991) and La Cantuta (1992) massacres. He was also found responsible for the kidnappings of a businessman and a journalist in 1992.

The guilty verdict and maximum applicable sentence against Fujimori symbolise a pivotal moment for Peru, Latin America and the international community as it is the first time that a democratically elected former president has been tried and found guilty in his own country for human rights violations. This sets a historic precedent for other countries where political leaders are accused of crimes against humanity.

The Judiciary was identified in the final report of Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as one of the State institutions that did not take firm enough action to protect the lives of Peruvians during the country's 20-year internal armed conflict. This trial has demonstrated the independence and impartiality of the Peruvian judiciary, a key pillar in upholding the Rule of Law and Democracy.

Should the verdict and sentence be appealed, the PSG strongly urges the Supreme Court that the exemplary model of this trial should be reflected in the appeal process and that should the ruling be overturned and/or the sentence reduced, it should be absolutely transparent that the appeals process has been conducted to the highest standards, otherwise we believe that this would represent a worrying step backwards, not only for the victims and their families, but for the overall process of reconciliation and pursuit of justice in Peru.

We urge that the Supreme Court also extends the exemplary model of this trial to the significant backlog of cases on human rights violations dating back to the period of internal armed conflict currently pending in the Public Prosecutor's Office. This was an issue identified during the UN Universal Periodic Review of Peru's human rights practices in May 2008.

Finally, the PSG extends its congratulations to Peru's human rights organisations which have worked, and continue to work, tirelessly to bring the perpetrators of human rights violations to justice.

The Peru Support Group (PSG) was established in 1983 to campaign in the UK for the rights of Peruvian people, particularly the most vulnerable, and to support them in becoming more effective participants in the development of their country. It has campaigned on human rights issues.

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