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ECUADOR FAMILIES AND DETAINEES AT RISK FOLLOWING MASSACRE

A massacre broke out on July 22, in del Litoral, Ecuador's largest prison, in the city of Guayaquil. The first reports pointed to several deaths, as well as hunger strikes. 137 prison guards are reported to have been taken hostage simultaneously in several prisons around the country. The president declared a state of emergency in all prisons on July 24. On July 25, 2,700 security police and military agents entered del Litoral prison.

As of July 27, the total number of deaths confirmed from the massacre was 31, with 14 wounded. Family members are at risk as they are waiting outside the prison in precarious conditions and lack information on detainees. Days after the massacre, forensic services have not yet identified all the bodies of the deceased. Thousands of people detained inside the prison lack sufficient access to health services.

Write to the Director General of the National Service for Integral Attention of People Deprived of Liberty (SNAI) urging him to:

- Ensure the health, physical safety, and integrity of all detainees in del Litoral prison, as well as all those detained in prisons throughout the country;
- Make sure proper coordination with investigative and forensic services to ensure the prompt investigation of the events;
- Guarantee that family members are treated with respect and precise information regarding the remains of their deceased relatives.

Write to:

Guillermo Rodríguez
Director General
National Service for Integral Attention of People Deprived of Liberty (SNAI)
Av. Orellana E3-62 y 9 de Octubre.
Quito - Ecuador
Telephone/Fax: 593-2-3932-520
Email: guillermo.rodriguez@atencionintegral.gob.ec
Salutation: Dear Director General Rodríguez,

And copy:

His Excellency Carlos Alberto Patricio JATIVA NARANJO
Ambassador
Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador
99 Bank Street, Suite 230
Ottawa, ON K1P 6B9
Tel: (613) 563-8206
Email: eecucanada@cancilleria.gob.ec

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to the Permanent Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDH), an estimated 600 people have died in prisons in Ecuador from 2019 to the present. Ecuador has been living through a sustained crisis in its penitentiary system and there have been no major structural measures taken to resolve the situation.

On July 24, President Guillermo Lasso emitted Executive Decree, 823 which declared a state of emergency in all of Ecuador's prisons, allowing for armed forces and police to enter prisons. This is not the first-time armed forces and police have entered prisons in response to massacres.

According to local human rights groups on the ground, investigative authorities are failing to properly carry out their duties, with forensic services delaying in properly identify bodies and remains of those deceased and families receiving distressing and confusing information on the fate of their loved ones.

In addition, according to information received by Amnesty International, health services inside Ecuador's prisons have been practically non-functional since at least 2022. The Ministry of Health no longer provides doctors stationed inside del Litoral prison, which houses over 5,000 prisoners. Those wounded during the massacre of July 22, were transported, after significant delays, to external health posts with the help of emergency services.

In 2022, the UN Sub-Committee for the Prevention of Torture (SPT) carried out a country visit to Ecuador and will shortly provide the Ecuadorian government with their final report. The government has the option to publish the results of the report.