In run-up to elections, Peru’s rightist regime faces crisis of rule

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Just three months after replacing Peru’s ex-president Dina Boluarte and with barely three months to go until national elections, the rightist regime of President José Jerí is confronting an escalating crisis of bourgeois rule.

While coming to office vowing an “iron-fist” (*mano dura*) crackdown on organized crime, murders, extortion and other crimes have not only persisted but increased alarmingly. This phenomenon is politically critical, as social outrage over the relentless advance of extortion mafias was the main catalyst for Boluarte's impeachment by Congress and made her one of the most hated heads of state in the country’s history.

The security crisis has further emphasized the failed nature of the state throughout the country. The ruling class, aware of its total disrepute, decided to abandon Boluarte—who had served them obediently—for Jerí.

The newspaper *La República* reports that “The number of homicides increases from year to year and has doubled since 2020, nearing six crimes per day”—equivalent to 2,190 in the last year. It adds: “In the 80 days of José Jerí's regime, there have been 444 victims, with a daily average higher than that recorded under Dina Boluarte.”

Even more significantly, 2025 also saw an increase in class struggle in Peru. Transportation, healthcare and mining workers, along with 'Generation Z,' and many other sectors staged strikes and protests. Without a doubt, this heightened fears within ruling circles that Boluarte was incapable of quelling the unrest and had become a liability for Peruvian capitalism.

Jerí's rise has also signaled a realignment with Washington's campaign to recolonize the region. Jerí's first international act was to invite a delegation of high-ranking officials from the Trump administration to Peru. Among the six officials was José A. Pérez, director of Operations at the FBI, who was accompanied by other FBI officials, representatives from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and police representatives from various US states. During their stay in Peru, they met with personnel from the Ministry of the Interior, Defense, and the National Police.

Under the guise of fighting urban insecurity and drug trafficking, Jerí proposed to the US delegation to develop a new National Citizen Security Plan which will be presented this month, tacitly recognizing for the first time that his original plan has failed miserably.

Additionally, on December 18, the Peruvian Congress overwhelmingly approved the entry of armed U.S. military personnel starting January 1 until the end of 2026. According to the news outlet RPP, “Peru has previously approved the entry of foreign military personnel for exercises and cooperation, but the relevance of this approval is that it *includes the presence of armed US military throughout the year 2026* with scheduled rotations, which has generated attention in the media and public opinion.” [Emphasis added]

They will visit various departments where there are conflicts between miners and transnational corporations, as well as indigenous complaints about contamination of air and farmland. On the coast: Lima and El Callao, and Pucusana (in Lima). In the Amazon Basin: Ucayali, Loreto, and San Martín. In the central Andes: Huánuco, Pasco, and Junín. And in the southern Andes: Cusco, Ayacucho, and Apurímac.

The purpose of visiting so many different geographical locations is obviously to familiarize the US military with the terrain. The reasons are twofold: first, to prepare to confront China, which will not yield without a fight given the US$33 billion invested in Peru; and second, to support the Peruvian police and military in repressing any popular uprising, given the precarious political situation.

Washington’s criminal invasion of Venezuela and the abduction of its president, Nicolás Maduro and his wife is directed not only at that oil-rich country, but at the entire hemisphere and at reversing the rise of China in the

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region.

Jer issued a groveling statement hailing Washington's criminal regime change operation as "a new era of democracy and freedom," while appealing to xenophobic prejudice against Venezuelan migrants by asserting that they could now be freely repatriated.

Nonetheless, China has invested US$1.3billion in the first phase of construction of the Peruvian mega maritime port of Chancay, with a total investment expected to top US$3.6 billion.

The Peruvian government's expectations are that Chancay, which is a deep-water port, will serve as the gateway for trade between China and Peru, Bolivia, and São Paulo (Brazil), the largest industrial city in South America.

To counteract increasing Chinese influence not just in Peru but throughout South America, Peruvian Foreign Minister Hugo De Zela reported that the US Army Corps of Engineers is working on expanding the port of Callao, the country's main port, which, he stated, will require "a significant investment from the United States," estimated at about US$3 billion.

Investing in Callao will put China and the US in direct competition, which could have catastrophic consequences.

The Trump administration has significant reason to be concerned. Washington's plans for war with China would be hampered if its Asian rival maintains even partial dominance over South America. It is expected that within a decade, China will have vastly surpassed the US in direct investment and foreign trade in every country on the continent.

This is why Washington has proposed designating Peru as a "major non-NATO ally," which is a category of military and defense strategic cooperation without the country being a formal member of the treaty organization.

The Trump administration's proposal would integrate the Peruvian military through training, supply of military equipment and joint exercises with the US armed forces. The aim is for US and Peruvian soldiers to learn to fight together against a common enemy: China.

Implementing this program would mean a declaration of war against the Peruvian working class, which does not wish to be enslaved or turned into cannon fodder for the insane wartime plans of the White House. This is why the pseudo-left in Peru promotes the false solution of constitutional change as a trap to keep the working class engaged in struggles within the capitalist framework.

The *Fujimorista* Constitution of 1993 benefited the entry of transnationals with their capital-intensive operations and helped pave the way for increasing inequality, lack of formal jobs, abandonment of the youth, destruction of labor rights, and, ultimately, the fragmentation of the working class.

Calling for a Constituent Assembly with a Congress dominated by the same political forces that are based on and benefit from the 1993 Constitution will bring no change whatsoever.

As of today, there are around 30 parties running for the first round of presidential elections in April 2026.

The most predictable outcome is that two of the parties rooted in the *Fujimorista* Constitution that have been governing from Congress—including *Fuerza Popular*, *Alianza Para el Progreso*, and *Renovación Popular* will advance to a second round.

The only way forward lies through the political independence of the working class in alliance with the workers of South America and the entire planet. The elemental striving of Peruvian workers to break free from the grip of the capitalist state and big business interests found expression in the call for the building of "neighborhood base committees" raised during the last major protests. This demand was in opposition to the leaders of transportation unions that mainly represent transport line owners and are using the masses to push the government into repressive measures; that is, more police, more soldiers on the streets, and increased funding for intelligence.

Any such initiative can provide a progressive alternative only to the extent that it is armed with a socialist and internationalist program. The International Committee of the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist movement, is alone in advancing such a program in the fight to build sections throughout the Americas and internationally. We urge workers wishing to get involved in these struggles to read about the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees.

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