

Keiko Fujimori's inaugural speech: A class war agenda for Peru's oligarchy and US imperialism

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As she was sworn in Tuesday as president of Peru for the 2026-2031 term in a session of the newly established bicameral Congress, Keiko Sofía Fujimori Higuchi delivered a first message to the nation that laid out seven government objectives. The ceremony was attended by King Phillip VI of Spain, US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau and several heads of state from the region. Before she began to speak, opposition legislators held up photographs of those killed in the protests of 2022-2023 and walked out of the chamber.

Fujimori's speech must be examined not merely as a government program in the naive sense attributed to it by bourgeois commentators, but as what it really is: the political presentation of a class war agenda. Each of the seven "objectives" she announced—whatever their technocratic and conciliatory trappings—expresses the interests not simply of Fujimorism, but fundamentally of the Peruvian financial oligarchy and US imperialism, at a moment of acute crisis of bourgeois rule and of extreme social polarization.

Fujimori takes power as the 10th person to occupy the presidency of Peru in a decade, a fact that by itself reveals the uninterrupted disintegration of the Peruvian bourgeois regime. She arrives in office fundamentally through the determination of the ruling class and of Washington to block any hint of social reform that could feed the class struggle now erupting.

The "national emergency" and the concentration of power

Fujimori opened her speech by declaring that she plans to declare two "fronts of national emergency"—the El Niño phenomenon and citizen security—"during which the Armed Forces will temporarily take the leadership over security and domestic control."

She will employ "extraordinary resources," emergency decrees and extraordinary powers delegated by Congress, she added. This is the political core of the speech.

The call to break with "the logic of belated reaction" and move into "the era of timely prevention" is no technical declaration. It is the political justification for concentrating executive power outside parliamentary control.

In 1992, her father Alberto Fujimori, with military backing, dissolved Congress, stripped the judiciary of any semblance of independence, suspended the Constitution and imposed martial law, all of it justified in the name of confronting an "emergency." Keiko Fujimori learned to govern from her father, serving as first lady during the dictatorship after replacing her mother, Susana Higuchi, who had been abducted and

tortured inside the Government Palace for denouncing corruption. This inspires no confidence in her invocations of the "rule of law."

The "citizen security" measures—the death penalty, El Salvador-style maximum-security prisons, coordination between police and military intelligence—leave untouched the laws protecting the mafias with political connections in Congress and the judiciary. Their practical function is the intensification of repression against the working class, something minimized or passed over in silence by her pseudo-left and liberal opponents.

In the weeks before the election, the Fujimorist Congress transferred crimes committed by police and military personnel to military tribunals, placing killers in uniform beyond the reach of civilian justice. This is the "security" Fujimori offers: impunity for the repressive apparatus of the state.

The farce of "youth employment" and the wage increase

Fujimori announced the "Youth with a Future" program, aiming to halve youth unemployment from its 10 percent rate, and an increase in the minimum wage from 1,130 soles to 1,300 (US\$383.75) a month.

Informal employment covers more than 72 percent of the Peruvian workforce—the highest rate in Latin America—with average incomes in small enterprises of 858 soles a month against a basic family basket of 1,848 soles. The new minimum wage falls far below what a family needs to survive, and the "compensatory bonus" for micro and small enterprises is a direct subsidy to capital: the state pays employers to partially comply with the law.

"We want better wages, but also sustainable businesses and more formal jobs," Fujimori said. Translated from the bourgeois idiom: we want workers to accept crumbs while capital maintains its rate of profit.

Programs such as "Productive Youth" and "Youth Seed Capital" are the classic neoliberal policies of "entrepreneurialism," which transfer responsibility for structural unemployment onto the individual worker. They create no genuine employment, only a layer of precarious workers who exploit themselves under the illusion of being "entrepreneurs."

Infrastructure and inter-imperialist rivalry

The ambitious infrastructure plan—metro lines, commuter rail, highways,

ports—must be analyzed in light of Peru’s place in the rivalry between the United States and China. The Chancay mega-port, built by the Chinese state enterprise COSCO with an investment of US\$3.5 billion, has turned Peru into a battlefield in the strategic competition between US imperialism and China.

China accounts for 36 percent of Peruvian foreign trade against 14 percent for the United States, and Chinese direct investment exceeds US\$30 billion against US\$6.7 billion. Washington, under the would-be Hitler Donald Trump, has responded by allocating US\$1.5 billion to upgrade Peru’s principal naval base 73 kilometers south of Chancay, while the State Department has branded the port an instrument of Chinese “predatory ownership.”

Fujimori’s transport plan is not a project of “national development” an attempt to satisfy the needs of Peruvian working people. Rather, it is the creation of material conditions for a greater penetration of foreign capital and opportunities for corruption.

This is confirmed by her announced package for deregulation to free “the citizen, the entrepreneur and the investor from bureaucratic burdens.” In practice it means eliminating the labor, environmental and social protections that survive as conquests of the working class’s historic struggles. To “free the investor” is to free capital from any limits on its exploitation of labor.

The creation of a “National Digital Authority” with “the backing of artificial intelligence” and a “digital identity for every citizen” is no innocent administrative modernization, but the construction of a centralized apparatus of surveillance and social control. In the hands of a government with the record of Fujimorism—the Colina Group death squad, the Barrios Altos and La Cantuta massacres, the 69,000 dead in the internal conflict—“digital identity” acquires a sinister meaning.

Crumbs to contain a social explosion

The doubling of Pensión 65—from 350 soles to 700 soles (US\$206.63) every two months—was presented as a great advance toward a “universal pension.” The arithmetic: 700 soles a month, roughly US\$3.45 a day, exposes the “generosity” of the Peruvian bourgeois state toward the elderly in extreme poverty, in a country where 17 families have accumulated US\$35 billion.

These are not conquests of the working class but calculated escape valves to contain social pressure. The Peruvian bourgeoisie knows—as the popular uprising from December 2022 to March 2023 demonstrated, with at least 70 protesters killed—that the extreme misery of millions is inflammable material threatening the stability of big corporate business. The “mobile enrollment brigades” announced for rural areas are no expression of humanitarian concern, but mechanisms of political containment and electoral clientelism. Alberto Fujimori did it; Keiko seeks to repeat the experience.

Subordination to imperialism and the myth of “one Peru”

The emphasis on the Pacific Alliance, the Andean Community and APEC, and the reference to Spain as promoter of “the friendship and common interests of Ibero-America,” defines a foreign policy of subordination to US imperialism and its European allies. Turning Peru into “the bridge” between the Asia-Pacific and Latin America is no sovereign development strategy; it is the offer of the national territory as a

logistical platform for imperialism. The working class gains nothing from being the “bridge” for transnational capital.

Her professed “absolute respect for the independence of the branches of government and for individual liberties, in particular freedom of expression and of the press,” pronounced by the daughter of a dictator sentenced to 25 years for crimes against humanity, is an insult to Peruvians’ intelligence. The “independence” she invokes is that of a judiciary that protects the members of Congress under investigation—between 70 and 85 percent face criminal proceedings—and guarantees impunity to the mafias embedded in the state apparatus.

What the speech conceals

The close of the speech—“There are not two different Perus; there is only one Peru,” “without ideological distinctions, because hunger, disease and crime have no political color”—is the same bourgeois discourse advanced by every previous government: the call for class collaboration, for the exploited to accept their exploitation in the name of supposed “national unity.”

But there are indeed two Perus. Not the two imagined by bourgeois mythology—the “deep” Peru against the “modern” one—but the Peru of the working majority against that of the bourgeois class. On one side, the 17 family clans that have accumulated US\$35 billion, on the other, the nearly 9 million living in poverty and the more than two million in extreme poverty. There is the Peru of the congressmen who amend laws to guarantee themselves impunity, and the Peru of the 64 drivers murdered in the first five months of the year by extortion mafias operating under state protection.

“Hunger has no political color,” says Fujimori. But hunger does have a cause: the capitalist system and the regime of property that her government exists to defend.

The socialist alternative

Fujimori’s speech confirms what Marxism teaches: the bourgeois state, however much it clothes itself in technocratic language and conciliatory gestures, is an instrument of class domination. The “seven objectives” are a plan to administer misery, facilitate exploitation and repress the resistance of the workers and the poorest, all of it under the cover of a “rule of law” that is today a farce.

The pseudo-left, the union bureaucracies of the CGTP, the remnants of Castillismo, and the nominal left have demonstrated again and again their incapacity to offer workers a genuine alternative. The function of all these tendencies is to channel the opposition of the working class into electoral dead ends and to sabotage its independent mobilization for authentic change.

The only alternative to Fujimorism and the bourgeois regime it represents is the construction of a revolutionary party of the working class, based on the program of the International Committee of the Fourth International: the fight for the Socialist United States of Latin America, the expropriation of finance capital and the transnationals, the abolition of the bourgeois state apparatus and its replacement by organs of workers’ power.



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