Mr. Martín Vizcarra  
Constitutional President of Peru  

Mr. Ismael Rubén Vargas  
Executive Director/ DEVIDA  

Dear Sirs:  

We represent regional and international organizations that promote drug policy reform from human rights and development-oriented perspectives. We write to express our concern about recent events in your nation.  

We have received reports about the April 12, 2019 incident in El Carmen, San Gaban District in Puno, Peru in which two farmers were killed, seven more were injured, and a yet to be determined number of farmers was arrested. The incidents occurred during a confrontation between coca farmers and DIRANDRO, the antidrug police accompanying the CORAH Project during the initiation of the 2019 eradication efforts.  

According to local organizations, the conflict arose when the forces began to set up a camp to carry out forced crop eradication in this Peruvian region. We understand that the farmers continue to blockade the Interoceanic Highway and local roads.  

In view of the information provided, we respectfully request the following:  

1. We echo the coca grower organizations and Peruvian human rights organizations’ request for transparent investigation of the incident, and prompt sanctions for those responsible. Witnesses affirm that law enforcement authorities fired “indiscriminately” against coca growers.  

2. We support the Asociación de Agricultores y Productores de la Hoja de Coca de Alto Huallaga Valle, Monzon y Padre Abad, and their counterparts in the VRAEM’s request for a new coca grower registry in the region, the implementation of a community coca control system, greater investment in the agricultural sector, and the decriminalization of the coca leaf.  

3. For three decades, forced eradication has failed to reduce coca crops, and has had extreme human, economic, and environmental costs. In Peru, like Bolivia and Colombia, the use of force in coca crop eradication has eroded respect for human rights, hindered institutional legitimacy with coca growing communities, increased the population’s distrust of law enforcement authorities and forcibly displaced families, among other negative impacts.
4. We regret that external pressures in the region complicate opportunities for dialogue and the pursuit of innovative agreements between communities and their governments. Diplomatic relations should be based on respect for self-determination, the principle of shared responsibility and should always avoid the narcotization of bilateral agendas.

Our organizations condemn the use of force especially when used disproportionally, and we believe that face-to-face dialogue is the most viable strategy. We have recently learned your government is contemplating reviewing and reevaluating of the alternative development model applied in Peru, and considering new options, which would allow for gradual and progressive crop reduction and development.

Therefore, we urge you and the coca grower organizations to engage in open dialogue on these issues and avoid future conflicts that could have devastating consequences for the most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

Ann Fordham
Executive Director
International Drug Policy Consortium, IDPC
London UK

Pien Metaal
Transnational Institute, TNI
Amsterdam Netherlands

Coletta Youngers
Asesora Principal
Oficina en Washington sobre Asuntos Latinoamericanos, WOLA
Washington D.C.

Marie Nougier
Head of Research and Communications
International Drug Policy Consortium, IDPC
London UK

Zara Snapp

---

1 The International Drug Policy Consortium is a global network of over 170 NGOs that promotes objective and open debate on drug policy at national, regional and international level. Ann Fordham and Marie Nougier have signed this letter on behalf of IDPC.
In Solidarity With Peruvian Coca Growers

Instituto RIA
México City
Kathryn Ledebur
Andean Information Network
Cochabamba Bolivia

Catalina Pérez Correa
Professor, Researcher
CIDE
Aguascalientes México

Gloria Rose Achá
Acción Andina – Bolivia y Programa Libertas
La Paz Bolivia

Luciana Boiteux,
Universidad Federal do Rio
Rio de Janeiro
Brasil

Romer Cari Laura
Coca grower and lawyer
Plataforma Coca Orgánica, Libre e Informada, COLI
La Paz Bolivia

Pedro Arenas.
Observatorio de Cultivos y Cultivadores Declarados Ilícitos.
OCCDI GLOBAL
Bogotá Colombia

Milton Romani Gerner
Professor
Ex Secretario General Junta Nacional de Drogas de Presidencia
Montevideo Uruguay

Linda Farthing
Journalist
U.S. - U.K.

Ec. Hugo Cabieses Cubas.
DNI 105 85 951
Instituto para el Desarrollo y La Paz Amazónica IDPA
San Martín Peru

Jorge Vicente Paladines
Professor at Universidad Central
In Solidarity With Peruvian Coca Growers

Quito Ecuador

Ernesto Cortes,
ACEID
San José de Costa Rica.

Ricardo Soberón Garrido,
DNI 06625316
Centro de Investigación Drogas y Derechos Humanos, CIDDH
Lima Peru

Cecilia Israel
Investigadora
Lima Peru

Aura Maria Puyana
Sociologist
Nariño Colombia

Andrés Antillano
Instituto de Ciencias Penales. Universidad Central de Venezuela.
Caracas

Antolin Huscar
DNI 23938412
Confederación Nacional Agraria
Lima Peru

Luis Alberto Hallazi
DNI 40753060
Lawyer and Political Scientist
Lima Peru

Dr. Thomas Grisaffi
Lecturer in Geography
University of Reading
Reading U.K.

Estefania Ciro
AlaOrilladelRio
México-Colombia

Patricia Chulver
Acción Semilla
Bolivia
In Solidarity With Peruvian Coca Growers

Gabriela Reyes
Programa Alternativas Contra la Violencia
Bolivia

Paul Gootenberg
Chair of History
SUNY Distinguished Professor of History & Sociology
Stony Brook University
New York

Adam Isacson
Director for Defense Oversight
WOLA Washington DC

Sanho Tree
Director, Drug Policy Project
Institute for Policy Studies
Washington DC

Lesley Gill
Department of Anthropology
Vanderbilt University
Nashville U.S.

Eric E. Sterling
Executive Director
Criminal Justice Policy Foundation
Maryland

Diego Piñol Arriagada,
Centro de Estudios en Seguridad Ciudadana
Chile

Alberto Adrianzen Merino
DNI 07238397 Internacionalista
Lima Peru

Note: For comments or additional information feel free to contact Mr. Pedro Arenas at pedroarenas@occdiglobal.org