

Against the attempted coup in Ecuador

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CADTM denounces the attempted coup in Ecuador and supports popular mobilization to defend democratic and social progress.

On Thursday 30 September an attempted coup took place in Ecuador. Rebel units of the national police abducted president Rafael Correa after he urged policemen to accept the law on public services which had been adopted at its first reading by the national assembly on 29 September 2010. The aim of this law is to end certain financial benefits enjoyed by police and armed forces.

A sector of the armed forces, including air force personnel, together with police, took control of the country's main airports. Former president Lucio Guttierrez, who stood down in 2005 in the wake of public protests, and speaking from Brasilia, declared his support for the coup and an end to Rafael Correa's mandate.

Along with many other bodies and associations CADTM insists that President Rafael Correa is a democratic president. He was elected to office twice (in 2006 and 2010) in democratic presidential elections. Since the beginning of his mandate, his government has implemented a series of positive measures: a democratic process of political reform which led to a new constitution for the country in 2008; a newly affirmed declaration of independence resulting in an end to the US army's occupation of the Manta base; an audit of the public debt (in which CADTM actively collaborated) which led to suspension of repayments, which in turn enabled the volume of debt to be significantly reduced; an increase in social spending; the promotion of Latin-American integration; an environmental initiative to end oil drilling in the Amazonian rain forest on the Yasuni reservation; the creation of public service television and radio in a country where the mass media was until then entirely controlled by big private corporations, and more specifically by the country's private banks. These advances have been enabled through strong popular mobilization over the last 15 years. Though these advances may be modest and certainly insufficient in scope, the various democratic changes brought about since Rafael Correa's election at the end of 2006 have engendered fierce opposition from the conservative sectors who are accustomed to use government as a medium for defending their interests.

As the attempted coup d'état progressed, citizens and organizations massed in Ecuador to demand the release of Rafael Correa, who was being held in a police hospital in Quito.

While CADTM has never failed to take a critical stand on Rafael Correa's government when it considered its actions contrary to the ongoing process of emancipation, it firmly denounces the attempted coup of 30 September. Constitutional order must be respected, democracy must be reaffirmed, and Rafael Correa must enjoy full freedom to pursue his mandate. CADTM calls for international support of the popular movement to defend democracy. The democratic process currently underway in Ecuador must be achieved through thorough-going economic and social reforms.

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