



Today, June 14, 2022, at dawn (approximately 00:30), unidentified agents, presumably from Ecuador's Armed Forces and the National Police, unlawfully and arbitrarily detained Mr. Segundo Leónidas Iza Salazar with identity document number 050244048-0 of Kichwa panzaleo nationality, and current president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) while at E35 street, in the Lasso sector near to Pastocalle, city of Latacunga, province of Cotopaxi.

The alleged members of the Armed Forces and the National Police broke into Mr. Segundo Leónidas Iza Salazar's personal vehicle and tried to prevent members of the press from recording the detention. They also attacked Mr. Iza's companions who tried to prevent his unlawful detention. In addition, they took the key of the vehicle in which Mr. Iza's companions were traveling, leaving them abandoned without the possibility of transportation and in the middle of the road at dawn, seriously endangering their physical safety.

The arrest, as can be seen in videos recorded by citizens and disseminated through social networks, was carried out through the illegitimate use of force, without informing the reasons for the arrest. Mr. Iza was put into a white Chevrolet double cab truck with plates PTR-3246. The vehicle does not display any official signs of the alleged police or military agents, which highlights the illegal and arbitrary nature of the detention.

It is noteworthy that after the illegal, illegitimate and arbitrary detention of Leonidas Iza, President Guillermo Lasso published the following through his official twitter account at 1:18 am:

In the attached video it says:

“Yesterday there were acts of vandalism that are prohibited by the Constitution and the laws. Behind these crimes there are intellectual and material authors who must answer to the Ecuadorian people. The burning of patrol cars, the invasion of agricultural producers, the breaking of the windshields of private and school vehicles, the attack on an oil pumping facility, closure and serious damage to state roads. Respecting the law is a fundamental principle of coexistence in a democracy. That is why the arrest of the masterminds and perpetrators of these violent acts has begun. Now, it's up to the Prosecutor's Office and the Judiciary to act [...]”

President Lasso's statement shows that this arrest was made by a direct, Executive order and carried out by military and police agents, without an arrest warrant issued by a competent judge or within an investigation ordered by the Prosecutor's Office.

Segundo Leónidas Iza Salazar, despite the fact that he was presumably apprehended by agents of the National Police and the Armed Forces, has not been transferred to the area established by law for these cases— the Flagrancy Unit. Mr. Iza remains incommunicado and his whereabouts are unknown.



It is URGENT that the Ecuadorian State, especially the Police and the Prosecutor's Office, report on the whereabouts and integrity of Mr. Iza and grant him his immediate freedom since the facts for which he was deprived of liberty were not made public at the time of his detention, and guarantee the rights of Ecuadorian citizens to protest and social mobilization. Leonidas Iza is a recognized social and indigenous leader, with extensive experience in social organization processes and since assuming the presidency of CONAIE in 2021, he has shown a firm position demanding that the Ecuadorian State comply with its constitutional and conventional obligations with the Peoples and Nationalities threatened by the imposition of a neoliberal and extractivist economic model promoted by the government of Guillermo Lasso.

All of the above has occurred within the framework of the national strike that CONAIE has been holding since Monday, June 13. The strike, called in advance by the indigenous movement and supported by other movements and social groups, is a legitimate measure of protest against the government for the increase in the cost of living, price speculation of the basic basket, job insecurity and unemployment, the decrease in the budget and guarantees of access to health and education rights, the increase in insecurity and violence in various areas of the country, the imposition of extractive activities (mining and oil) in violation of collective rights, among other points. The strike call has been supported by other organizations and movements such as the Popular Front (FP - Frente Popular), the National Union of Educators (UNE - Unión Nacional de Educadores), the Federation of University Students of Ecuador (FEUE - Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios del Ecuador); and, feminist and LGBTIQ movements, among others.

Despite the fact that calling and carrying out a strike is not a crime but a legal and legitimate exercise of social protest and resistance recognized as rights, high government authorities have dedicated themselves to stigmatizing it.

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