

# *Ecuadorian congress approves UNASUR withdrawal*

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Quito, September 18 (RHC)-- The National Assembly of Ecuador has approved a report denouncing the Union of South American Nations' treaty, formalizing the process to definitively leave the regional body known as UNASUR.

The report that had been prepared by the Sovereignty, Integration and International Relations Commission and awaited the ratification of the plenary session.

With 79 votes in favor, 36 against, 4 abstentions and no null votes, the national legislators approved the report that had been prepared by the Sovereignty, Integration and International Relations Commission and awaited the ratification of the plenary session of congress.

"With Ecuador's departure from UNASUR, the country loses its chance to turn into a global player," Citizen's Revolution lawmaker and former president of the National Assembly Gabriela Rivadeneira said, reminding that this also affects the body's goal, which was regional peace.

On March 11, the government of right-wing Lenin Moreno became the second to formalize its abandonment of the treaty, joining Colombian President Ivan Duque, who on Aug. 27, 2018, made a similar decision. Other conservative and far-right governments such as Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, and Peru denounced the treaty soon after.

However, Ecuador's withdrawal which was filed in May wasn't immediate. According to article 24 of the Constitutional Treaty of UNASUR, the pullout had to take effect after six months from the date the notification was received by the body. While the Ecuadorean Constitution of 2008 states that leaving international treaties are required to pass through the country's National Assembly.

With the official withdrawal, its headquarters, which are located in Quito, on property donated by the Rafael Correa administration will return to state hands, leaving the body without any building. In July 2018, Lenin Moreno announced his plans for the building, where he hopes to create what he calls an "intercultural" university.

UNASUR has promoted regional integration since its creation in Brasilia on May 23, 2008, under the leadership of the Bolivarian revolutionary, Hugo Chavez.

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