

*Peru's former President Pedro
Castillo grants interview from
prison*



"I am the first teacher and farmer to hold the presidency. I was democratically elected, but the Peruvian right never accepted my victory" Former President Pedro Castillo, Peru. | Photo: Twitter/ @HBenitez_

Lima, February 8 (RHC)-- Peru's El Salto newspaper has published an interview with former President Pedro Castillo, who has remained in the Barbadillo maximum security prison since Congress removed him from the presidency on December 7th last year.

"I have feared for my life since the second round of the 2021 elections, when the death threats against me and my family began," Castillo said, stressing that there are no guarantees of legal, political, or civil security in Peru.

He recalled that far-right politicians and citizens beat him with metal pieces and bolts in the city of Tacna. He also remembers that Lima Mayor and entrepreneur Rafael Lopez once exclaimed at a rally: "Death to Castillo."

"At other times, my family and I are mocked for our dress, accent and background. These attacks are manifestations of hatred and racism," he stressed, recalling that the Peruvian right even accused him of being a terrorist.

"The harassment was constant and disturbing. Therefore, I had no option than putting my wife and children safe," Castillo said and regretted that the Barbadillo prison's restrictions do not allow him to keep contact with his wife and sons, who took refuge in Mexico.

"I never tried to subvert Peruvian institutions. I wanted to get closer to the people. I wanted to demonstrate that popular power is the ultimate expression of society. I did not want to obey economic elites, but to put my people first," he said about his decisions as president.

The left-wing politician also condemned that the prosecutor who opened the case against him was not present at his arrest, which was executed without prior legal process and in front of his family. "My fundamental rights were violated... I was the victim of a plot. I am the first Peruvian teacher and farmer to hold the presidency. I was democratically elected, but the Peruvian right never accepted my victory."

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