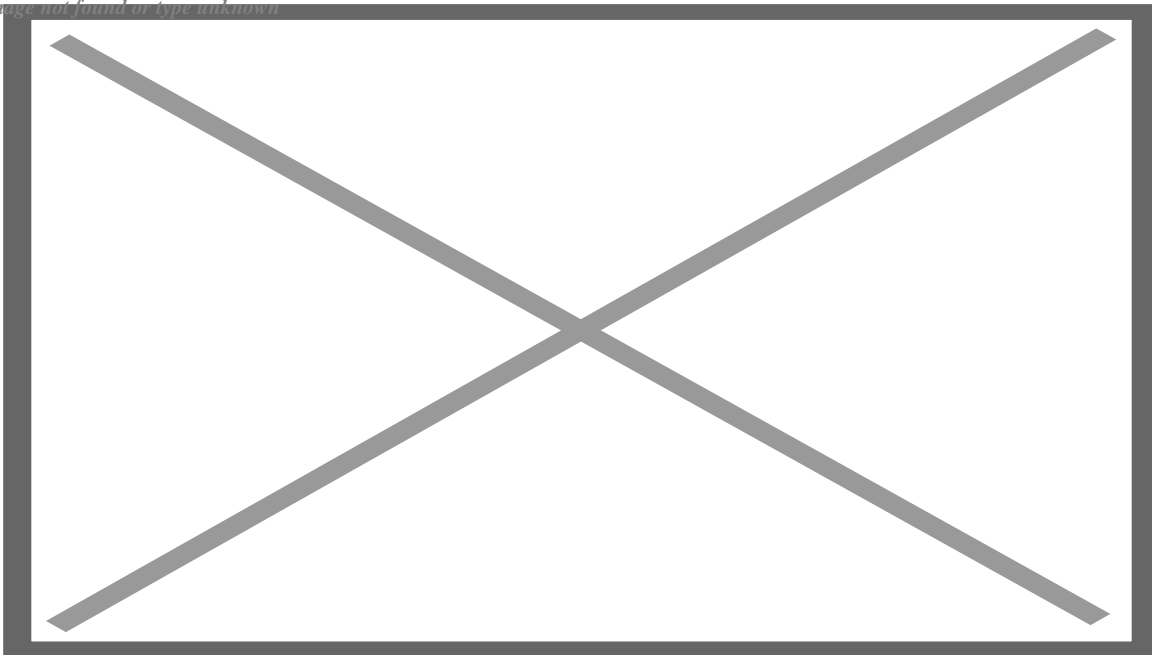


Ecuadorian president Guillermo Lasso dissolves National Assembly to block impeachment

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Quito, May 17 (RHC)-- Ecuador's right-wing President Guillermo Lasso has dissolved the opposition-led National Assembly, blocking efforts by lawmakers to impeach him amid accusations of corruption and embezzlement in a scheme involving a state-owned oil transportation company.

The constitutional power, which had never been used in Ecuador before, allows Lasso to rule by decree until new elections can be held.

Lasso made the move a day after Ecuador's National Assembly held its first hearing, where Lasso addressed lawmakers and denied involvement in the scheme, which opponents of Lasso say cost Ecuador millions of dollars in losses.



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