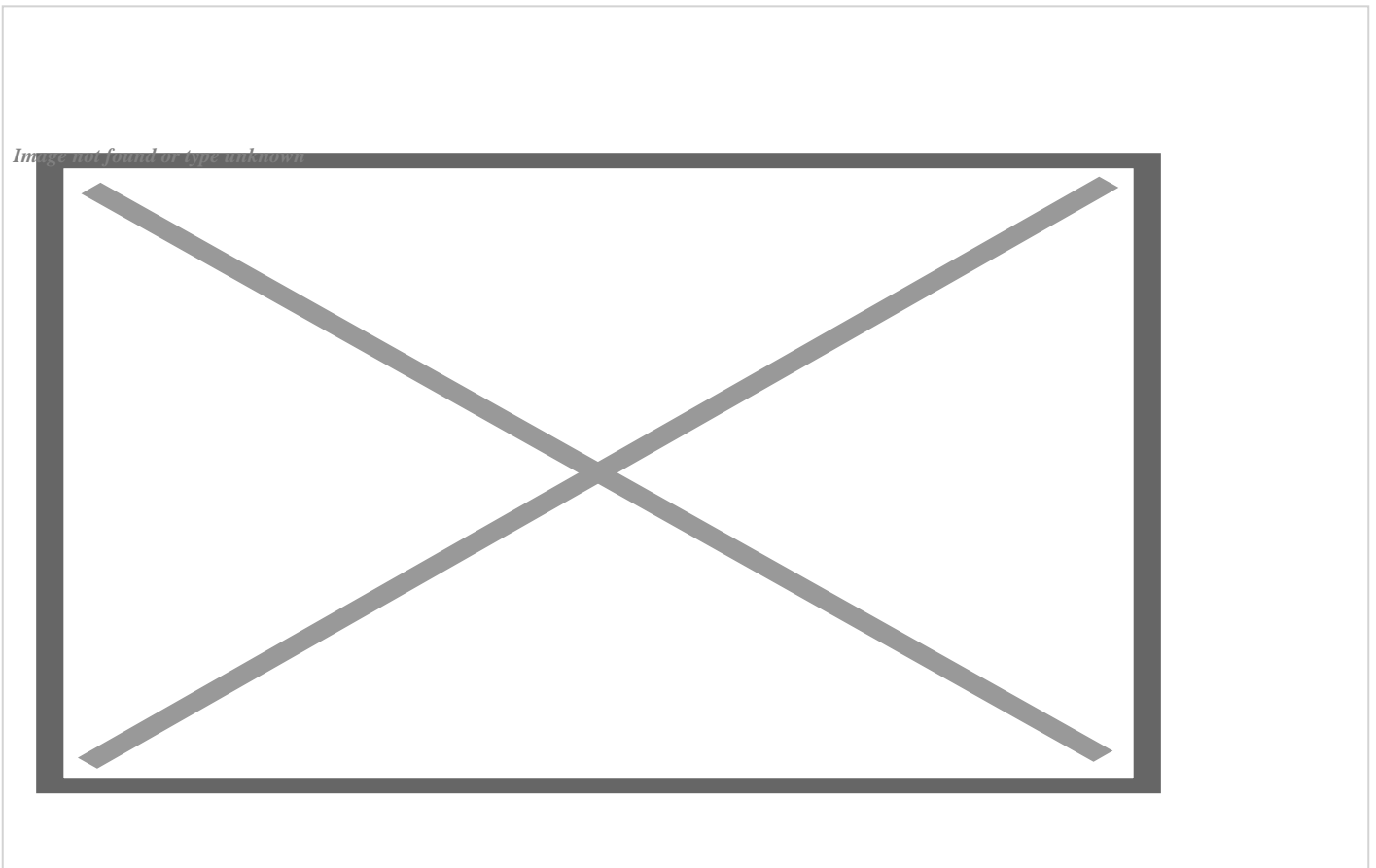# *Indigenous peoples say Ecuadorian President Guillermo Lasso is to blame for violence*

Quito, August 13 (RHC)-- The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) has pointed to the administration of conservative Guillermo Lasso as responsible for the ongoing spiral of violence, which claimed the life of presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio.

CONAIE President Leonidas Iza stated that the sooner Lasso steps down from power, the sooner a process of reversing the surge in crime could begin. However, he emphasized that an enduring solution is still a collective challenge for all Ecuadorians.

The Indigenous leader highlighted that thousands of Ecuadorians have been murdered by criminal groups since 2021, underscoring that these criminal networks have been able to operate because the Lasso administration abandoned public policies related to security. "We cannot allow organized crime's bullets to define a democratic process," Iza said, referring to the assassination of Villavicencio, which occurred less than 15 days before the presidential elections scheduled for August 20th

"There is a direct responsibility for this wave of insecurity and the advancement of organized crime," the CONAIE president said, referring to the former banker Lasso. "His State downsizing model dismantled the entire security system and the judicial function," Iza pointed out, and recalled that the Lasso administration is even tainted with suspicions of a connection with the Albanian Mafia. However, the State Prosecutor has not yet provided responses regarding these allegations.

"Lasso has led us to a Failed State," and the advancement of organized crime cannot be explained without an "infiltration of the mafia into the State security forces," the Indigenous leader said, adding that "violence and terrorism come from sectors linked to big corporations."

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