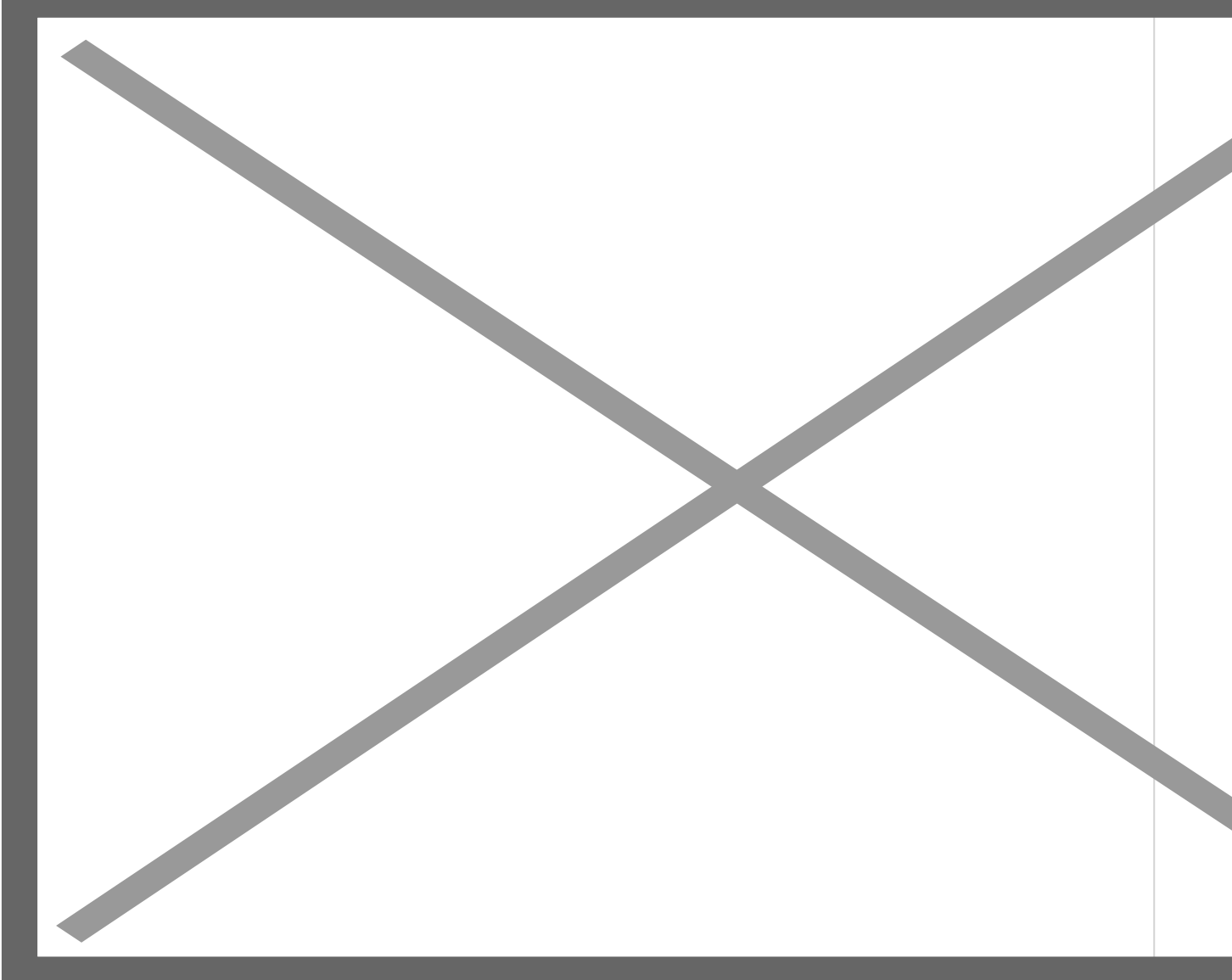


Ecuadorian president's impeachment process begins Tuesday

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**"Out with Lasso" chant legislators in the Ecuadorian National Assembly | Photo: Twitter/
@radiocentroec?**

Quito, May 14 (RHC)-- In Ecuador, National Assembly President Virgilio Saquicela convened legislators on Sunday for a session in which Ecuadorean President Guillermo Lasso will be impeached on embezzlement charges.

According to the complaints compiled by investigative journalists and formally presented by progressive legislators, this right-wing politician incurred in embezzlement since he knew about the alleged irregularities in a contract signed between the state-owned Ecuadorian Oil Fleet (FLOPEC) and the private firm Amazon Tanker.

Despite the fact that there was information about this alleged act of corruption, Lasso did not prevent further damage to the Ecuadorian State. His defense lawyers, however, maintain that such a contract was signed during the Lenin Moreno administration (2017-2021). They also affirm that Lasso asked the Comptroller General of the Nation to review the contract to renew it under new conditions.

Last week, with 88 votes in favor, 23 against and 5 abstentions, the Legislature approved entering the last phase of the impeachment trial against Lasso, who must attend the National Assembly to defend himself before the legislators.

"Lasso has not committed any embezzlement. So far there is no proof. They have not been able to prove it because it does not exist," Government Minister Henry Cevallos said, assuring that the Ecuadorian President would attend the plenary meeting in the Assembly. "Impeachment has neither head nor tail. Despite that, he will come to defend his position and prove the truth," he added.

In the impeachment's first session, Lasso and the interpellants will make a round of interventions, which includes a reply and debate. Subsequently, the session will be suspended for five days, after which the legislators will meet again for the final vote. If at least 92 out of 137 lawmakers cast a favorable vote, the former banker will be removed from the Presidency.

Among the supporters of his removal are the Union for Hope (UNES), a leftist organization related to former President Rafael Correa (2007-2017), and the Christian Social Party (PSC), a right-wing organization that supported Lasso in his political campaign.

The current Vice President Alfredo Borrero will assume the Presidency of the Republic in case Guillermo Lasso is removed.

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