

Violence continues to claim victims in Ecuador

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Murder of 4 children in Ecuador

By María Josefina Arce

In less than a month after assuming the presidency of Ecuador, Daniel Noboa has already faced his first security crisis. Ecuadorian society was shocked by the murder of 4 children, between 6 months and 7

years of age, by hired assassins inside his home in the city of Guayaquil, ranked as one of the most violent cities in the world.

In the short period of time that has elapsed since his arrival to the Carondelet Palace there have been some violent events, but this one in particular has earned him strong criticism for what the citizens qualify as the government's late response.

It is precisely the high level of insecurity prevailing in Ecuadorian territory one of the main problems faced by the president and to which he will have to respond in just a year and a half of his mandate.

It is a fact that violence has taken over the South American country. It is estimated that this year will end with more than seven THOUSAND murders, a record number.

The report Law and Order 2023, by the Gallup consulting firm, indicates that Ecuador ranks fifth in the list of countries in the region with the highest perception of citizen insecurity.

Meanwhile, a report by the Ecuadorian Observatory of Organized Crime reveals that between January 2019 and June last year, homicides of young people between 15 and 19 years of age increased by 500%.

Since 2021, during the administration of the now former president Guillermo Lasso, violence has been on the rise. Murders, kidnappings and extortion have become a daily occurrence in the Andean nation in recent years.

Prisons, overcrowded and with poor conditions, have been the scene of several massacres. More than 500 inmates have lost their lives. In an attempt to deal with the delicate situation, Lasso resorted to declaring states of emergency and taking the army and police forces to the streets, measures that did not have the desired effect.

The current government's strategy to deal with this crisis has so far included the appointment of new security authorities and police forces. Likewise, it seeks to equip the police and the Armed Forces with weapons and new technologies, an aspect contained in the so-called Phoenix Plan, one of Noboa's electoral promises. Let us hope that the president, as he promised, does not neglect the social and economic aspects. The security crisis that Ecuador is experiencing requires a comprehensive response.

Of a greater social investment to reduce poverty, to guarantee basic services to the population and to create new opportunities, especially for the youngest, who are extremely vulnerable to criminal gangs.

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