



ELDH European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & World Human Rights

WITH LAWYERS
IN 23 COUNTRIES

EJDM Europäische Vereinigung von Juristinnen & Juristen für Demokratie und Menschenrechte in der Welt

EJDH Asociación Europea de los Juristas por la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos en el Mundo

EJDH Association Européenne des Juristes pour la Démocratie & les Droits de l'Homme

EGDU Associazione Europea delle Giuriste e dei Giuristi per la Democrazia e i diritti dell'Uomo nel Mondo

Equality Privacy Social Rights
No Racism Peace No Torture No War
Self-Determination of Peoples Democracy
Human Rights Rights of Migrants

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ELDH: against politically motivated lawfare

The European Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights (ELDH) strongly denounces the politically motivated lawfare campaign being waged by the National Electoral Commission of Colombia against President Gustavo Petro. These actions blatantly violate the principle of presidential inviolability, which is clearly enshrined in Colombia's constitution, and directly contradict the standards established by the Inter-American Court of Justice (IACJ), which safeguards democratic institutions and protects elected officials from judicial manipulation.

This case is not isolated. In Ecuador, former President Rafael Correa has faced a similar lawfare campaign, with legal actions that many view as politically motivated attempts to block his return to politics. In Bolivia, the forced resignation and subsequent legal persecution of President Evo Morales also reflect a pattern of using judicial tools to undermine the democratic mandate of progressive leaders. The use of legal mechanisms to harass and delegitimize elected officials poses a significant threat to the rule of law and democratic governance across Latin America.

However, the ELDH makes it clear that opposing these lawfare tactics does not imply support for impunity. The ELDH fully acknowledges the need for accountability for all public officials, including heads of state, when legitimate legal procedures are in place. Nonetheless, the current actions in Colombia are a clear example of judicial overreach, which serves to undermine democracy rather than uphold justice.

The misuse of legal channels to challenge the democratic mandate of President Petro, as has been seen in Ecuador and Bolivia, and some years ago in Brazil constitutes a direct assault on democracy. The ELDH firmly rejects any attempt to destabilize a democratically elected government through judicial means, as it erodes the integrity of democratic processes and undermines public trust in institutions.

The ELDH calls on Colombian authorities to immediately halt these politically motivated actions and respect the democratic will of the people. We further urge the Inter-American Court of Justice and the international community to closely monitor this situation and take appropriate measures to defend democracy and human rights in Colombia.

In defense of democracy and the rule of law!

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