

# CRS Report for Congress

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## **Peru: Recovery from Crisis**

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# Peru: Recovery from Crisis

## Summary

Peru was thrust into a major political crisis with the sudden resignation of President Alberto Fujimori in November 2000 following allegations of electoral fraud and a series of scandals involving his top aide. An interim government was formed, with the immediate task of organizing new elections. First and second round elections on April 8 and June 3 were widely praised as being free and fair. Alejandro Toledo was elected President.

President Fujimori headed Peru from 1990 to 2000. During that time he did much to bring under control destabilizing factors such as terrorism, drug trafficking, hyperinflation, and border disputes. But Fujimori also led the country into constitutional crises, and his efforts to remain in power eroded democratic institutions. An eruption of scandals led to his sudden resignation, after which constitutional succession passed the presidency to the President of the Congress, Valentin Paniagua, in November 2000.

The immediate challenge facing the interim government was to organize new presidential and parliamentary elections. The Toledo administration will face the more long-term challenge of stabilizing Peru while trying to strengthen democratic institutions weakened by ten years of a democratically elected, but autocratically run, government. Toledo will assume office on July 28.

Peru is located along the Andean mountains of South America. Although economic conditions have improved over the last five years, there is still extensive poverty in Peru. Peru has a free market economy.

The United States and Peru have enjoyed generally friendly relations over the past decade, although the recurring political crises of the Fujimori government strained those relations. The primary U.S. interest in Peru has been the reduction of illicit narcotics production and trafficking. Other stated goals of U.S. assistance are: broader citizen participation and more responsive government; increased incomes for Peru's poor; improved health of high risk populations; and improved environmental conditions. The United States pressed the Fujimori government to improve respect for human rights; for much of his term Fujimori's regime had the worst human rights record in the hemisphere. The United States has been concerned about security in Peru and in the Andean region as a whole.

The U.S. Congress has expressed concern about the development of democratic institutions in Peru, and has conditioned aid on the respect for those institutions, and for human rights, and the holding of free and fair elections. Congress has also expressed concern about the case of Lori Berenson, an American prisoner in Peru; the relationship between U.S. agencies and Peru's spy chief, Vladimiro Montesinos; and whether to resume a joint aerial drug-interdiction program that was suspended after the accidental shooting of an American missionary plane.

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# Peru: Recovery from Crisis

Peru was thrust into a major political crisis with the sudden resignation of President Alberto Fujimori in November 2000 following allegations of electoral fraud and a series of scandals involving his top aide. An interim government was formed, with the immediate task of organizing new elections. Legislative elections and the first round of presidential elections were held on April 8, 2001. Alejandro Toledo was elected President in the second-round presidential election held on June 3, 2001.

## Socio-Economic Conditions

Peru lies on the northwest coast of South America. Its western coastal plains and eastern tropical lowlands are separated down its middle by the rugged Andes Mountains. Three times the size of California, it has a population of 25 million, 72% of which live in urban areas. Over 7 million people live in and around the capital of Lima. Official languages are Spanish and Quechua; a number of other Indian languages are spoken as well. The population is 45% Indian, 37% mestizo (or mixed Indian- and European-descent), 15% white, and 3% black, Japanese, Chinese, and other groups.

Peru is a country of medium human development, according to the United Nations' Development Programme (UNDP), based on three socioeconomic indicators: longevity, educational attainment, and standard of living. Life expectancy in Peru is 68.6 years (compared to 76.8 years in the United States). The adult literacy rate is 89.2%. GDP per capita in 1999 was \$2,611. Although economic conditions have improved over the last five years, there is still extensive poverty in Peru. A sizeable portion of the population – 49% – live below the national poverty line. Thirty-three percent of the population lacks access to safe water. Twenty-eight percent lack access to sanitation. There is a broad gap in income distribution in Peru. The richest 20% of the population account for over half (51.2%) of the nation's income or consumption. The poorest 20% account for only 4.4% of income or consumption.<sup>1</sup>

Peru has a free market economy. Among the reforms implemented by the Fujimori government (1990-2000) were a wide-ranging privatization program; simplification and strengthening of the tax system; lowering of tariffs; and the opening of Peru to foreign investment. The United States is Peru's largest trading partner; in 1999, the United States exported about \$1.6 billion to Peru. Peru is a member of the Andean Community and the Latin American Integration Association, with whose

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<sup>1</sup>United Nations Development Programme. "Human Development Report 2000." Oxford University Press, NY 2000. pp. 158, 169, 179.

members it shares duty-free access on many products. In 1998, the Andean Community agreed to establish a free trade area with MERCOSUR, the Southern Cone Common Market, after the year 2000. Peru signed a Free Trade Agreement with Chile in 1998, to be implemented over several years, and is negotiating one with Mexico as well.

## **Political Conditions: State of Democracy in Peru**

Basic elements of a democracy include effective and independent legislative and judicial branches of government, freedom of expression, respect for human rights, and free elections. A broad array of organizations, both domestic and international, criticized Fujimori throughout his decade in power for impeding the development of these democratic elements.

Fujimori effectively controlled both the legislature and judiciary, inhibiting the development of either as independent democratic institutions. In 1999 and 2000, Freedom House classified Peru as the only country in the hemisphere, besides Cuba, where the press was “not free.” A State Department Human Rights report, released in February 2000, said that although human rights abuses had decreased in several areas, the Fujimori “Government’s human rights record was poor in several areas,” including the protection of civil and political rights. The latest elections held in Peru, in April and May, 2000, were deemed by international and Peruvian observers to have been neither free nor fair. That controversy, combined with the revelation of high-level corruption in his administration led Fujimori first to agree to new presidential elections in which he would not run, and then to flee to Japan and resign in November 2000.

Under the constitution’s rules of succession, the president of the Congress, Valentin Paniagua, became Peru’s new president. The immediate challenge facing the interim government was to organize the extraordinary elections, held on April 8, 2001, with a presidential run-off held on June 3. The Toledo administration will face the more long-term challenge of stabilizing Peru while trying to strengthen democratic institutions weakened by ten years of a democratically elected, but autocratically run, government.

**Erosion of Democratic Institutions under Fujimori.** Most analysts acknowledge that in some major areas Fujimori brought greater stability to Peru. He did much to bring under control destabilizing factors such as terrorism, drug trafficking, hyperinflation, and border disputes. But Fujimori also led the country into several constitutional crises. He was elected in 1990 under a constitution which limited presidents to serving one five-year term. In 1992, in what became known as a “self-coup,” Fujimori dissolved Congress and took control of the judiciary. Under intense domestic and international pressure, Fujimori then oversaw the drafting of a new constitution that went into effect in 1993, and scheduled elections. The new constitution allowed a president to serve two consecutive terms and established a unicameral legislation.

Fujimori ran again in 1995, and won a second five-year term. He quickly began paving the way for yet another term, further eroding the independence of Peru's already weak democratic institutions as he did so. In 1996, the unicameral legislature, dominated by a pro-Fujimori majority, passed a "Law of Authentic Interpretation" which stated that Fujimori's election under the previous constitution did not count against the two-term limit of the current constitution. In 1997, the Constitutional Tribunal, a high court charged with deciding the constitutionality of laws, issued an opinion that the Law of Authentic Interpretation was not applicable. The Peruvian Congress dismissed the three members of the court who signed the opinion (the other four members abstained), rendering the court unable to act. The Congress also thwarted an effort by civic organizations to put the matter of a third term to a national referendum, voting against allowing it, even though petitioners gathered 1.4 million signatures – more than the 10% of registered voters required to do so.

The ability of Peruvian citizens to challenge such actions was further limited by the inability of the Constitutional Tribunal to act, and by Fujimori's withdrawal of Peru from the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court for Human Rights. Fujimori withdrew from the court after the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights recommended in 1998 that Peru reinstate the three dismissed justices and restore the Tribunal's power to rule on constitutional issues. Fujimori's government announced it would not comply with the recommendation.

**Elections of 2000.**<sup>2</sup> Having cleared away obstacles to his candidacy, Fujimori ran for an unprecedented third term. All 120 seats of the unicameral legislature were contested along with the presidency. Many observers believed that electoral conditions did not represent a "level playing field" but an environment that heavily, and often unfairly, favored the incumbent. Numerous Peruvian and international election monitoring organizations and press reports indicated several areas of concern: the executive branch's manipulation of the judicial system to achieve its desired outcome; questions regarding the independence and impartiality of the electoral bodies responsible for organizing Peru's elections, and use of public resources for campaign purposes. Concerns regarding freedom of the press and access to information involved unequal media access, media bias, and harassment of candidates and domestic election observers. Two weeks before the April 9, 2000 elections, an international delegation to Peru organized by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the Carter Center stated that, "The conditions for a fair election campaign have not been established. Irreparable damage to the integrity of the election process has already been done..."<sup>3</sup>

The first round of elections was followed by three tense days of delayed results, widespread suspicion of fraud, and public protests. After international observers said they would not validate a first-round victory by President Fujimori, Peru announced there would be a second round of elections on May 28, though election officials

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<sup>2</sup>For further information, see CRS Report RS20536, *Peruvian Elections in 2000: Congressional Concerns and Policy Approaches*, by Maureen Taft-Morales.

<sup>3</sup>National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. "Statement of the National Democratic Institute (NDI)/Carter Center Pre-Election Delegation to Peru." Lima, March 24, 2000.

denied there was any connection between the two acts. Election officials said Fujimori won 49.8% of the vote, and Alejandro Toledo 40.31%. More than 50% of the vote is needed to win in the first round.

As the second round election approached, both Peruvian and international observers reported that conditions for a free and fair election still did not exist. The Peruvian monitoring organization, Transparencia, and the Organization of American States (OAS) observer mission withdrew from monitoring the week before the runoff. Toledo withdrew as a candidate from the race. Fujimori denied requests from both organizations and Toledo to delay the vote in order to resolve irregularities. Official results showed Fujimori winning the election, with 51.2% of the votes cast. Toledo had called on voters to either boycott the vote or spoil their ballots; almost 30% of ballots were spoiled, and Toledo still received 17.7% of the vote even though he had withdrawn from the race.

**Fujimori's Fall.** The United States pressed for regional sanctions, but the OAS sent a high-level mission to press Peru for democratic reforms instead. An OAS permanent office was set up in Peru to oversee reforms and mediate a dialogue between the Fujimori government and elements of civic society, including opposition parties. Decreased support for Fujimori, and corruption and human rights scandals involving Fujimori's top aide, Vladimiro Montesinos, led Fujimori to agree to new elections in April 2001, in which he would not run.

On November 16, 2000, a group of opposition parties took over the presidency of the 120-member legislature for the first time since Fujimori suspended Congress in 1992. With Fujimori's loss of control over an institution which had become a rubber stamp for his initiatives, investigations into the expanding evidence of corruption in his administration – and his possible role in it – became a strong possibility. One of the opposition's first actions was to reinstate the three judges of the Constitutional Tribunal who had been fired after issuing an opinion unfavorable to Fujimori's efforts to seek a third term in office.

On November 20, President Fujimori faxed his resignation to the Congress from Japan, where he had gone following a visit to an economic forum in Brunei. Congress rejected his resignation, removing him by declaring him "morally unfit" for office instead, a move apparently made to make him ineligible to run for office again in Peru. With Fujimori's dismissal, and the resignation of his two vice-presidents, constitutional succession passed the presidency to the new President of the Congress, Valentin Paniagua.

Fujimori remains in Japan, where he has claimed Japanese citizenship based on the registration of his birth there by his parents, who were born in Japan. The two countries do not have an extradition agreement.

## Interim Government

Valentin Paniagua was officially inaugurated President of Peru on November 22, 2000. His cabinet includes former United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar as cabinet chief and foreign minister. The mandate of the interim government has widely been seen to be threefold: (1) to guarantee and carry out free and fair elections scheduled for April 8, 2001; (2) to begin to restore the independence of democratic institutions by rooting out widespread political corruption; and (3) to prevent the economy from sliding into recession. The Paniagua administration is to serve until the newly elected Toledo administration takes office on July 28, 2001.

Following the June 3 elections, the head of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission, Eduardo Stein, praised the performance of Paniagua's interim government, saying it showed "very strong political will and determination to address crucial problems of corruption, and tackle conflicts and conundrums resulting from the fall of the Fujimori regime," and "therefore draft an agenda for the future government."

**Organizing the 2001 Elections.** The Paniagua government committed itself to holding presidential and parliamentary elections as scheduled, on April 8, 2001. A respected academic, Fernando Tuesta, was appointed head of the National Office of Electoral Processes (ONPE), which oversees elections. He promised to carry out a "profound internal reorganization" of the electoral body, and began by replacing the ONPE leadership. The United States is providing technical assistance and funding observation missions.

According to a report by the pre-election delegation of NDI and the Carter Center, "The conditions for organizing genuine democratic elections have been established in Peru, and the prospects for realizing them are strong." Describing the conditions surrounding the 2001 extraordinary elections as "fundamentally different" from those of last year's elections, the report said, "All of those with whom the delegation met expressed a high degree of confidence in the integrity of the new leaders of government and of the electoral authorities."<sup>4</sup>

**Rooting Out Corruption.** An independent prosecutor and special Congressional commission are investigating the widespread corruption that apparently operated under the Fujimori regime. The network of corruption is coming to light through videotapes compiled by the former head of Peru's intelligence service, Vladimiro Montesinos. The videos show members of Congress and others accepting bribes from Montesinos. Montesinos fled the country soon after the first of these videotapes was broadcast last September. The Peruvian government issued a warrant for his arrest for crimes including blackmail, extortion, money laundering, and drug trafficking. His whereabouts are unknown.

The Paniagua administration is also purging the military of Montesinos associates, and attacking the impunity with which they operated. Over 40 high-

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<sup>4</sup>National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. "Statement of the National Democratic Institute (NDI)/Carter Center Pre-Election Delegation to Peru." Lima, Jan. 26, 2001. p. 2.



ranking military officials have been forced to retire. Retired army general Walter Ledesma, appointed by Paniagua to oversee the “depoliticization” of the military, has promised the “absolute impartiality” of the armed forces during the pending elections.

In late February and March, several actions were taken against former President Fujimori. The Peruvian Congress voted to bar Fujimori from holding any public office for 10 years. Congress also stripped him of his five-year presidential immunity, allowing for criminal proceedings against him. Peru’s attorney general filed criminal charges against him for abandonment of office and dereliction of duty. Congress and government prosecutors are investigating Fujimori for numerous accusations of impropriety, including embezzlement, mostly based on his link to Montesinos. The two were known in Peru as the “Siamese Twins” for their apparently tight-knit relationship, yet Fujimori denies any involvement with Montesinos’ alleged illicit activities over his 10 years in power.

**Stabilizing the Economy.** Peru’s fragile economic recovery was stalled by the uncertainty surrounding the demise of the Fujimori government in late 2000. By tackling corruption and demonstrating fiscal discipline, however, the interim government has increased public confidence and kept the political crisis from leading to economic chaos. Economic Minister Javier Silva outlined Peru’s most serious economic problems as the national debt, the fiscal deficit, and the need to create a climate for investment. The government is reportedly determined to meet the fiscal goals for 2001 agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund. Some economists say that approach, adhering to strict fiscal constraints, may prolong economic stagnation. But others say Peru might experience slight economic growth by the end of the year.

## The 2001 Extraordinary Elections

The 2001 elections determined the new President and all 120 members of the unicameral legislature. Traditional political parties were discredited in the 1980s, and current parties are mainly vehicles for an individual’s candidacy. There were 8 candidates running for president. Because no presidential candidate received more than 50% of the vote on April 8, a run-off between the top two candidates was held on June 3, 2001. Members of the legislature were elected on April 8, only needing a simple majority to win a seat. The first round of elections were generally deemed free and fair by domestic and international observers.

According to Peru’s electoral commission, Toledo, of the Peru Posible party, won 36.51% of the first round vote, and Garcia, of Partido Aprista Peruano, won 25.78%. Just behind Garcia was Lourdes Flores, a former member of Congress and long-time Fujimori critic, with 24.30% of the vote. Flores, an attorney, served in the legislature, or the Constitutional Assembly after the legislature was dissolved in 1992, from 1990 to 2000. If elected, she would have been the first woman elected president in Latin America on her own achievements, not as the wife of a deceased president. Flores represented the Unidad Nacional party.

The campaign period leading up to the presidential run-off election was marked more by exchanges of character attacks by the candidates than by debates on the issues. Polls showed much of the public to be disillusioned with both candidates, with as many as 25% saying they would cast null ballots. Voting is mandatory in Peru. In the final count, 13.8% cast blank or null votes.

There was at least one major episode of election-related violence. A bomb exploded near the national elections board headquarters on May 16, injuring seven people. Although pamphlets supporting the Shining Path guerrillas were found near the explosion, Peru's Interior Minister said the material was atypical of the group's fliers and that it was premature to attribute the bombing to the guerrilla group. Since the arrest of its leader, Abimael Guzman, in 1992, the Shining Path's members and activities have been reduced to a minimum.

The two presidential candidates facing a run-off were Alejandro Toledo, who withdrew from runoff elections with Fujimori last year because he believed they were not fair, and Alan Garcia, who was president of Peru from 1985 to 1990. Toledo won the election, with 53.0% of the vote; Garcia garnered 46.9%. Toledo, who earned his doctorate in economics from Stanford University and was an adviser to the World Bank, emphasizes his humble origins. He is one of 16 children from a poor indigenous family and shined shoes as a boy.

Garcia spent years in self-imposed exile abroad following allegations of corruption in his administration, and has only recently returned to Peru. Many critics blame Garcia's policies for creating a 7,000% annual inflation rate and a debt crisis which led Peru into economic chaos. Nonetheless, these elections mark a remarkable political comeback for Garcia, who can now be expected to be a powerful opposition voice during Toledo's term. In conceding the race, Garcia pledged to work for unity in pursuing a national agenda.

The head of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission to Peru said that Peru did an "incredible job" organizing "free and fair" elections on June 3 that were an example for the rest of Latin America.

Post-election polls indicate that, despite having voted for him, many Peruvians have serious questions about Toledo's character. Many feel he has not adequately answered allegations—including that he used cocaine, fathered a child out of wedlock, and beat his wife—that arose during the campaign. Garcia's strong showing in electoral polls, say political analysts, denies Toledo a solid mandate for his programs.

## **U. S. Relations with Peru**

The United States and Peru have enjoyed generally friendly relations over the past decade, although the recurring political crises of the Fujimori government strained those relations. The primary U.S. interest in Peru has been the reduction of illicit narcotics production and trafficking. Other stated goals of U.S. assistance are: broader citizen participation and more responsive government; increased incomes for Peru's poor; improved health of high risk populations; and improved environmental

conditions. U.S. assistance to Peru is estimated to be about \$121 million for FY2000, and about \$97 million for FY2001. Assistance for 2001 includes \$38.1 million in development aid, \$10 million in Food Aid, Title I Loans, \$48 million in Narcotics Aid, and \$475,000 in International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds.<sup>5</sup>

The United States also pressed the Fujimori government for improvement in respect for human rights; for much of Fujimori's term his regime had the worst human rights record in the hemisphere, according to State Department and other human rights reports. Violations of human rights by Peru's security forces included extrajudicial killings and torture. Lack of accountability within the security forces remains a problem. The Paniagua administration has already begun to address some of these problems, according to the State Department's most recent Human Rights report on Peru, released in February 2001. The report states that "the Paniagua administration took steps to implement important democratic reforms, including some which improved the exercise of civil and political rights, and to address allegations of corruption surrounding the former intelligence services and other government officials."<sup>6</sup>

Regarding counter narcotics efforts, Peru has been considered fully cooperative in working towards the goals of the U.S.-Peruvian counter narcotics framework agreement. During the last four years of Fujimori's term, Peru reported reduced illegal production of coca leaf by 66%.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, Peru remains one of the world's largest suppliers of coca leaf for cocaine.

The United States has been concerned about security in Peru and in the Andean region as a whole. At the time Fujimori took office, in 1990, two guerrilla insurgency groups had terrorized Peru for a decade. Fujimori effectively dismantled both the Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA). His enhancement of national security came at the cost of high levels of human rights violations, however, and his administration had the worst human rights record in the hemisphere. A long-standing border conflict between Peru and Ecuador flared briefly into armed conflict in 1995. The two countries signed an agreement in 1998 to resolve the dispute peacefully.

President-elect Toledo is traveling to Washington the last week of June. He is expected to seek more balanced U.S. support for a broad range of social and economic programs, as opposed to support that has primarily focused on counter narcotics issues over the past decade.

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<sup>5</sup>U.S. Agency for International Development, "Budget Justification Fiscal Year 2001, Annex IV, Latin America and the Caribbean", p. 399. Also updated aid figures, "Latin America—FY 2001 Estimate". Apr. 2, 2001.

<sup>6</sup>U.S. Department of State "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2000: Peru." Feb. 2001, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>U.S. Department of State "Background Notes: Peru." Mar. 2000, p. 10.

## Congressional Concerns Regarding Peru

Congress has expressed concern about the development of democratic institutions in Peru, and has conditioned aid on the respect for those institutions, and for human rights, and the holding of free and fair elections. Congress has also expressed concern about the case of Lori Berenson, an American prisoner in Peru; the relationship between U.S. agencies and Peru's fugitive spymaster, Vladimiro Montesinos; and whether to resume an air drug-interdiction program suspended after the accidental shutdown of an American missionary plane.

On April 11, 2000, following the first round presidential election in which Fujimori ran for a third term, the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress passed a joint resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President of the United States should encourage free and fair elections and respect for democracy in Peru. The resolution (S.J.Res. 43, P.L. 106-186) called for reviewing and modifying U.S. political, economic, and military relations with Peru, and working with other democracies toward a restoration of democracy in Peru, should elections be deemed not free or fair.

In the FY2001 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill (P.L.106-429, Sec.530), Congress directed the Secretary of State to report every 90 days to Congress on whether Peru has made substantial progress in creating the conditions for free and fair elections, and in respecting human rights, the rule of law, the independence and constitutional role of the judiciary and national congress, and freedom of expression and of the independent media. It prohibits assistance to Peru unless it has made substantial progress with respect to those goals. It also earmarks a minimum of \$2 million for the work of nongovernmental organizations and the OAS in promoting free and fair elections, democratic institutions, and human rights in Peru.

Lori Berenson is an American who has been serving a life sentence in Peru on charges of treason. Berenson was convicted in January 1996 by a secret Peruvian military tribunal of helping the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement plan a thwarted takeover of Peru's legislature. Berenson has maintained her innocence. Since her imprisonment, Members of the U.S. Congress have appealed for her release or for a new, fair trial. In July 2000 bipartisan groups of 221 Representatives and 40 Senators urged the Clinton Administration to seek Berenson's release. Both letters cited Peru's failure to provide a fair public trial, as outlined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Peru is a signatory. In August 2000 Peru's highest military court overturned her conviction, sending her to civilian court for a new trial on lesser charges of "terrorist collaboration." Her new trial began on March 20, 2001. On June 20, she was convicted and given a 20-year sentence, the minimum for collaboration.

The Member representing Berenson's family's district (Maloney, N.Y.) has reportedly said she will ask congressional colleagues to ask President-elect Toledo to pardon Berenson once he is in office, and rallies are planned to coincide with Toledo's visit next week to Washington, D.C. and New York. But analysts predict Toledo

will not want to issue a pardon and risk being viewed at home as either soft on terrorism or interfering with the courts.<sup>8</sup>

In legislation and committee reports, the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress expressed concern about the Clinton Administration's provision of counter narcotics assistance to Peru's intelligence service, which was widely reported to be responsible for a wide array of human rights violations. Since the fall of the Fujimori government, many observers have also expressed concern regarding the former head of that intelligence service, Vladimiro Montesinos, and his relationship to U.S. intelligence agencies. As Fujimori's top adviser, Montesinos was also involved in Peru's collaboration with the United States in counter narcotics efforts. Montesinos is wanted in Peru on charges of corruption, illicit drugs and arms deals, and ordering death squads. He is currently a fugitive from justice, having fled Peru in the fall of 2000 after a video of him bribing a Member of Congress was released publicly. According to a news report (Reuters, 2/23/01), Peru's Justice Minister has requested "extraordinary collaboration" with the United States regarding Montesinos, "given the special responsibility everyone attributes to certain U.S. government agencies over Montesinos' political survival for so long."

Congressional support for a U.S.-Peruvian aerial drug interdiction program has waned following an accident in which an American missionary plane was shot down in Peru on April 20, 2001. A Central Intelligence Agency surveillance plane identified the plane to Peru's military as a possible drug flight. The Peruvians subsequently shot down the plane, killing a missionary woman and her infant daughter. The aerial drug interdiction programs in both Peru and Colombia have been suspended and are under review. Some Members have said they would not support a resumption of the program unless firing at a suspected plane was no longer allowed. A joint U.S.-Peruvian team of officials is expected to complete its report soon.

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<sup>8</sup>Craig Mauro, "Berenson Backers Place Hope in Toledo," Associated Press, June 21, 2001.

