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## PERU Government pressed to drop charges against human rights prosecutor

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The Peru Europe Platform, a coalition of NGOs from across Europe, is urging the Peruvian government to drop charges against a government prosecutor who has taken a leading role in the investigation of human rights atrocities there.

The charges against Dr. Cristina Olázabal were filed last week by the Attorney General of the Nation, Gladys Echaíz.

They relate to a formal case Dr. Olázabal submitted as a provincial prosecutor for the region of Ayacucho. The suit named Peru's current President, Alan García, as ultimately responsible for a 1985 massacre carried out by government troops in the community of Accomarca. García was president at the time.

According to legal experts consulted by Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), the charges of prevaricato, or violation of legal duty, filed against Dr. Olázabal are serious, and could result in the loss of her job and potentially, criminal charges.

Dr. Olázabal is based in Ayacucho, the region hardest hit by the internal violence of the 1980s and 1990s, when government forces battled far left guerrilla groups, the Shining Path and the MRTA. Her work has led to the successful convictions of human rights violators from all sides of the conflict. She and her family have received repeated threats as a result of this.

Chief Executive of CSW, Mervyn Thomas, said: "We are shocked to hear of the charges brought against Dr. Olázabal, whose courageous, unrelenting work on behalf of the victims of human rights atrocities has been recognised in Peru and around the world. We have had the privilege of working with her on a number of occasions and know first hand of her personal and professional commitment to truth and justice. We now call on the Peruvian government to immediately drop these spurious charges and allow Dr. Olázabal to carry on with her work, which is vital in giving closure to victims and in contributing to the process of national reconciliation".

### **Notes to Editors:**

1. The Peru Europe Platform, (PEP) of which CSW is a member, is a coalition of NGOs from across Europe working to support the work of human rights organisations in Peru for the full implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
2. Dr. Olazabal has been directly responsible for the investigation and prosecution of such high profile cases as the Putis, Callqui and Lucanamarca massacres. She was also responsible for the exhumation and investigation of mass graves at Los Cabitos, in Ayacucho, where the remains of hundreds of the "disappeared" were uncovered.
3. The full text of the PEP statement can be obtained on request by contacting [CSW's press office](#).

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