PSG Webinar: 'Peru after the election'

On 3 August, the PSG organised a webinar entitled 'Democratic Governance and the Environment: Prospects for Peru'. For the panel we were fortunate to have Manuel Pulgar Vidal, expert on climate change and former environment minister, and Glatzer Tuesta, director of the Instituto de Defensa Legal (IDL). John Crabtree was the moderator and Adam Kemmis Betty the interpreter for Tuesta.

Among many important themes, both placed much stress on the importance of a long-term vision giving a sense of purpose and providing a framework for short-term policy; both panellists believed that a clear long-term vision was lacking amid the new government.

The environment was developed as an example of the absence of such a vision and that this would endanger any commitment to phasing out fossil fuels by 2050. Pulgar Vidal pointed to the need for measures against deforestation (said to be the cause of 63.5% of emissions); control of illegal activity, above all in mining; and sustainable urban development, especially with coherent and viable public transport policies. He said that a loss of around 25% GDP is possible by 2050 due to climate change. He stressed that Peru had of late disengaged from global debates and negotiations on such issues as regulating carbon content; it needed to re-engage, he said.

Both panellists took issue with some of the new government's policy plans, reflected in some disputed ministerial appointments. However, Tuesta argued that any judgement was premature and that it was important to allow the government to work whilst exercising strict civil society oversight and in a climate of accountability. The media was seen to be playing a negative role. Tuesta thought that talk of impeachment was an inappropriate response to weak policy making; what was needed was the strengthening of institutions.

On human rights, both panellists emphasised the need to remedy the previous Congress's refusal to ratify the Escazú Regional Agreement which strengthens rights to environmental protection and access to information and participation in the environmental decision-taking. Both stressed the importance of removing politics from the debate and of focusing this on the benefits brought by Escazú.

Asked about the role of the UK, the panellists commended the embassy's timely statement rejecting Keiko Fujimori's accusations of fraud. They urged the UK and the international community to help Peru safeguard democratic processes and institutions and to help provide innovation and capacity building in promoting modernisation and in upgrading Peru's technological capacities.

The recorded webinar may be viewed HERE.