Annual Report

April 2020– March 2021

Sponsors:

Lord Brennan QC
Ann Clwyd
Linda Fabiani MSP
Richard Howitt
Simon Hughes
Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Conor
Rev Ed O'Connell
Hugh O'Shaughnessy
Professor William Rowe
Rosemary Thorp CBE
Wendy Tyndale

Founding Sponsor: Graham Greene

President: Baroness Coussins
Lord Alderdice (from November 2020)

Vice President: Rosemary Thorp

Coordinator: Ana Reyes-Hurt

Management Committee

Chair: John Crabtree
Treasurer: Tim Thorp
Secretary: Tom Pegram
Vanessa Baird
John Beauclerk
Judith Condor-Vidal
Nuria Garcia
Adam Kemmis Betty
Martin Scurrah
Natalia Sobrevilla

coordinator@perusupportgroup.org.uk

www.perusupportgroup.org.uk

Contents

Contents i
Abbreviations ii
Executive Summary iii
The Peruvian context iii
Influence iii
Collaboration iii
Media iii
Organisation, Governance and Finance iii
The Year in Context 1
Influencing 2
MPs and Peers 2
Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office 2
European Union and United Nations 3
Peruvian authorities 3
Inter-Agency Collaboration 4
Plataforma Europa Perú (PEP) 4
Peru Solidarity Working Group 4
Peruvian NGOs 4
Events and Media 5
Events 5
PSG webinars 5
PEP events 5
Virtual forum for environmental and land rights defenders 5
Newsletter, website, and social media 6
Newsletter 6
Website and social media 6
Organisation and Governance 7
Presidency 7
Staff 7
Management 7
Funding 7
Membership 7
End of Year Accounts 8
Payments and Receipts FY2020/21 9
Balance Sheet FY2020/21 9

Abbreviations

Organisations	
APPG	All Parliamentary Party Group
BHRCC	Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CNDDHH	Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos
DAR	Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales
DHSF	Derechos Humanos sin Fronteras
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
FEDEPAZ	Federación Ecuménica para la Paz
FP	Fuerza Popular <Peruvian party>
LMN	London Mining Network
PEP	Plataforma Europa Perú
PHRG	Parliamentary Human Rights Group
PSG	Peru Support Group
UK	United Kingdom
Acronyms	
AGM	Annual General Meeting
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRD	Human Rights Defender
MP	Member of (UK) Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

Executive Summary

The Peruvian context

The year has been dominated by crises in the Government and Covid.

The legislature has been fragmented with Fuerza Popular aiming to destabilise the Executive. In the end after running through three Presidents, the year finished up with Francisco Sagasti as President whose primary objective came to be the organisation of an election for a new President. By April 2021 the candidates in the running were Pedro Castillo and Keiko Fujimori.

Peru has suffered more from Covid than practically any other country in the world. It has shown up the weaknesses in the Peruvian public health system. As always it is the poorest who suffered most, whether in Lima or the Amazon. Deaths per capita were one of the world's worst.

In spite of lock-down the poorest had to work to survive. Even so the formal economy collapsed with GDP down more than 10%. The mining sector has been one of the first to re-initiate production.

Influence

The Peru Support Group continues to aim to bring Peruvian issues to members of parliament. Channels include the All Parliamentary Party Groups for Latin America and Peru and, with Cafod, briefing the Parliamentary Human Rights Group. Questions have been raised by our President initially by Baroness Coussins and latterly by Lord Alderdice.

Collaboration

The Peru Support Group (PSG) continues to forge new alliances and strengthen ongoing relationships with Peruvian and European civil society organisations with our work with the Plataforma Europa Perú and the Peru Solidarity Working Group (led by the London Mining Network). We have undertaken a series of joint initiatives with partner organisation Cafod, including the delivery of Human Rights Defender forums with the UK Embassy. Throughout the year, we sought to update our analysis of current political, economic, and human rights situation through regular contacts with our Peruvian partners as well as through the delivery of our series of webinars.

Media

The newsletter has continued to be published, generally weekly, via email together with the placement of the articles into our website. Most of our regular readers access the information by email or social media links to our website. The newsletter readership increased by 25%, in part driven by interest in the series of webinars.

Organisation, Governance and Finance

At the last AGM Lord Alderdice agreed to take over being our President from Baroness Coussins. We are grateful for the years of support she has given us.

Our Coordinator Ana Reyes-Hurt continues in post.

The Management Committee has met regularly via Zoom or Skype.

Cafod has continued funding us at the same level as last year. Membership has increased by about 35 and some members and others continue to support us with additional donations. We are grateful for the continuing support of Cafod and our supporters.

The year finished with a deficit of £8,825 in line with the budget. The balance sheet is such that we can continue at least through to April 2022, but in several months time we will need to raise extra funds to remain viable. The timing of such a funding push has been delayed because of Covid.

The Year in Context

The year ending 31 March 2021 proved to be politically no less confrontational than previous years with ongoing conflicts between the executive and an unruly Congress in which the former enjoyed scant support. Elections to a new Congress in January 2020 had removed the previous congressional majority of Keiko Fujimori's Fuerza Popular (FP) party but resulted in a fragmented legislature keen to defend its interests at the expense of President Martin Vizcarra and his administration. Although an attempt by Congress to impeach Vizcarra failed to win sufficient support in September, two months later Vizcarra was removed from office due to allegations of corruption while he was governor of Moquegua region between 2011 and 2014.

The president of Congress, Manuel Merino, assumed office, a prime mover behind the earlier attempt to get rid of Vizcarra. But faced with massive demonstrations on the streets of Lima and other cities protesting against him, Merino was obliged to step aside after only five days in office. He was replaced, in turn, by Francisco Sagasti on 17 November, a more centrist political figure from the Partido Morado. Sagasti set his primary objective as the organisation of free and fair elections scheduled for the following year. The first round of presidential elections took place in April 2021, contested by no less than 17 candidates. As is often the case in Peruvian elections, early front-runners, in this case, George Forsyth and then Yonhi Lescano, were displaced at the last moment by a left-wing outsider Pedro Castillo who topped the poll with 19% of the vote.

During the year, Peru had been beset by the Covid-19 virus, having the world's highest death rate as a proportion of population. The pandemic, which began in March 2020, revealed the weaknesses of Peru's public health system, which has been ignored for years in public investment. The disease spread rapidly through the country's low-income neighbourhoods with their overcrowded housing. Calls for people to adhere to lockdown offered them little option but to continue to work in order to feed themselves. The impact of the pandemic was particularly hard in areas like the Amazon where the health system is most rudimentary and indigenous peoples are highly exposed to the new contagion.

The lockdown imposed by the Vizcarra administration had a devastating impact on the economy with GDP declining in 2020 by more than 11%, the worst figure of any Latin American country and Peru's largest one-year fall since 1983. As a consequence, poverty levels grew rapidly alongside indices of social, ethnic and regional inequality. By the end of 2020, 10 million Peruvians were living in poverty compared to 6.6 million a year earlier.

One of the sectors that was able to re-initiate production early on in the pandemic was the country's mining industry, despite accusations that companies failed to follow government protocols in dealing with Covid and thus protect workers. The recovery of the mining industry was assisted by the revival of minerals prices, particularly for copper. Gold prices also stimulated mining, but in the case of gold a substantial proportion of output was derived from illegal mining in the Amazon jungle. The lockdown led to a lull in the number of active conflicts between mining companies and nearby communities, but as the monthly figures from the Ombudsman's Office (Defensoría del Pueblo) show, the numbers of cases actually resolved were very few. Conflicts along the southern 'mining corridor' in Cuzco and Apurimac regions remained unresolved, as did that surrounding the Tia María project in Arequipa.

Illegal logging in the Amazon increased under the cover of Covid.

During the year, Peru continued to receive large numbers of Venezuelan migrants in spite of attempts by the authorities to stem the flow by introducing tighter restrictions on admission.

Influencing

MPs and Peers

With the appointment of Lord Alderdice as the new president of the PSG we took the opportunity to renew our links with members of the All Parliamentary Party Group (APPG) on Latin America and that on Peru. Confirmation on the latter's continuity only occurred in February 2021, with the appointment of MP David Mundell as the Chair of the group. Lord Alderdice has been in contact with the Chair and with the trade envoy for Peru, MP Mark Menzies, to introduce our work and request virtual meetings, which are due to take place in the Autumn of 2021.

The PSG co-wrote a briefing with Cafod for the Parliamentary Human Rights Group (PHRG) coordinator containing analysis and information on the effects of Covid-19 in Peru, which formed the basis of a PHRG letter to the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) Minister expressing concern about the situation in Peru during the Covid-19 crisis and asking the UK government to raise these concerns with their Peruvian counterparts.

In June 2020, Baroness Coussins asked a written question to HM Government on its assessment of the compliance by British mining companies operating in Peru with the health and safety regulations set up by the Peruvian government to prevent further spread of Covid-19.

The PSG also wrote two short briefings for Baroness Coussins and Lord Alderdice ahead of their possible participation during Parliamentary debates discussing Covid-19 impact in Latin America and a debate of UK's decision on whether to join the Pacific Alliance. The debate on the Covid-19 impact was delayed until October 2021.

In March 2021, the PSG wrote a detailed briefing for interested MPs on the economic, social, political, and human rights situation in the country, following the political crisis that peaked in November 2020, with the ousting of former president Vizcarra.

Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office

We continued to forge strong links with the UK Embassy in Lima, with regular meetings to exchange information and provide updates on our main human rights concerns. The PSG and Cafod also organised two events for and with environmental and land human rights defenders, to raise awareness about their increasing vulnerability and to gain knowledge about the ways in which the UK Embassy can support the work of Human Rights Defenders (HRD). The first event took place in December 2020 (see under events below). The organization for the second event, to take place in June 2021, began soon after.

In continued collaboration with Cafod, the PSG co-wrote and co-signed two letters to the British Ambassador in Peru:

1. On the impact of Covid-19 on indigenous people, asking the British government to remind Peru of its obligations to guarantee the right to health and ensure effective participation of IPs in decision making.
2. Letter highlighting a series of ongoing concerns regarding the situation in Espinar, particularly concerns about the handling of social protests in July 2020 triggered by the pandemic crisis.

The PSG, as one member of the PEP, sent a letter to the British Embassy outlining the coalition's concerns regarding the situation in Espinar, as a result of rising levels of social conflict due to the insufficient response to the pandemic to support local communities. With PEP, we continued to

work in raising awareness at the European level of the ongoing human rights situation in Espinar province, as part of #laagendapendiente campaign, led by Cusco-based NGO Derechos Humanos sin Fronteras.

European Union and United Nations

The PSG continues to make an input into the EU system through its membership of the PEP (see next section on Inter-Agency Collaboration).

Peruvian authorities

PSG's president, Baroness Coussins, and the PSG's coordinator met with the Peruvian ambassador in the House of Lords in March. There, we renewed our relationship with the Embassy and highlighted PSG's main areas of work and of concern. We agreed to maintain regular contact and to send them any relevant information that we would like the Peruvian authorities to be aware of.

Inter-Agency Collaboration

Plataforma Europa Perú (PEP)

The PSG is one of three organisations that coordinates the work of the PEP. As such, we continue to play an important role in shaping PEP's priorities. The PSG coordinator is the lead PEP person for identifying opportunities for advocacy and media work that are related to Human Rights Defender (HRD) issues as well as issues around extractive industries. The coordinator also continues to assist in building and maintaining relationships with Peruvian civil society partners, with the aim of informing PEP's ongoing work.

The PSG co-organised and co-chaired the PEP's AGM that took place in December 2020. Prior to the AGM, the PEP also organised a webinar that took place in November to inform our priorities for 2021. For this event, the PSG liaised with the Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDDHH) to participate in the webinar and provide an insight into the implementation of the Protection Protocol for HRDs and the adoption of other HRD policies, including the Registry and discussions around an inter-sectorial mechanism.

At PSG's initiative, the coordinator began the drafting of what PEP called a "baseline document for advocacy". The joint paper contained what as PEP we identified as the main priorities which we then presented to Peruvian civil society for their response. The paper was used as basis for a virtual round table meeting with Peruvian civil society to identify priority issues ahead of the Peruvian presidential elections. The meeting took place in February 2020, with many of our partners participating, including the CNDDHH, Red Muqui and Cooperaccion.

As PEP, the PSG coordinator helped with the drafting and circulation of two press communiques: the first expressing concern following the State's response to social protests taking place in July in Espinar province; the second highlighting cases of criminalisation of leaders in the Valle del Tambo region, related to the Tia Maria mining project.

Peru Solidarity Working Group

The PSG continues to be part of the 'Peru Solidarity Working Group', led by the London Mining Network (LMN), and with the participation of War on Want, Terra Justa, Global Justice Now and Cafod. Since its creation in July 2019, the PSG coordinator has attended regular meetings to discuss ideas for joint work, such as organising events and providing relevant information about human rights and environmental consequences of mining activities ahead of mining companies' AGMs. The PSG took part in the elaboration of a briefing ahead of the Anglo-American AGM that took place in May 2020. In coordination with Derechos Humanos sin Fronteras (DHSF), we also fed information into a briefing paper ahead of Glencore´s AGM, which took place in April 2021.

Peruvian NGOs

The PSG is continuing to strengthen its relationship with a number of Peruvian NGOs and academic institutions working on human rights defenders at risk, business and human rights, FPIC, Indigenous People, and sustainable development. Unfortunately, the PSG coordinator was not able to travel to Peru. She was able, instead, to maintain close contact with civil society in Peru through virtual channels. These include: Red Muqui, Cooperaccion, CNDDHH, DHSF, Fedepaz, Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (DAR), and RedGe. Following Brexit, the PSG coordinator began informal talks with Peruvian organization RedGe to begin thinking about ways in which the PSG can support observance and monitoring of implementation of the FTA between the UK and Peru.

Events and Media

Events

PSG webinars

In response to the global pandemic, the PSG held a series of five webinars over the course of four months, which culminated on 28 November with our AGM. The main objective of the webinar series was to bring in expertise and local voices to provide insights into relevant current human rights, economic and political issues in Peru.

The webinars covered the following issues:

- The differing effects of COVID-19 in Peru
- The pandemic and its impact on indigenous people
- The challenges of economic recovery
- Could anything good could come out of the COVID-19 crisis for Peru? – although due to last minute political crisis in Peru the webinar, the focus was shifted to the country's political crisis.
- Towards Peru's 2021 elections

It is envisaged that there will be further webinars including on the election and its outcomes.

Detail information about content and a summary of the webinars and links to their recordings can be found in our website.

The webinars were well attended and provided us with a big opportunity to increase our outreach. For the Indigenous People's webinar, for instance, we had over 100 registered to attend. We had an average of 40 - 60 people participating across all webinars and many who watched the recording afterwards.

PEP events

As mentioned above, the PSG played a key role in organising two events with PEP members and Peru's civil society:

1. Webinar with Peruvian partners prior to PEP's AGM: it took place a week prior to PEP's AGM to inform PEP's 2021 strategy (November 2020)
2. Webinar with civil society to identify key areas for advocacy ahead of Peru's presidential elections (February 2021), including: human rights defenders, gender, indigenous rights, policing and reforms to the justice system, and business and human rights.

Virtual forum for environmental and land rights defenders

This was an event that the PSG organised jointly with Cafod and the UK Embassy in Lima, taking place on 1 December. The main objective of the event was to hear from defenders themselves as to what they see as the key challenges hindering efforts to promote and defend human rights. The forum also sought to provide a platform for the Embassy to explain in some detail what its human rights priorities are and how it can support their work.

During the meeting we heard testimonies from human rights defenders from Espinar, from indigenous leaders in Amazonia and defenders struggling against powerful economic interests involved in land grabbing in the outskirts of Lima. At the end of the session, we identified many of the main issues that defenders consider important to reinforce (such as effective protection, multi-sectoral commitment, role of police during social protests and criminalisation). The UK Embassy renewed its commitment to work closely with them and maintain ongoing dialogue. Specifically, the Embassy committed to holding further sessions such as this one, the first one to

take place in the context of the election.

Newsletter, website, and social media

Newsletter

Since April, the PSG has gone to great efforts to provide our members and newsletter readers with a continuing coverage of the social and economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly on the most vulnerable. This included coverage on the vaccine roll-out and analysis on COVID and its impact on poverty. The PSG also covered issues around measures for economic recovery and what they may mean for marginalised communities.

We also provided good coverage during the political crisis that began with Vizcarra's ousting and culminated with Sagasti's appointment. The PSG, in part responding to the views of our partners in Peru, issued a communique welcoming the decision of Manuel Merino to step down and calling for a rigorous enquiry into police brutality during the mass demonstrations that took place in mid-November 2020.

We also continued to increase our coverage of topics that affect indigenous populations in the Amazon region, including the risks facing indigenous leaders and environmental defenders, including calls for increasing protection, and ongoing issues around land grabbing and land titling, etc.

We provided coverage of the run up to the 2021 elections, providing analysis on future implications, including candidates' profiles. On the situation in Espinar, we covered the protests in Espinar, because of longstanding issues that are yet to be addressed (criminalisation, toxic metal contamination), made worse by the situation caused by the pandemic and the communities' need for financial support. We also covered some success stories that are the result of international and national civil society pressure: including the court ruling on contamination in Espinar, urging the Ministry of Health to adopt a health emergency plan.

The PSG continues to provide strong coverage of the political situation, including attempts to weaken the executive, and ongoing corruption cases.

The weekly newsletter's readership increased by over 25%. We have had over 70 new subscribers since 1 April taking the number from 260 to 331. There was also an increase in the number of shares of our articles, most notably in Facebook, but also in Twitter. There has also been an increase in referrals from Facebook and the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC) to our website. In March 2021, for the former there were 71 referrals and for the latter 13.

Website and social media

The number of people engaging on our Facebook page has also increased; up to the end of March 2021 we had 1402 followers of which there were 78 new followers since April. The biggest cause of the increase in social media engagement has been the publicising and broadcasting of our webinars, as all webinars were transmitted live on Facebook too.

We believe that our most faithful users access our content initially via the newsletter or through links on Facebook. The website is our long-term repository of information going back to 2005. Following completion and launch of our new website, the PSG has been able to provide a more user-friendly experience, and users are able to share information with other social media platforms. About 31% of access is from the US, 16% from UK, 11% from Peru, 5% China followed by a number of countries at 2% or less. We have about 150 active users a week.

Organisation and Governance

Presidency

Lord Alderdice formally became PSG's president at our last AGM in November 2020. Since, he has maintained regular contact with the PSG coordinator, attended a committee meeting and has familiarised himself with the way PSG works, its values and its mission. Thanks to his role and his membership in the APPGs for Latin America and that for Peru, we have been able to identify and establish useful relationships with key parliamentarians.

Staff

Our Coordinator, Ana Reyes-Hurt, is employed on a part-time basis (21 hours per week).

Management

The PSG Committee meetings are being held regularly. In this period, we have had regular virtual meetings by Skype and Zoom.

Funding

Cafod continue to fund us this year. We also received support through subscriptions and donations. More details can be seen in the financial statement at the end of this report.

Membership

Thanks to continued efforts to capture new members more consistently and to our increased social media engagement through our webinars, membership numbers rose substantially this year, with 38 new membership subscriptions. The model for donations appears to be working in that we have received individual donations ranging from £50 - £300. Most members adhere to the recommended sum of £20-£30.

End of Year Accounts

The PSG's financial year is from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The accounts for the year given below are, with a few exceptions that are explained in the notes, prepared on a cash basis, that is receipts and expenditures are recognised when they occur.[1]

The accounts show the budget agreed at the beginning of the year and the actual outcome at the end of the year. It will be noted that the budget and outcome are very different. This was primarily because of Covid and the ensuing lock-down and/or travel restrictions. In particular there was no travel into Europe or Peru. We had a number of webinars and these incurred extra costs for Zoom licences and also to pay for translators.

The PSG has over a number of years been funded by grants from CAFOD (£7,750 this year) and from supporters. CAFOD has supported us through a programme agreed on a three-yearly basis with detailed annual plans, covering activities such as: research; advocacy; publication of news, analysis and reports; and events.

Again because of Covid PSG did not make any applications for small grants as these would imply activities not possible under the Covid restrictions.

Members and other well-wishers have been generous in their support this year. We have received about £4,300 from donations and subscriptions.

We would like to express our thanks to all organisations and individuals who have supported us, including those providing pro bono services.

The cash deficit at the end of the year was £8,825. From the balance sheet one can infer that the PSG will have sufficient funds for the next year, though we would run into difficulties in FY2022/23 without more support.

[1] Thus for example a cheque from a donor might be received in January for work to be done January to July; this receipt would be recognised in January. Expenses would each be recognised as they occur between January and July.

Payments and Receipts FY2020/21

Payments	Budget	Actual	Notes
Rent & Insurance	350	295.11	
Salary & National Insurance	18,470	19,534.06	
Small grant direct costs	1500		No grants were applied for so no direct costs.
Travel and Subsitence			Because of Covid there was no travel.
• Coordinator UK Local	80	-24.80	
• Coordinator EU	500		
• Coordinator Peru	2,200		
• Consultants Peru	500		
Phone & Fax, Email & Website	600	645.41	
Post, Printing, Copying	50		
Resources	50	8.12	
Equipment and Stationary	200		
Events		450.00	We used translators in our webinars.
Volunteers	100		
Other		29.98	
TOTAL PAYMENTS	**24,600**	**20,937.88**	
Receipts	**Budget**	**Actual**	
Grants	7,750	7,750.00	
Small Grants	3,000		Since Covid no small grants applied for.
Subscriptions[2]	1,000	3,089.19	
Donations	4,000	1,273.18	
Interest	100	0.43	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	**15,850**	**12,112.80**	
Grand Total	**-8750**	**-8,825.08**	

Balance Sheet FY2020/21

	Petty Cash	Santander current	Santander Deposit	Coop	PayPal	Assets[3]	Liabilities and deferred income[4]	Total
31 March 20	264.55	5,307.78	70.51	30,309.07	97.46	0.00	-282.29	**35,767.08**
31 March 21	264.55	6,787.78	70.94	27,477.44	529.48	0.00	-8,188.19	**26,942.00**
Difference	0.00	1,480.00	0.43	-2,831.63	432.01	0.00	-7,905.90	**-8,825.08**

[2] Supporters often give lump sums not distinguishing between subscriptions and donations. Here any sum given <=£20 (unless it is a corporate subscription) is assumed to be a subscription, the balance a donation.

[3] Cheques or income received but not yet cashed by PSG. Also includes credit provisions.

[4] Deferred income and liabilities also includes debit provisions.