

2017 Human Rights Report Ecuador

The 2017 Human Rights Report highlights significant issues related to the exercise, promotion, and protection of fundamental freedoms in Ecuador. It notes that important steps have been taken by the Government of Ecuador to begin addressing some of these issues.

Freedom to Participate in the Political Process

On April 2, voters elected President Lenin Moreno and chose members of the National Assembly in elections that were generally free and fair, marking a successful democratic transfer of power. International observers and domestic observers deemed both election rounds as open, free, and well organized, despite limited local irregularities.

Freedom of Speech

During 2017 independent media remained active and expressed a wide variety of views, including those critical of the government. President Moreno encouraged dialogue with the media and specifically called on journalists to report on corruption. According to civil society organizations, attacks on the media decreased and the government-aligned public media outlets became more objective and balanced both in their news reporting and in editorial pages.

Freedom of Association

On October 23, President Moreno issued decree 193 to replace executive decrees 16 and 739 that regulated freedom of association. Decree 193 simplified the application process to obtain and maintain legal status for NGOs and social groups by relaxing and eliminating some bureaucratic hurdles. The decree closed loopholes that had been exploited to infiltrate and divide NGOs. The government also ended the exercise of obtaining information on foreign nonprofits through diplomatic missions abroad.

Freedom of Movement

The Government of Ecuador cooperated with UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations in providing protection and assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, and other persons of concern. Despite increased migration flows into Ecuador, the government and NGOs continued to provide humanitarian aid and additional services, such as legal, health, education, and psychological assistance to vulnerable populations.