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**Strategy Flash – Ecuador**

**May 15, 2023**

# Ecuador Strategy Flash

**On Sunday, the Assembly renewed its authorities, with the opposition obtaining all relevant positions in a very lopsided session.**

**On Sunday, the Assembly renewed its authorities, with the opposition obtaining all relevant positions in a very lopsided session.** With two years having passed since the start of the current legislative period, the Assembly had to determine whether the current members of its ruling organ, the CAL (Legislative Administration Council) should continue in place, or be replaced. Last time, Mr. Lasso was able to broker several agreements with the PSC, ID, and Pachakutik to obtain a majority in said council. However, the opposition made it its target to disjoint said majority. Using the impeachment mechanic as their main strategy, the Assembly managed to oust first Mrs. Llari, the president of the CAL, and then Mrs. Yamani, the second vice president, as the opposition bullied the administration with its overwhelming majority in the chamber. After the oustings, the opposition voted for the current first vice-president, Mr. Virgilio Saquicela to take the presidency. Then to replace him, they assigned Mrs. Holguin, from the correist caucus. To replace the second vice-president, Mr. Pereira, from the rebel wing of Pachakutik was chosen, and finally, Mr Torres from the PSC took Mr. Pereira’s ordinary seat. So, the opposition virtually controlled the legislative organ even before the change in authorities.

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**The reshuffling of the CAL saw the administration lose its only remaining seat, and determined even more clearly the strength of the opposition’s legislative muscle, with most proposals being approved with over 92 votes.** The new composition of the CAL left several positions unchanged. Mr. Virgilio Saquicela was confirmed as the President of the CAL for the next two years. His candidacy was supported by 96 votes in the Assembly. This was an intelligent maneuver from correism, as allowing Mr. Saquicela to remain in his seat, secures some additional independent votes for the impeachment against Mr. Lasso. The first vice president. Mrs. Holguin was also confirmed, with 94 votes in favor. The second vice presidency was occupied by Mr. Torres, from the PSC, a key member in this party’s alliance with correism in recent times. This was the position that enjoyed the most support, galvanizing 100 votes. The four ordinary seats were handed over to Mrs. Viviana Veloz (UNES, 94 votes), Mr. Angel Maita (Pachakutik, 96 votes), Mrs. Yeseña Guamani (ex-ID, 98 votes), and Mr. Jorge Abedrabbo (PSC, 99 votes).

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**These results leave a worrying image for the impeachment process, which will start on Tuesday, as the opposition managed to muster over 92 votes for all its candidacies.** On Saturday, the large coalition formed by the ID, PSC, UNES, and rebel factions of Pachakutik and the ID decided to showcase the true strength of its legislative muscle. They were able to muster enough support to pierce the 92-vote barrier six times. This is the main roadblock for the opposition to finally oust Mr. Lasso in the impeachment process, and now more than ever seems somewhat flimsy. This session conveyed the chances of Mr. Lasso surviving the impeachment in the assembly are low, as, if willing, the opposition can muster over 92 votes to support a project. However, there are still some silver linings for the administration. First, only 83 assembly members posted affirmative votes for all candidates. This suggests, incentives are not equally aligned for all the members of the opposition caucus, which should signal the existence of rifts between parties, which the administration could try to capitalize on. This was especially true for Pachakutik and independent votes. While all the members of the opposition had something to gain on this occasion, as Pachakutik, the PSC, UNES, and independents all fought for a seat in the CAL, that could not be true for the impeachment process, where incentives for each party are less clear. Compounding this with the results of the vote to continue with Mr. Lasso’s impeachment (for more

information, [click here](#)), it would seem the fate of the president largely depends on said votes. In addition, the proposed correist members were approved with the least amount of votes, 94. While still overwhelmingly high, these facts suggest that there could be some independent votes that do not support more extreme policies such as the impeachment. While the difference with the rest of the candidates is relatively low (nearly 3 votes under the average), in these circumstances, each vote could be crucial. In this context, with the votes in the assembly aligning in favor of the impeachment, the alternative of the Muerte Cruzada turns increasingly tempting for the administration..

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