

# Ecuador in Crisis: A State of Emergency is Declared

written by Ezba Walayat | April 3, 2023



Guillermo Lasso, the president of Ecuador, issued an emergency declaration for 14 of the provinces that were hardest hit by a massive earthquake of 6.8 magnitude and harsh weather conditions, a small city named Balao in the province of Guaynas served as the epicenter of earthquake. The emergency declared by President, will remain in effect for 60 days starting on March 20, 2023, which will assist authorities to mobilize financial resources, to support the population and rebuild infrastructure. Lasso spent the day after the earthquake touring the worst-hit regions, noting that El Oro, Guayas, and Azuay were particularly hard hit. In a statement, President of Ecuador, Guillermo Lasso said, "We are carrying out an evaluation of the damage caused by the earthquake. The institutions were immediately activated, and contingency teams are mobilizing to provide full support to those who have been affected."

Most of Ecuador is expected to experience severe weather through at least March 24. The National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology of Ecuador (INAMHI) has issued a weather warning for rain and thunderstorms in several parts of the country. Red alerts, the highest level on a three-tier scale, have also been issued in several areas. It was noted that about 16 people died and 460 suffered injuries due to the earthquake in the country. Initial reports indicated that the majority of the fatalities occurred in El Oro which also suffered 29 aftershocks, a southern province bordering Peru. As per authorities, at least 235 homes were affected in the wake of the earthquake which severely damaged the nation's infrastructure. Furthermore, official sources also reported that 148 schools, 48 health facilities and 17 other public buildings felt damages in varying degrees, in addition to 90 houses that demolished completely.



According to a statement from the Ministry of Economics and Finance, financial aid would be provided to the government agencies so they can deal with the needs of earthquake-affected individuals more efficiently. Moreover, the most affected areas will be given access to the full network of disaster protection and bonds. The decision by the Ecuador's Government to activate an emergency response plan is commendable, but its execution is more crucial to help the country's citizens. Since the weather forecasts indicate worsening conditions which can have an impact on a significant number of people, therefore, immediate action is imperative to ensure the safety of lives and the provision of basic needs.