

Indigenous leader Iza says he won't to run for Ecuador's presidency



Indigenous leader Leonidas Iza, June 2, 2023. | Photo: Twitter/ @radiolacalle

Quito, June 4 (RHC)-- Leonidas Iza, one of the most charismatic leaders of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), withdrew his candidacy from the early presidential elections to be held in August.

During a press conference, Jairo Cartincus, CONAIE President for the Coastal Region, said that the decision to withdraw Iza's candidacy was made because there are no favorable conditions for the Indigenous peoples to present their own candidate.

The Pachakutik party, which had been linked to Indigenous grassroots organizations, "is currently kidnapped by the oligarchy," Cartincus said, thus confirming that that such a party has in practice an alliance with President Guillermo Lasso and other right-wing groups.

Previously, Iza had made his participation in the presidential race conditional on Pachakutik removing from the new lists of candidates for legislators all those lawmakers who had collaborated with the Lasso administration.

Marlon Vargas, president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENAIE), mentioned that Pachakutik's lists of lawmakers even include people who were against the 2022 national strike. Iza explained that there were also other disagreements with Pachakutik since the lists of candidates for congress did not include social leaders capable of guaranteeing adequate representation of grassroots organizations.

"We are not leaving Pachakutik. We just have to get rid of those bad elements that have misled our glorious Pachakutik movement, which was born in the heart of the struggles of the Indigenous movement but articulated with all popular sectors," Iza pointed out.

By renouncing his presidential candidacy, Iza effectively leaves the way open for the presidential binomial of the Citizens Revolution, which is a political group led by former President Rafael Correa, to become the only leftist option in the upcoming elections.

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