

Chronology of the fall of Abdalá Bucaram (December 1 1996 - February 6 1997)

December 1. President Bucaram officially presents his economic plan to the nation (EC 1996; EIU 1997, pp. 14-18).

December 2-9. Trade unions, indigenous groups, transport federations, and other popular organizations reject the economic plan. Opposition is also voiced by political parties, including PSC, DP, ID, PK, and MPD (DH 1996a; DH 1996b; EUN 1996; DH 1996d).

December 11-13. The business chambers reject convertibility, citing the government's lack of credibility (DH 1996c).

January 5. Scandal erupts over the disappearance of funds raised by government's telethon "Christmas of the Poor" (DH 1997a).

January 5. The opposition parties agree to thwart Bucaram's economic plan and maintain vigilance against corruption and abuse of power (DH 1997b).

January 8. Hundreds of mouth-gagged journalists march in Quito and Cuenca protesting government intimidation (DH 1997c).

January 10. CONAIE, the trade union centrals, and the CMS form a Patriotic Front to resist privatization, convertibility, and elimination of subsidies. They announce a national civic strike, scheduled for February 5, to demand the subjection of the proposed economic measures to a referendum (DH 1997d).

January 26. Speaker of congress Fabian Alarcon takes distance from Bucaram, calling for rectifications (DH 1997g).

January 27. Former presidents, opposition parties, business chambers, other civil society organizations, and the municipalities of Quito, Guayaquil, and Cuenca have announced that they will join the national strike on February 5 (DH 1997e; DH 1997f; EUN 1997).

January 27. Bucaram proposes dialogue on economic measures (DH 1997k).

January 27. Opposition politicians reject dialogue, talk openly about possible impeachment. Leaders of the PSC and PK propose Bucaram's dismissal on the grounds of mental insanity, which requires a simple majority in congress (DH 1997h).

January 29. US ambassador Leslie Alexander declares that corruption is rampant and that it is his duty to warn Americans of the dangers of investing in Ecuador (EC 1997).

January 30. CMS activists occupy Quito's cathedral demanding Bucaram's resignation (DH 1997j).

January 31. Declaring that the role of the armed forces is to defend the nation's sovereignty, the Association of Generals and Admirals asks Bucaram to preserve unity and refrain from using the military to repress opponents (DH 1997i).

February 5. The national civil strike begins with massive indigenous rallies and road blockades in the countryside. More than 2 million demonstrators march in Quito, Guayaquil, Cuenca and other towns demanding the ouster of Bucaram (DH 1997l); DH 1997m; DH 1997n).

February 6. Leading a delegation of the organizations participating in the strike, former presidents Rodrigo Borja and Osvaldo Hurtado submit an impeachment petition to congress (DH 1997o).

February 6. Bucaram announces rectifications in economic policy (DH 1997p).

February 6. In a move of dubious legality, Congress removes Bucaram for mental insanity and appoints its speaker Fabian Alarcón as acting president (DH 1997p).

References

DH - Diario Hoy (Quito daily newspaper).

- 1996a. Trabajadores rechazan el paquete económico de Abdalá (December 4).
- 1996b. Los transportistas dicen que se van al paro general (December 6).
- 1996c. Bucaram y la credibilidad otra vez (December 14).
- 1996d. Abdala logra unir a la oposición (December 9).
- 1997a. Las cuentas de la teletón (January 6).
- 1997b. Se arma la oposición (January 7).
- 1997c. Marcha periodistas contra acoso a la prensa (January 10).
- 1997d. Preparan acciones contra el gobierno (January 11).
- 1997e. Mahuad y el foro presentes (January 24).
- 1997f. Anuncian nuevas protestas -HOY (January 27).
- 1997g. Ojo con Fabián (January 27).
- 1997h. Piden salida de Bucaram (January 30).
- 1997i. Militares no a la represión (February 1).
- 1997j. Más adhesiones a la toma de la catedral (February 2).
- 1997k. Crónica de una caída anunciada (February 2).
- 1997l. El paro será de dos días (February 5).
- 1997m. Indígenas al paro indefinido (February 5).
- 1997n. Más de dos millones en las calles (February 6).
- 1997o. Destituirían a Bucaram (February 6).
- 1997p. Cronología de la destitución (February 7).

EC - El Comercio (Quito daily newspaper).

- 1996. Plan económico luz verde al cambio (December 2).
- 1997. Ecuador tiene una corrupción penetrante (January 30).

EIU - Economist Intelligence Unit

- 1997. *Country Report Ecuador - February 1997*, London: Economist Intelligence Unit .

EUN - El Universo (Guayaquil daily newspaper).

- 1996. CONAIE rechaza plan económico (December 10).
- 1997. Aumentan reclamos y se suman sectores al paro (February 3).