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By M<sup>a</sup> Ángeles Fernández  
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**"We must maintain the links between feminist movements and social movements"**



Mariana Mangini posa tras su intervención en Bilbao. / Foto: M<sup>a</sup> Ángeles Fernández

Sources: <https://www.pikaramagazine.com/>

Mariana Mangini, of the Manuela Ramos Movement in Peru, reviews the situation in her country a year after the coming to power of Dina Boluarte, "the first female dictator" for her organization.

His voice is broken and his tone is low because he has been talking non-stop for days. The cough interrupts her several times. He apologizes and continues. He doesn't shy away from questions or be afraid to call things by their name. **Mariana Mangini** is "a Manuela" who, with the help of **InteRed**, has travelled from Peru to Bizkaia to talk about political harassment and, of course, sexist violence. Being "a manuela" means having the support of 40 years of feminist activism and, among other things, not being afraid to speak out. Not even with aphonia.

"She's not the first female president, she's the first female dictator." This is the title of [a communiqué posted](#) on the X profile (ex-Twitter) of the [Manuela Ramos Movement](#) since February 23. **Dina Boluarte** came to power on December 7, 2022, following the impeachment by Congress of then-President Pedro Castillo for "permanent moral incapacity" and his subsequent imprisonment. Boluarte, who was the vice-president of Castillo's government, was elected as the new head of state, a position in which she continues despite social demands to call elections. "Mrs. Dina Boluarte has not been and is not up to the task. It has betrayed the people who voted for a government that, from day one, was cornered by the ultra-right, it has betrayed us, the women and dissidents, by surrendering to the most conservative and anti-rights political sectors, sustaining itself in the police and military forces, becoming a civic-military regime," begins the statement of "Las Manuelas". as the members of the Manuela Ramos Movement, born in 1978, are popularly known.

"We have been asking for an early election since December came in; Congress has given many extensions and Dina Boluarte does not have the political will to leave, because it is her lifeline," shares feminist activist Mariana Mangini in Bilbao, who predicts that there will be no elections until 2026. Now with calmer streets, the Peruvian activist recalls that Boluarte's coming to power coincided with months of much violence and security forces in the streets: "It was a scene of terror again." [The year of Boluarte's government](#) has seen more than 60 people killed, 1,300 injured and 600 arrested.

"The use of lethal firearms against protesters shows a blatant disregard for human life. Despite the Government's efforts to portray them as terrorists or criminals, the people who died were protesters, observers and bystanders. Almost all of them belonged to poor, indigenous and peasant backgrounds, suggesting a racial and socio-economic bias in the use of lethal force," [said Agnès Callamard](#), Secretary General of Amnesty International, which produced a report on repression in Peru. Quoting this source, Mangini claims that there was "a whole plan to silence and kill directly."

**In the hardest moments of the social outburst, the images of indigenous women with their children hanging and being persecuted were very harsh. These women [were singled out](#) and even the president took away their political strength, she didn't see them as political subjects, how was this accusation experienced?**

There is a context of repression and denial of their agendas and demands; The racism that already existed has become more unpunished and we see it in the different authorities who express themselves badly about indigenous women. And they have taken away everything

they have gained, which was participation, visibility, fair access to their rights; We see that there is no reparation, there is no justice for them. It is a difficult situation because they also do not have access to a nearby health center or have problems accessing education; There is still thought of child marriage, which is prohibited, but recently there were comments from congressmen who said that it fostered women's development. As a result of the social demonstrations that have taken place in the country, there is strong repression and killings; That is a situation that has us on tenterhooks right now, also waiting for reactions from the State, because what the State is doing is capturing powers, capturing the press as well, and it is important to denounce it because this affects the lives of women. The women who protested in Puno were also violated in their role, they had their buses, their daughters on their backs, and they were attacked by the police.

**Are the protests and, therefore, the repression still alive?**

Right now the population is more passive because we are facing a strong economic crisis, we have to survive. But the groups continue to come together when things happen, such as Congress wanting to keep the National Board of Justice or removing those from the National Elections Jury. There is a demand because of the little institutionality we have left.

**Mariana Mangini**, in charge of volunteering for the Manuela Ramos Movement, began her speech a few weeks ago in Bilbao by addressing some of the tasks of her organisation, which focuses on the defence of women's rights and diversity. "We work from different axes: from the protection of bodies, from sexuality and physical autonomy, **from the development of economic autonomy and political rights**, which is what we work with InteRed; Different laws have been achieved that have to do with being present in political life," he begins. Achievements that are in retreat: "From this belonging in the political space, women have experienced situations of harassment and that we are typifying this as political harassment." Since 2021, Peru has had a law to prevent and punish harassment of women in politics.

"We are working on how we implement the law from all perspectives. It is also in our interest to continue to strengthen our work with elected women, so that they have their own agendas, so that they develop their own initiatives. We are always attentive to any violation, and we accompany victims of political, psycho-emotional and legal harassment; There are some cases that are emblematic and have to have more visibility so that they are not repeated, that is why we make it public. It is important to give a name to violence,

because there is a social imaginary that says that it does not exist; There is a lot of denial of violence with the advance of the right," he adds.

Faced with this complex context of repression and regression, the "manuela" stresses the importance of "maintaining the articulations between feminist movements and social movements", which, she explains, "allow us to have a direct response to the State".

Almost a decade ago, the Manuela Ramos Movement launched together with other organizations [the campaign for the right to decide](#); Signatures were collected but a few votes were needed to obtain abortion in cases of rape. In 2016, the feminist activist shares, the law against sexual harassment was achieved, because the "not one less" movement was quite strong and "made those more conservative bases" tremble, a majority in Congress.

### **What is the situation of sexual and reproductive rights?**

Suddenly we have been stripped of rights already won under conservative discourses. We have a Congress that is mostly right-wing conservative and with a left-wing conservative section. Therapeutic abortion has been a law since 1924, but in recent months laws have been passed to give the right to the conceived child and this could have relevance in decision-making regarding access to therapeutic abortion; Although they deny it and say that it has no connection, more conscientious objections are generated. They want birth control and pregnancy control.

### **And are there setbacks on other issues?**

There is now an attempt to change the name of the Ministry of Women to the Ministry of the Family. We'll see if it happens or not, that's in Congress, the change hasn't been achieved yet, but there are attempts. Also the Municipality of Lima, which has a conservative far-right mayor, has removed some issues related to women and gender equality. The [removal of inclusive language](#) as a use by the State Government has been ordered and approved. And last year they also took away comprehensive sex education and that is the biggest attack on education with a gender focus, now what they are going to do is that the parents themselves are going to intercede in the preparation of school textbooks.

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Source: <https://www.pikaramagazine.com/2024/01/hay-que-mantener-las-articulaciones-entre-los-movimientos-feministas-y-los-movimientos-sociales/>

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