As detailed below, the Peruvian government is now attacking illegal mining on numerous fronts: formalization of select small-scale mining operations, raids on illegal mining operations, raids on illegal processing plants, seizures of illegal exports, restriction of fuel, establishment of a mercury purchase registry, and establishment of a national company to buy gold.

The upcoming miners protest starting March 17 will be a major test for the government and for the looming April 19 formalization. High Commissioner for Formalization Daniel Urresti characterized the protest as a “desperate measure”. Likewise, environment minister Manuel Pulgar-Vidal said the government’s strategy is “correct and successful” and therefore the target of the illegal miners’ protest.

Environment minister Manuel Pulgar-Vidal estimates that more than 10,000 miners will be formalized by April 19. He also indicated that those with documents presented will still be eligible and around 20,000 miners in total will eventually be formalized. It is reported that 72,816 miners initially began the formalization process.

In March, a Buyers Registry (Registro Único de Compradores) for mercury and cyanide will be established. This registry will be obligatory and run by SUNAT (Superintendencia Nacional de Aduanas y de Administración Tributaria).

As noted in Report #1, it appears that the government is preparing to back away from the mining ban in rivers. Legislation will soon go to Congress that would modify the law and approve alluvial mining under “international standards”.

The government will start directly buying gold from small-scale miners via the state company Activos Mineros S.A.C. (AMSAC). AMSAC will soon begin a process to establish formal business agreements with the miners.

According to customs officials, exports of illegal gold are “frozen, almost paralyzed”. Officials expect a 25% drop this year in gold exports due to tougher requirements. Upcoming legislation will require that exporters justify the source of the gold and conduct lab tests to verify these origins. Last December, SUNAT installed a lab that scans and verifies gold leaving the country. The government is also installing special teams in airports to detect and seize illegal gold shipments.

January saw the first major raid of illegal gold processing plants in Nazca. 95% of the processing plants for gold coming from Madre de Dios, Cusco, and Puno are located between Nazca and Chala on the Peruvian coast. Officials have stated that by July all of the illegal
plants will be shut down. The government is planning construction of processing plants across the country so everything is not concentrated in Nazca and Chala; the first pilot project will be in Piura.

- The raids on illegal mining camps continue as well. Late February saw another big police-led raid within the La Pampa section of Madre de Dios that yielded the destruction of equipment. There have now been 14 raids in 2014, coming off of 78 in 2013.

- According to environment minister Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, Peru’s multi-pronged attack on mining will be a model for the greater region. In fact, officials from Ecuador were recently in Peru to study their strategy.

- The Permanent Representative of Peru to the Organization of American States (OAS) proposed on behalf of Peru to prioritize the fight against drug trafficking and illegal mining as related crimes that finance and aggravate the threat of terrorism in the hemisphere. The proposal was made at the annual meeting of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) of the OAS in Washington DC.

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11. [http://www.larepublica.pe/17-02-2014/oro-ilegal-de-madre-de-dios-se-lava-en-las-plantas-de-chala-y-nazca](http://www.larepublica.pe/17-02-2014/oro-ilegal-de-madre-de-dios-se-lava-en-las-plantas-de-chala-y-nazca)