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Ecuador: Public School Teachers End Strike After 43 Days

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On April 9, the National Educators Union (UNE) concluded a 43-day strike after President Rodrigo Borja announced that legislation pertaining to teachers' employment status and career trajectories would be approved and promulgated if they returned to work. UNE members number 100,000, including teachers, aides and supervisors. About 1 million pre-school, primary and secondary school students were affected by the strike. Legislation recently approved by the national congress specifies payment of a "seniority subsidy." Teachers with less than five years of service are to receive an additional 2,500 sucres ($2.50) per month. Teachers with more than five years of seniority will receive an amount equivalent to 3% of the entry level salary for their respective "category." Prior to April 9, the Ecuadoran Secondary Student Federation (FESE) called on students to attend classes on April 10 as a pressure tactic to end the strike. A UNE communique said teachers would resume activities on April 10. UNE president Juan Jose Castillo said his organization would reject a total or partial veto to the new legislation approved the congress as threatened by Education Minister Alfredo Vera. A request for Vera's dismissal will be soon submitted to the unicameral legislature. (Basic data from EFE, 04/09/91)