

# The blackout in Puerto Rico

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Protesters marched along the Las Américas Expressway to demand the departure of Luma, amid the continued power outages across the island, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on October 15, 2021.

April 17 — This past Wednesday of Holy Week, Puerto Rico experienced — for the

second time in just three months — a general blackout. The first was on New Year's Eve.

Since the privatization of the electricity service, we have lived with unstable electricity. The blackouts, which last for hours, and voltage fluctuations have caused not only unrest among the population, but many people have lost everything from appliances, electronic devices, and food to their homes, which have burned down either by a short circuit or by the explosion of an electric generator. And let's not even mention the cost to their health. Some sick people, especially in mountainous areas, who live at the mercy of oxygen tanks or electrically powered medical instruments, have already lost their lives, or their condition has worsened. Small business owners who cannot afford a generator or a solar panel system have lost their businesses and their families' income. And let's also remember that in high-altitude areas, water service depends on pumps that, in turn, operate on electricity. So when there's no electricity, there's no water!

The local government of Jennifer González, obedient to the Fiscal Control Board imposed by the United States, continues to reward these companies that come not to provide a service, but to steal from the people. They've already raised the cost of electricity seven times since they started four years ago. Now that Board has requested that the rate be raised again! And unlike other countries that may experience difficulties with this service, there is no remedy or warning from the government. Quite the contrary! The governor only lies and makes false promises to the people.

But it seems the people's patience is running out, and both on social media and in the news, they are protesting against both the operation of these private companies and the governor. And here, six years ago, a similar movement began that forced Governor Roselló to resign.

We'll see if this will turn into Jennifer Resign! Zero Privatizations! And Down with

the Junta!

From Puerto Rico, speaking to Radio Clarín of Colombia, Berta Joubert-Ceci

