

# *Protest against the privatization of Machu Picchu*

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Lima, January 25 (RHC)-- After the street actions against the privatization of the Wonder of the World, different social organizations called for an indefinite strike until the situation is clarified.

Responding to protests carried out in Cusco against the privatization of the Machu Picchu sanctuary, Peruvian legislator Luis Aragón presented a motion of interpellation against Peru's Minister of Culture, Leslie Urteaga.

According to reports from Lima, Minister Urteaga must answer before the Congress of the Republic for the "outsourcing of the sale of virtual tickets for admission to the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu."

These tickets are sold through the web platform of the private company Joinnus, this action led to several street actions by citizens shouting "Machu Picchu is not for sale." Despite the fact that the social discontent had a place inside the Congress of the Republic, several social organizations in the city of Cusco called an indefinite general strike to exert more pressure on the decision of the sale of tickets to the Peruvian cultural heritage.

The initiative of the indefinite general strike is carried by the Committee of Struggle for the Defense of the People of Machupicchu; this strike was effective from January 25 from 00h00.

The text mentions, among other reasons for the demonstration, the "conflict of interests" of the company involved in the privatization and the "chaos" produced in the purchase of tickets."For improvising a virtual sales platform that is neither modern nor functional," they stated in the communiqué.

The platform for which Peruvians are taking street actions is carried out by the private company Joinnus, said platform is in operation for the sale of tickets for the sanctuary since January 20th.

Minister of Culture Leslie Urteaga once pointed out that the platform is not about privatization, however she did not clarify the reason why a private company was selling the ticket. "Here we are precisely, the guiding role of the Ministry of Culture is to protect, to take care of our main sanctuary of Machu Picchu," he told the press on Wednesday.

For his part, the Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism, Juan Carlos Mathews, replied to RPP that the Government seeks "transparency" and "predictability" for visitors to the Inca citadel.

"It is positive that this possibility of electronic sales is being opened for the simple fact that any tourist coming here from Europe or Asia normally plans his visit two months in advance, therefore, we cannot expect a tourist to come and wait for him to queue up and enter," he said.

While the members of the executive cabinet defend the ticket sales measure, the people of Cusco categorically reject the measure alleging that it is an unpatriotic action.

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