

# *Argentinian president declares he will not increase minimum wage*

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Buenos Aires, February 17 (RHC)-- Argentinian President Javier Milei told the media on Friday that he has no plans to sign a decree to update the minimum living and mobile wage, amid the inflationary process facing the country, and said he has no plans to convene a national teachers' union meeting.

He pointed out that the increase in the minimum wage has to be addressed by the workers with their employers and that the teachers' bargaining negotiations depend on each province.

At the same time, he defended that the high tariffs for electricity and other services are appropriate because they obey the market and will help to tackle inflation. He said that he will not relax until fiscal balance is assured.

In addition, he announced that he will move forward with the elimination by decree of some trust funds, which would eliminate about \$2 billion in revenues that so far are given to the provinces and are usually used as budgets to finance public programmes. It has repeatedly alleged that the use of these funds is

not transparent.

Previously, the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) issued a statement in which it accused Milei of boycotting the negotiations to raise the Minimum, Vital and Mobile Wage (SMVM) by 85 percent as of February 1, according to the unions' proposal.

On Thursday, the unions and employers met to discuss the unions' proposal to raise the SMVM from 156,000 pesos (about \$186) to 288,600 pesos (about \$345). However, the employers rejected the offer and the meeting ended without agreement.

In assessing what happened, the CGT said that such an outcome confirmed "the government's absolute disregard for the social drama that Argentines are going through", with a suffocating inflationary process and "intolerable and unjustifiable" tariff increases.

What happened was also criticised by the Central de Trabajadores de Argentina (CTA) and the CTA Autónoma, which considered that the Executive and the employers acted in complicity against the interests of the workers.

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