

Peruvian Congress Accepts Prime Minister Amid Social Unrest



Lima, April 29 (teleSUR-RHC)-- The Peruvian Congress voted on Monday to approve the new Prime Minister Pedro Cateriano and a new Cabinet. The debate, lasting over 15 hours until close to midnight, resulted in 76 votes in favor of the new Cabinet, 36 abstentions, and 10 leftist minority votes against the government.

Juan Pari is one of the left-leaning Congress members who abandoned the ruling party due to the government's shift to the right. He explained why his new party, Dignity and Democracy, voted against Cateriano, claiming that previous discussions with the government have been one-sided.

According to Pari, "dialogue cannot be biased and [held] only with those who have a particular political viewpoint and a predetermined position that only defends the current economic model. [Cateriano] has not engaged in dialogue with the real opposition, which simply aims to question the economic model." Cateriano's address to Congress focused on reaffirming the economic strategies of the government based on extractive industries and supporting and favoring foreign investments.

The Prime Minister mentioned the word "investment" 32 times in his speech and defended the project *Tía María* to great extent. *Tía María* is the multi-million dollar mining project of Southern Copper Corporation currently causing social conflict with farm workers in Arequipa. Southern Cooper Corporation has a history of environmental impact that has made areas infertile. Notably, the valley where *Tía María* would take

place is one of the most fertile lands in Peru.

According to political analyst and the editor of the UNO newspaper, Paco Moreno, the conflict with *Tía María* is the evidence of one of the biggest obstacles the government must face if it aims to push its economic plan.

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