

Ecuadoran President Rafael Correa Delays Tax Vote, Calls for National Debate on Wealth Redistribution in Ecuador



Quito, June 16 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Ecuadoran President Rafael Correa announced on Monday night in a televised address that the National Assembly vote on two controversial tax bills, which sparked a series of protests last week, will be temporarily suspended.

According to the head of state, the decision is rooted in the best interests of the people, to launch a debate and avoid violence. "We can wait. This is not for our government, this is for future generations," explained Correa.

Correa criticized inequality and excessive wealth, saying: "Every excessive concentration of wealth is unjust." The president claimed that the opposition is not trying to debate these laws, but to oust him. This is why a national debate would show that they do not have real arguments and are trying to use the tax laws as an excuse to topple him.

The president criticized the way in which the opposition has addressed the inheritance tax. He said the argument that opposing the tax law is defending the Ecuadorean family unit is misleading. Correa reiterated that if the opposition can show that the taxes would affect the poorest of Ecuadoreans, he would discard both projects.

The president also criticized several messages on social media that claim that poor people are poor because they wish to be, or because they don't work hard enough. "Poor people are poor because of an extremely unjust society," he explained, adding that poor people face many more obstacles to obtain wealth.

Correa talked about the aftermath of the 1999 banking crisis, which devastated Ecuador's economy, saying the nation was saved by the lower classes and those left in poverty. "The country was not saved by the rich, but by the poor, the migrants ... who left and sent their remittances," he said. Correa emphasized that the two taxes would only affect a very small fraction of the population.

Earlier Monday, Ecuadoreans from all socioeconomic backgrounds and various social movements filled the main square of the capital Quito to show their support for the Correa administration's Citizen's Revolution.

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