

# *15,000 Local Government Leaders in Ecuador Back Rafael Correa's Tax Plan*

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Quito, June 25 (teleSUR-RHC)-- After weeks of often-violent right-wing protests over proposed tax changes that would affect only a very small minority of affluent Ecuadoreans, over 15,000 leaders from Ecuador's rural governments are carrying out an extraordinary assembly on Thursday in support of the government.

The event, taking place in the northeastern city of Montecristi, will see the leaders discussing the advances achieved by the current government and express support for President Rafael Correa in the face of ongoing right-wing hostility. Individual members of the so-called "rural parish governments" have expressed their support of Correa in recent days, but the Montecristi meeting will be an opportunity to support his democratically elected government.

The movement leader, Bolivar Armijos, said members of the national council of local governments have declared they will be "on constant watch" for any attempt to destabilize the government. "If we have to support the government we will bring hundreds of thousands of rural citizens to protect the Citizens' Revolution," Armijos said.

The so-called Citizens' Revolution was established by Correa when he became president in 2007. It has brought about a series of social programs and deep reforms that have delivered remarkable changes for Ecuador's long-excluded majority. It has also positioned the country as one of the most stable economies in Latin America, after decades of turmoil, including the 1999 financial crisis prompted by a bank bailout, which resulted in mass unemployment, inflation and poverty.

Correa's left-wing government has taken an estimated 1.1 million people out of poverty, according to official figures.

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