

Venezuela Launches Truth and Justice Commission Against Coups



Caracas, April 13 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro launched the new Truth, Justice, and Victims Reparation Commission on Tuesday as the country marks the anniversary of the 2002 coup attempt against former President Hugo Chavez.

The Commission is aimed at shedding light on human rights violations and preventing coups and other attempts to undermine democracy in the South American country, including the violent opposition blockades known as guarimbas that killed 43 people in 2014.

UNASUR General Secretary Ernesto Samper, who will accompany the Commission, spoke in support of the initiative at the launching ceremony in the Presidential Palace Miraflores, welcoming the opportunity to participate.

Maduro has invited four representatives of the opposition, which controls the country's National Assembly, to join and work with the Commission. The group will be coordinated by Vice President Aristobulo Isturiz, who Maduro said has had first-hand experience living the circumstances of the last 28 years.

The initiative focuses on events that have taken place in Venezuela during the countrys Bolivarian Revolution, launched in 1999 with the election of Chavez, including the 2002 coup attempt.

Another Truth Commission was set up in 2011 with the approval of the Law Against Forgetting to investigate historical state repression and human rights violations, including torture and extrajudicial killings, committed during the countrys Fourth Republic from 1958-1998.

The Maduro government put forward the Truth, Justice, and Victims Reparation Commission at the beginning of this year after the election of an opposition-majority National Assembly promised to approve the Amnesty Law.

Like the new Commission, the Amnesty Law also covers the period since Chavezs election, from 1999 to present. A high Venezuelan court has ruled the Amnesty Law unconstitutional.

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