

# *Maduro Calls Venezuela Peace Meeting to End Violence*

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Caracas, February 26 (RHC) — Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has called for a peace conference aimed at quelling the recent upsurge of violence in the South American country.

Maduro urged all the country's top religious and political leaders to attend the peace meeting on Wednesday.

However, the main opposition leader, Henrique Capriles, announced that he would not join the conference to protest what he calls 'government repression' of demonstrators.

The president also said he would ask the National Assembly to form a Truth Commission to investigate the violent protests that have engulfed Venezuela recently, which he says are an attempt to "justify foreign intervention."

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Elias Jaua on Tuesday said the violent groups that have marred recent political protests in Venezuela are "increasingly more isolated."

"Why aren't there violent gangs in the working class neighborhoods? Because they know this is not their fight," Jaua said at an official event in Acevedo, Miranda State. "Popular rebellions are not led by oligarchs," he added in reference to the right wing opposition that has organized the violent

demonstrations.

The violent riots against the government of President Nicolas Maduro have left 13 people dead and 149 people injured since they broke out on February 12th in the capital Caracas and several other cities.

Some 83 percent of Venezuelans condemn the violence-marred protests, according to a poll released Tuesday.

Oscar Schemel, president of polling firm Hinterlaces, added those people "demand the government sanction those responsible for the violence."

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