

Venezuelan Authorities Seize Opposition Stronghold



Caracas, March 18 (RHC) -- Venezuelan authorities on Monday took over Altamira Square in the eastern Caracas district of Chacao from violent protesters.

Following a special operation involving some 600 security agents, Interior Minister Miguel Rodriguez Torres said the area, which protesters had turned into a stronghold, has now been declared violence-free.

The minister added that several people linked to vandalism were arrested and that many confessed they had received payments of up to 5,000 bolivars (793 U.S. dollars) per week to generate violence in the area.

Transportation Minister Haiman El Troudi said that the public transportation service, known as Metrobus, resumed operations again on Monday, after several days of suspension due to violence.

Since its onset more than a month ago, anti-government protests in capital Caracas and other major Venezuelan cities have left 29 dead and some 400 others injured.

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