

# *Puerto Ricans reject U.S. plan to invade Venezuela*

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San Juan, February 18 (RHC)-- Hundreds of Puerto Ricans, joined by formerly incarcerated revolutionary activist Oscar Lopez Rivera, have held a demonstration in front of the Federal Court, in Old San Juan, to voice opposition to a U.S. military intervention in Venezuela.

The vice president of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, Maria Santiago; the co-president of the National Hostosiano Independence Movement, Wilma Reveron; the Working People Party's leader, Rafael Bernabe; and the leader of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, Gerardo Segarra condemned U.S. aggression towards the Venezuelan people, according to a report by Prensa Latina.

A Venezuelan Solidarity Network activist, Jose Rivera, said that the main purpose of the protest was to denounce the U.S. government's plan to provoke an invasion of Venezuela. The demonstration was also aimed at denouncing "the undue intervention" of the Puerto Rican Government, which backed the U.S. campaign for so-called "humanitarian aid" to Venezuela, last week.

"Puerto Ricans will not support the United States in its attempt to destabilize and recolonize our Latin American brothers," Rivera said, adding that "we defend the right of all peoples... In Venezuela, [President Nicolas] Maduro was elected in free, democratic and sovereign elections."

According to the Venezuelan Solidarity Network, a U.S. military intervention would mean the destruction of properties of hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans from the most humble and working classes. Protesters carried Venezuelan flags, placards showing support for President Nicolas Maduro and signs reading: "Yankees get out of our America."

Along with Lopez Rivera, freedom fighter Heriberto Marin -- a Puerto Rican revolutionary who participated in the historic 1950 uprising against the United States -- also attended the demonstration.

The protesters also questioned the reasons given by the United States to justify actions against the Bolivarian Republic and its people. "What happens in Venezuela has to be solved by Venezuelans. The United States says there is hunger in Venezuela ... There is hunger in half of the planet. However, the United States Government does not help the governments of those countries," stated Rafael Bernabe, a Working People Party member.

Additionally, the Puerto Rican Presbyterian Caucus (CPP) expressed: "We recognize that, for the last 20 years, [the Venezuelan nation] has chosen its destiny through democratic processes of liberation and hope."

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