

# *Macri is running mate denies food shortages in Argentina*

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Buenos Aires, September 19 (RHC)-- Mauricio Macri's Vice Presidential Candidate, Miguel Angel Pichetto, referred to hunger and poverty in Argentina as "an exaggeration" and strongly criticized the Catholic Archbishop of Salta for having talked about poverty.

During a television interview, the right-wing vice-presidential candidate said there was no hunger in Argentina and that the food emergency law "is a phenomenal symbolic defeat," hinting thus that recent protests constitute attempts to damage the image of the Argentinean government.

In order to minimize Macri's responsibility for the current situation, Pichetto argued that poverty in Argentina has a "structural character" because there has not been job creation over the last 18 years. The right-wing politician then took the opportunity to complain about the growth of social security funds: "75 percent of the national budget is for social spending," he claimed.

On September 15th, during a meeting with the Argentinean president held in the city of Salta, Monsignor Mario Cargnello delivered a strong rebuke to Macri for increasing poverty levels. "Mauricio, you've talked about poverty. So take with you the faces of the poor, who are worthy and respectful Argentineans. They deserve to get on our knees in front of them," the Archbishop told Macri as he extended his hand.

Regarding this face-to-face delivered moan, vice presidential candidate Pichetto said: "Speaking of hunger, of the concept of famine, is an exaggeration. If you see hunger, you should report where it is. There is no hunger in Argentina. The Archbishop, who lacks of the Vatican diplomacy, is not an intelligent man. His gesture with the president was incorrect, to put it mildly."

A couple of days after Senator Pichetto tried to save the Argentinean government's face, official data showed that the inflation trend is far from reversing. So far, annual inflation for producers has reached 62.9 percent, which means that price increases will affect consumers in a greater magnitude by the end of September.??????

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