

Bolivian opposition rejects new elections, Evo Morales calls for peace



La Paz, November 10 (RHC)-- Bolivian President Evo Morales rejected calls for resignation and condemned the opposition for failing to respect his new decision to reform the electoral authority and call for new elections, the Bolivian president told teleSUR Sunday in an exclusive interview from La Paz.

In an exclusive interview with teleSUR's correspondent in Bolivia Freddy Morales, the president said the decision to call new elections was to preserve the peace in Bolivia "so that we do not confront the Bolivian family," while calling on the opposition protesters to end the strikes and remove roadblocks in order to not harm the economy of the country.

Morales went on to condemn the opposition leaders and parties on how they rejected "the results obtained in the elections, now they do not accept the decisions of the OAS [Organization for the American States], I made a call to dialogue and they didn't accept it either."

When asked about the OAS' audit report where the organization recommended a new election be held, the president argued that the report was more political than technical, but said that his government would follow through on its promise and respect its findings. "The OAS has made a political decision, [but] we accept this provision of the international organization."

He went on to say how the opposition's attempted coup started the next day after the October 20th elections and peaked Saturday night. "The opposition sends its militants to burn the state buildings, violent groups sought to burn the city of La Paz, then the mutiny by some police officers."

Commenting on the reports of police joining the right-wing protests, the president confirmed the news while saying that the majority of the police forces are carrying out their main duty of maintaining peace and safety.

He thanked international support and solidarity and said that he has been receiving messages of support for his Sunday decision. "Several countries around the world, including in Europe, have expressed solidarity with us and welcomed the decision to call for new elections, however, the opposition continues to reject the new measures aimed at peace," the president told teleSUR's correspondent.

Asked about the role of the armed forces and their position on the ongoing unrest, Morales dismissed the notion that he would deploy the army and confirmed that he has the military's support.

"There is no problem with the country's armed forces. They will not go out into the streets. They have other tasks to take care of, the border, the fight against drug trafficking and the security of newly opened national companies," he said.

He concluded with a message of peace while reaffirming his call for talks. "I call on opposition political representatives not to continue damaging Bolivia, not to continue damaging the country's economy, to be in solidarity with the people. Only those who have personal objectives want to radicalize the events."

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