

# *Vast Majority of Venezuelans Back Measures Against Hoarding*

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Caracas, February 10 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Venezuelans have been facing shortages of basic goods, in part due to hoarding by businesses and according to a poll conducted by Venezuelan polling firm, Hinterlaces, a staggering 84 percent of them support the government using a “firm hand” against those who are hoarding basic goods.

The poll asked: “Do you agree with those who say the government should use a firm hand in order to combat hoarding and speculation?”

The Venezuelan government has been working to end hoarding and speculation by businesses that are opposed to price controls in the country, including some with alleged links to opposition parties. Earlier this month, a massive stockpile of goods hidden in a warehouse was uncovered.

Several managers with the Farmatodo chain were detained after it was alleged that they artificially created long lines by purposefully under-staffing their stores. The president of the National Assembly, Diosdado Cabello, denounced a plot by the opposition to sow disorder by provoking conflict in these lineups.

The poll also asked: “Do you agree or disagree with those who say merchants and businesspeople are taking advantage of the economic crisis in order to hoard products and speculate on prices?” 53 percent

of respondents said they agreed, with 45 disagreeing.

The Hinterlaces poll was conducted January 21st to the 27th and garnered 1,200 respondents.

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has called the opposition efforts to destabilize the country an “economic war”. Meanwhile, Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa has compared the situation Venezuela is facing to that of Chile in the early 1970's under President Salvador Allende before the U.S.-backed military coup.

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