

Video Counters Venezuelan Opposition Account of Mayor's Arrest



Caracas, February 25 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Venezuelan TV showed a video Monday which disproved claims by allies of opposition leader Antonio Ledezma that the Caracas mayor was violently handled when arrested last week for involvement in a foiled coup.

Miguel Angel Perez Pirela, host of the Cayendo y Corriendo television program, played a video of the arrest of Ledezma that shows the opposition mayor calmly leaving his office alongside police officials who arrived with a detention order for Ledezma.

Ledezma's wife told CNN that her husband was forcibly "kidnapped" and that punches were thrown as he was removed from his office. An opposition legislator, Richard Blanco, also appeared on television claiming that Ledezma was beaten as he was arrested.

Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado, who co-authored a 'transition plan' with Ledezma and Leopoldo Lopez, told international media that she spoke with Ledezma, insisting that he was beaten and removed from his office in handcuffs. The 'transition plan,' which was published in a national paper one day before the coup plans were to take effect, included calls for privatization of the country's oil and deregulation of

the economy.

In the video shared by Perez, it is clear Ledezma left willingly and the police did not mistreat him, nor was he put in handcuffs.

Ledezma was arrested last week and is accused of participating in the thwarted coup attempt against the democratically-elected government of Nicolas Maduro. His arrest was ordered by the Venezuelan Office of the Public Prosecutor.

Ledezma was named by Lorent Saleh, a young opposition activist who organized violent protests last year, as being the strongest supporter of the protests which resulted in 43 deaths.

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