

Guatemalan President Investigated by Congress for Corruption



Guatemala City, June 11 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Guatemalan President Otto Perez Molina is being investigated by the country's Congress and in the next few days it will decide whether to strip him of his immunity from prosecution to face a possible trial over corruption scandals that have caused massive protests demanding his resignation, the Supreme Court announced Wednesday.

Opposition lawmaker Amilcar Pop presented the motion that in the case of being granted would be unprecedented in the modern history of the Central American nation, and when the approval came through he said, "I always maintained my faith that Congress would do the right thing."

Luis Rabbe, president of Congress, said that the commission would be formed as early as Thursday and in the following days it would be up to them to investigate the president and decide on his immunity. The presidential spokesman Jorge Ortega responded to the news saying, "This is a legal procedure. We will

await Congress' resolution.”

According to Guatemalan opposition and political analyst, Perez, whose right-wing Patriot Party does not have a majority in Congress, remains in power only because of the support he has from the United States and Canada due to their sole interest in exploiting the country's resources. The *Memorial de Guatemala* website said that business leaders and influential right-wing leaders have gone to extreme lengths to back him, because “they fear if he is removed from power, impunity will end.”

Protesters have staged massive rallies in Guatemala City calling for Perez Molina to resign over the corruption allegations, which have rocked his cabinet in the last six weeks. He, however, has not yet been accused of any wrongdoing.

In May, Vice President Roxana Baldetti stepped down from office after news reports linked her to a customs corruption racket. She denied the allegations. A few days later, various other government officials, including the central bank chief and a former personal secretary to Perez Molina, were arrested over a bribery inquiry. Immediately after the arrests, several top cabinet officials who had been accused of corruption also stepped down.

Presidential elections in Guatemala are scheduled for September, in which Perez Molina cannot seek re-election.

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