

Outraged Movement Will Meet U.S. Ambassador in Honduras



Tegucigalpa, July 16 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Honduras' outraged movement protesting against endemic corruption in the country plans to march up to the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa on Friday before a scheduled meeting with U.S. Ambassador James Nealon.

Thousands of people have been taken to the streets with torches for the past eight weeks, demanding the dismissal of current President Juan Orlando Hernandez, who is embroiled in a major corruption scandal along with many other government officials.

Ariel Varela, one of the leaders of the protest movement, told *El Heraldo* that the massive protest will start at 5 p.m. from Morazan avenue up to La Paz avenue, where the embassy is located.

"Ambassador James Nealon will be receiving us, and will provide us with all the information about the \$2 million of financial support that his country gave Honduras, especially what these resources will be allocated to," she said.

Hernandez and his ruling National Party are accused of taking \$90 million of more than \$200 million embezzled from the public coffers of the country's Social Security Institute, known as IHSS, to fund their 2013 election campaign that saw him narrowly win amid widespread calls of electoral fraud.

While Hernandez has admitted he accepted corrupt funds, he has denied personal responsibility. His government is the second one since the U.S.-backed military coup in June 2010. The political turmoil and resistance that followed was met with increasing militarization in the name of improving security, a strategy that has been endorsed by the United States. The U.S. has also deployed 280 U.S. Marines to Central America, mostly to Honduras, while Obama's US\$1 billion security plan for Central America's Northern Triangle remains pending. Human rights violations and criminalization of political opposition and social movements have dramatically spiked in the wake of the coup.

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