

Honduras Launches New Anti-Corruption Body after Huge Protests



Tegucigalpa, January 20 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Honduras is set to ramp up its fight against corruption after a wave of scandals rocked the Central American country last year, but Honduran activist Ariel Varela told teleSUR the plan, though a step in the right direction, falls short of what Honduran people want.

“MACCIH (Support Mission Against Corruption and Impunity) is not what the people were asking for,” said Varela, a member of the Indignados movement launched last year in Honduras. “It doesn’t seem to have sufficient autonomy and strength in its investigative ability.”

Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez and Organization of American States Secretary-General Luis Almagro signed an agreement on Tuesday in Washington, D.C., to launch the MACCIH.

According to Varela, MACCIH can be a tool in the fight against corruption, but it has major limitations and will not be able to solve the deep problems and rampant impunity suffered in the country.

Varela argues that a “change of attitude in Honduran society” and cultural shift of not tolerating corruption will be key in pressuring for deeper solutions to the crisis of corruption and impunity.

He added that although MACCIH falls short of what activists had demanded, the new initiative shows that social movements succeeded in pressuring the government to recognize the problem of corruption.

The Honduran government and OAS, on the other hand, expressed optimism about the new mission. Almagro said the initiative will “open a chapter of hope in Honduras,” while President Hernandez heralded the plan as a “key moment in the history of the country, Central America, and the continent,” the Honduran daily La Prensa reported.

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