

# *Review of Signatures for Recall Referendum against Maduro Begins*

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Caracas, May 5 (RHC-PL) -- The review of the signatures gathered by the Venezuelan opposition to carry out a recall referendum against President Nicolás Maduro began Thursday at the National Electoral Council (CNE, in Spanish), Tibisay Lucena, head of the CNE has reported.

The boxes were open in the morning, with members of the Democratic Unity Round Table (MUD) and the ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela as witnesses. The results of the audit will be ready by Monday or Tuesday.

The mayor of Caracas, Jorge Rodríguez, head of the government commission in charge of carrying out the audit, said on May 2nd that the review is necessary because in 2004 the opposition used false signatures to hold a recall referendum against President Hugo Chávez.

Rodríguez also stated that the authorities will ask for "all measures established by the Constitution and laws as a precautionary measure to defend the work of the CNE against excessive criticism and the violent actions of the opposition."

The MUD gathered 2.5 million signatures, out of which 1.85 million were sent to the CNE to begin the process of validation, which will taking place for five days, according to regulations in force.

Under the law, the MUD needs to collect 197,000 signatures in 30 days, one percent of the Electoral Registry.

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