



## Portugal Adopts Austerity Budget Plan Amid Protests



Lisbon, November 27 (RHC)-- The Portuguese parliament has adopted the 2014 austerity budget amid protests held to call on the government to resign and pave the way for immediate elections. Portuguese lawmakers approved the 2014 budget on Tuesday, bringing a third straight year of cuts affecting public sector wages and the pension program. The budget is expected to save 3.9 billion euros or about 2.3 percent of Portugal's annual GDP.

Among the budget measures were an increase in the public sector workweek by five hours, slashes to retirement pensions by 10 percent as well as salary cuts of up to 12 percent for those who earn more than 600 euros a month.

This is while protesters gathered outside the parliament calling for nationwide rallies against more cuts as demanded by the troika of lenders - the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund and the European Central Bank.

The protesters said the budget plan robs people of their salaries and pensions.

Opposition groups and unions said they will challenge the budget even though it will likely pass the parliament.