

Evo Morales arrives in Argentina to request political asylum



Buenos Aires, December 12 (RHC)-- Bolivia's former President Evo Morales, who was forced to resign after the mutiny of his country's security forces, arrived in Argentina as a refugee.

"He comes to stay in Argentina because he arrives as an asylee and then he will have refugee status," Argentina's Foreign Affairs Minister Felipe Sola announced on Thursday. The Argentinean minister indicated that he signed on Wednesday night the procedures to accept Morales as an asylee; in the next few days, however, the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) leader will request his declaration as a refugee.

Sola also mentioned that a meeting between Morales and President Alberto Fernandez has not been scheduled for this Thursday. Nevertheless, the Foreign Affairs Minister did not rule out the possibility of both politicians speaking by phone. During his declarations to the press, Sola also mentioned that Bolivia's self-proclaimed President Jeanine Añez "is a de-facto government."

Upon his arrival in Buenos Aires, Evo Morales said: "A month ago I arrived in Mexico, a sister country that saved our lives. I was sad and broken. Now I've arrived in Argentina to continue fighting for the humblest and to unite the Great Homeland. I am strong and lively. I thank Mexico and Argentina for all their support and solidarity."

The Bolivian leader was accompanied by his former Health Minister Gabriela Montaña. His former Vice President Alvaro Garcia Linera and former Foreign Affairs Minister Diego Pary Rodriguez will arrive in Argentina on Friday. All of them began the process to receive the political refugees status, which must be ratified by the Interior Minister Eduardo de Pedro.

"Evo is very grateful. He told us he feels better here than in Mexico and he did not ask us for any special treatment," Minister Sola said. Meanwhile, Mexico's Foreign Affairs Minister Marcelo Ebrard stated that the Bolivian leader fully thanked the generosity of the Mexican government and people.

"My eternal thanks to President [Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador] and the government of Mexico for saving my life and for sheltering me. I felt at home with Mexican sisters and brothers for a month," Evo Morales said.

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