

Venezuela's Subway Workers Protest Attacks on Public Transit



Caracas, May 13 (RHC) -- Subway workers in the Venezuelan capital of Caracas marched Monday against recent attacks on the public transit system around the country.

Demonstrators, including employees of the Caracas Metro and representatives of Venezuela's Bolivarian Workers' Central, also demanded an investigation into the role local authorities played in cities where the subway system suffered the worst damage, said Eddison Alvarado, the president of the metro workers' union, in an interview with state TV.

Among those authorities, said Alvarado, were Henrique Capriles, governor of the Miranda state and leader of Venezuela's opposition right-wing parties, as well as three mayors allied with the conservative movement.

These attacks are the latest in a wave of violent anti-government protests and aggressions in Venezuela perpetrated by hardline opposition groups, that aim to overthrow the elected government of President Nicolas Maduro.

"The opposition's violent actions had started to ebb away, but the ambivalent actions of those officials helped rekindle the violence," the union leader said.

"They have turned Miranda into an ungovernable state, where the metro workers have no guarantees of safety to do our jobs," he said. "In addition to going to the Attorney General's, we are going to march to the Supreme Court of Justice to deliver a document to file a constitutional complaint against this governor and those mayors."

Since the protests flared up in February, demonstrators hurled rocks and fired shots at the metro in intermittent attacks on the system, which not only caused damage to public property, but also left some 200 passengers and 57 metro workers injured, Alvarado said.

The extreme violence of the protesters indicates "they are paid mercenaries with no scruples, who, for money, terrorize and inflict injuries on the people that use our system," he said.

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