

Paraguayan Activists Arrested for Anti-President Graffiti



Asunción, February 5 (RHC-teleSUR) -- The Paraguayan government of Horacio Cartes has been repeatedly condemned for violating human rights like freedom of speech.

Paraguayan police arrested two activists while they were painting graffiti in the streets of the capital on the night of February 2nd to the 3rd.

The activists -- Pablo Echarri, from the Paraguayan Communist Party, and Pedro Lezcano, from the Jaguata movement -- were eventually released under pressure from their lawyers and relatives later in the morning.

Echarri said that the police officers -- from the Third Police Station, frequently denounced for its abusive actions -- intimidated and frightened them all the time, threatening that they would remain in jail for violation of private property and disturbing the peace. The public ministry has repeatedly used the latter against demonstrators, according to the Paraguayan agency E'a.

The activists had painted, "Stop the narco-soy genocide," referring to the alleged links between organized crime and the soy industry, as part of the activities celebrating the 26th anniversary of the downfall of Alfredo Stroessner's dictatorship.

“We were detained over the charge of painting a face. If we were painting in favor of [President Horacio Cartes' policies, they wouldn't have done anything,” said Lezcano.

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