

Peruvian State Oil Company Workers Call for National Strike



Lima, April 06 (teleSUR-RHC) Oil Workers from *Petroperu*, the state-run oil company, announced early Friday a national strike that will start on Wednesday April 8th and continue until issues are resolved.

The strike was called in response to the refusal by the president to invest in oil exploration in lots III and IV in the *Talara* region, which is estimated to hold 24 million barrels of the best quality oil.

The lots were given to a large private company called *Graña y Montero* for 30 years but the state was supposed to participate with a 25 percent share according to previous regulations. Instead, *Graña y Montero* will control and profit from the entire investment opportunity.

Workers explained to the minister of Energy and Mining, Rosa María Ortiz, the importance for the country to exploit lots III and IV again. However, their request was denied and for that reason more than 2,000 oil workers will go on strike.

"*Graña y Montero* is going alone," was the unambiguous answer of Ortiz. This decision contradicts the earlier Petroperu plan to participate with a 25 percent share.

"We demand respect for the contract that determines the participation of Petroperu with 25 percent and for that reason we do not accept the breaking of rules," stated a spokesman for the workers.

In a statement to *Diario La Republica*, expert Jorge Manco Zaconetti from the National University of San Marcos, stated that the amount of oil present in the lots and the conditions of the exploration do not put the investment at risk for the State and they will make a profit. The company benefiting from the government's concession, *Graña y Montero*, is one of the largest private Peruvian companies and is closely intertwined with the largest media conglomerate, *Editorial El Comercio*, which is accused of controlling the political agenda.

This conservative media corporation owns 80 percent of the national newspapers in circulation, the largest national television network, two other cable channels, over 12 magazines, and a series of websites that amount to 50 percent of the national online circulation among other non-media businesses.

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