Aggressive Ecuadorean Right-wing Protesters Attack Pro-Government Demonstrators

Quito, June 11 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Hundreds of opposition and pro-government protesters took the streets of Quito on Wednesday evening, staging two high-tension parallel demonstrations in the central Shyris Avenue, which as night fell began to turn violent. The TV network teleSUR witnessed bottles being thrown at supporters of the Rafael Correa government and former Culture Minister Paco Velasco was bleeding from the head after being struck.

The pro-government demonstrators gathered in front of the headquarters of governing party Alianza Pais around 4:00 p.m. (local time), blocking the opposition protesters from reaching that point.
Meanwhile, opposition activists, arriving around 5:00 p.m., carried black flags in what they claim was a symbolic gesture to show their mourning. The opposition demonstrators encircled both ends of the demonstration area in which the pro-government demonstrators had gathered, fencing them and yelling obscenities when they tried to get out.

The governing Alianza Pais confirmed that a group of opposition demonstrators were able to enter the party headquarters. They were later expelled by police. As with previous demonstration earlier this week, the opposition protesters were united by their call to oust the elected president Rafael Correa.

The demonstrators held banners and placards with scribbled phrases like “Out Correa out!” or “Correa Liar,” with black flags. One of the banners read “Correa you are our employee, stop fooling around and leave!” Although police barriers were set between both groups of demonstrators to avoid clashes, opposition protesters threw bottles and chased and threatened pro-government activists, who were marked by green hats or arm-bands.

In spite of the apparent chaos, one Ecuadorean watching the demonstrators told teleSUR that the country had seen a lot worse. The woman, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said, “This isn't going to do anything. Those (opposition) demonstrators, they all came here in nice cars. You'll know when the pueblo (people) arrive.”

Meanwhile, the government demonstrators chanted in support of President Correa, who is currently in Belgium attending the CELAC-EU summit. “I am more of an independent activist, but I like a lot of policies implemented by President Correa. That's why I am here today supporting the government,” explained Valerie, a demonstrator.

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