

Ecuador's Business Sector Unwilling to Enter National Debate



Quito, June 20 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Two weeks of protests over wealth redistribution bills has propelled Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa to call for a national debate in the hopes of reaching a consensus.

Violence was registered at protests and the threat of further destabilization prompted President Correa to temporarily suspend the inheritance tax bill and law for capital gains. The results of these discussions will be evaluated on September 15th.

"We are opening a national debate, about what type of country we want to have," said Secretary of Planning and Development Pabel Muñoz. "There are two models that are being disputed that we need to see. A model where people agree that a few families should accumulate a lot of wealth, but maybe also we will see a lot of Ecuadoreans who want to work for a more just society."

Pro-government demonstrators along with various social movements and parties have welcomed the idea of a national debate and are organizing neighborhood door-to-door campaigns and forums to further discuss these bills and the state of the nation.

"We have decided to join this national dialogue, but we believe that this dialogue should not just be focused on these two laws, but we believe that the Citizen's Revolution has to assume a new historic moment. We need to make this dialogue into an evaluation of what the Citizen's Revolution is, and the advances it has had," said Paul Almeida Pozo, secretary general of the Communist Party of Ecuador.

The Chambers of Commerce of Quito and Guayaquil and various members of the business sector have said they will not participate in the national debate. Instead of engaging in debate, they have said that they want the wealth redistribution bills to be eliminated from discussion.

On why he does not think a debate would be constructive, entrepreneur of the textile industry Joffre Izurieta told teleSUR English: "Thanks to my family and my children who have worked together, the effort we put in when we invested in this business, and what we have today is due to the daily effort my family makes to strengthen the company, because this is a family business. So I think that they should be able to share among themselves the inheritance. They are the ones that deserve it. Not other people who have not worked."

While some sectors have expressed their willingness to debate the wealth redistribution bills, the opposition has remained firm that they will not enter into discussion and will instead continue protesting the measures until they are permanently discarded.

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