

Chilean teachers call for demonstrations against poor conditions



Santiago de Chile, June 8 (RHC)-- The Chilean Teachers Association has called for a massive demonstration in the capital, Santiago de Chile, to demand the government address the public education crisis, to retract the curricular change which makes the subjects of history, physical education and arts optional and improve the working conditions of teachers in Chile.

The teachers' association said they were protesting for structural issues within the country's public system. Its president, Mario Aguilar, explained that there is a huge number of unresolved structural concerns which is why they will remain mobilized. Aguilar assured that this is not a wage claim but a protest to denounce the poor conditions of public education in the country.

"We have raised a petition that has nothing to do with readjustment of wages. We need people to know that we are not in this strike for wage readjustments which is the usual thing in a movement of this kind."

He pointed out that the problems are extremely serious and that public education is in a state of total abandonment. "What we are mobilizing for are structural issues, deeply concerning education which is not working anymore, the ministry has practically abandoned us and is in a total disregard to our very

concrete problems: plagues of mice in the schools that are not attended for months, inputs we do not have and that are basic to work," the union leader warned. "We don't have basic things like bathrooms amenities or pedagogical material, contributions from teachers remain unpaid and payments of salaries and wages are late" he said.

He went on to explain that there had been long months of conversations where the authorities made some understandable proposals, but at the last meeting, when the agreements had to be formalized in writing, the government presented a letter that did not respond to any of the problems raised.

Almost 70 percent of teachers are now mobilized throughout the country after marches earlier this week. The National Education Commission, meanwhile, stated its intention to act as a mediator between the teachers' union and the government.

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