

# *Venezuelan Government Highlights Progress in Talks with Opposition*

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Caracas, April 16 (RHC) -- The Venezuelan government and the right-wing opposition ended the second round of talks in Caracas aimed at ending two months of violent protests in the Latin American country with progress on several issues, said Venezuelan Vice President Jorge Arreaza.

"We have advanced in the dialogue for peace and justice," said Arreaza at the end of the second round of talks with the opposition Democratic Unity Coalition (MUD) delegation. He said that "one of our first agreements is full respect for the Constitution and the rejection of violence, from wherever it comes."

Vice President Jorge Arreaza hosted the closed-door meeting intended to set up an initial framework for future negotiations between the administration of President Nicolas Maduro and the opposition.

A delegation of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), including the foreign ministers of Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador, plus a Vatican envoy are overseeing the talks.

On April 10th, Venezuela's president and the opposition Democratic Unity Coalition (MUD) delegation held a televised meeting for the first time, in a possible first step toward defusing the ongoing political unrest in the country.

The Venezuelan talks, sponsored by the government of Maduro, aim to end more than two months of violent anti-government actions that began in mid-February. The violent actions, organized by U.S.-backed hardline opposition sectors, seek to destabilize the democratically elected government of President Maduro.

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