Venezuelan Government and Opposition Supporters Demonstrate to Protest against Violence

Caracas, October 20 (RHC-Xinhua) -- Venezuelans who marched in the streets of Caracas Saturday against violence, were split between government supporters, who rejected terrorism; and opponents, who protested against soaring crime rates in the South American country.

The pro-government mobilization that swept western Caracas, led by representatives of the government of President Nicolas Maduro, demanded justice for the death of lawmaker Robert Serra, who was murdered at his residence on October 1st.

"Peace is the only way we can achieve happiness in our country; there can't be peace without justice," said President Maduro who received thousands of supporters at the National Assembly.

Maduro, as well as government representatives, have held the hardline Venezuelan opposition and former Colombian president Alvaro Uribe responsible for many of the episodes of violence that occur in

the country. The president said that every day it becomes clearer that Serra's murder was politically motivated and the hired assassins planned the the action for more than three months.

A similar demonstration took place east of Caracas, led by representatives of the opposition, grouped in their coalition Democratic Unity Roundtable (MUD) in which they protested not only violence, but what they claimed was "political persecution."

This is the first public demonstration that the MUD coalition organized after an internal shake-up which was preceded by the resignation of its former secretary Ramon Guillermo Aveledo.

It is also the first opposition demonstration held in Caracas since a wave of anti-government protests that began in February and ended in mid-June left 43 dead, hundreds injured and thousands arrested, including opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez.

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