
Bolivia: Right-Wing Discredits Possible Socialist Candidate

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The coup-based government and its allies seek to present Andronico Rodriguez as a security threat.

The Vice-President of the Confederation of Coca Growers in the Cochabamba Tropics, Andronico Rodriguez, who is also the possible presidential candidate of the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), denounced Wednesday that Bolivia's coup-based government tries to discredit him by presenting him as a security threat.

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"This is very unfortunate. The de facto government wants the population to think that I am looking for war, death, and violence," Rodriguez said, adding that persecution against the MAS leaders continues.

In this context, former President Evo Morales also denounced that Defense Minister Fernando Lopez threatened to use "the uniformed men" to silence Rodriguez who is the farmer that people begin to call "the successor of Evo." This case of political harassment, however, is not the only one.

Since the self-proclaimed President Jeanine Añez seized power with the support of the military in Nov. 2019, she has been trying to remove left-wing organizations leaders from the

national political life.

"I want to tell this coup-based government that, although it can imprison me or many people who think and express ourselves freely, it cannot imprison the dignity of the people," the Province of O'Connor Sub-Governor Walter Ferrufino, a Socialist militant, denounced on Wednesday.

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As part of a systematic campaign against those who could resume the Socialist militancy leadership, far-right lawmakers requested authorities to investigate where MAS militants obtain money from.

In that sense, for example, the National Unity lawmaker Enrique Siles asked to investigate Rodriguez because he has been carrying out political activities in several regions of the country.

"Does he work? What professional or business activity does he carry out? From where does he get money to travel? From where does he have money for food and drinks?" Siles asked as if he did not know that farmers provide solidarity resources for the support of MAS leaders and militants.

Rodriguez, who is also a 30-year-old political scientist, has developed his career as a social leader in Cochabamba, one of the areas where the MAS has a broad and consolidated militancy.