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**Petition Against Obama Decree on Venezuela Tops 8m Signatures**

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A petition launched in Venezuela opposing President Barack Obama's latest sanctions and the labelling of Venezuela as a national security threat has topped 8 million signatures, it was announced Sunday.

President Obama issued an executive order March 9 declaring a "national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in Venezuela."

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro thanked the supporters who backed the call for Obama to "repeal the decree" through his Twitter account.

The signatures will be handed in during the Summit of the Americas which starts later this week in Panama and will be attended by all the nations in the hemisphere.

Mounting hostility from the U.S toward Venezuela is likely to be one of the most hotly debated themes at the Summit, which U.S. President Barack Obama is expected to attend.

Additionally, millions have taken to Twitter to express their opposition to the U.S. aggression. It was revealed last week that at least five million tweets across 105 countries have demanded a repeal of the measures.

The government has also been backed strongly in the international arena. Many high profile Latin Americans have come out in support of the democratically-elected government of President Maduro, including former Uruguayan President Jose Mujica and Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu.

In March, all 33 members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) expressed their opposition to the U.S. government move, with other regional bodies including the United Nations of South America (UNASUR) doing likewise.

Further afield, the G77+China group, comprising 134 countries, also issued a statement rejecting President Obama's executive order against Venezuela.

Last week, in response, the U.S. Subsecretary for Latin America Roberta Jacobson said she was 'disappointed' by the levels of support shown for Venezuela following the latest sanctions

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