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The city of El Alto defends Evo Morales amid repression

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Police patrol the streets of La Paz, November 11, 2019, supporting the fascist right-wing, targeting the anti-coup resistance.

The center of La Paz has been transformed into a scenario of barricades, queues to purchase in the few businesses that are open, transportation halted, neighbours stationed on corners crossed by barbed wires and zinc sheets. Near Plaza Murillo, the center of political power, groups pass by wearing helmets, shields, gas masks, Bolivian flags, police contingents betting on each other and asking for reinforcement from the National Armed Force (FAB).

It is Monday night and there is fear: that the city of El Alto will be brought down. The scenes seen during the afternoon reminded many in central and southern La Paz

that half of the country that voted for Evo Morales exists and will not stand idly by.

What was thought to happen in El Alto happened, and thousands of residents, mostly from the Aymara nation, took to the streets to face the coup d'état, to defend the process of change, and something very profound: the Whipala flag, which during the hours of the coup offensive was removed from institutions and burned in the street by right-wing demonstrators.

What happened was not part of the plan of those who lead the coup d'état which, at this time, has more elements of confusion and violence than of a planned project. One element is clear: the main objective was to overthrow Evo Morales and persecute him, as he denounced when he made public that an officer of the Bolivian National Police (PNB) has an illegal arrest warrant against him, and that he is in an unknown location.

Morales' situation was uncertain last night. Mexico's foreign minister, Marcelo Ebrard, announced that the former president was on a plane that would take him to that country.

His personal safety is a matter of great concern in a context where his house was attacked by violent groups and where there is no public authority among those who carried out the coup. The rule of law has been broken and that has opened the doors to absolute impunity for those who exercise power.

During the day, Morales sent messages from his Twitter account to denounce the repression in El Alto that claimed several lives, including that of a girl, and to ask people not to fall into confrontations "between brothers". At night, before boarding the plane, he tweeted: "Sisters and brothers, I am leaving for Mexico, grateful for the detachment of the government of that brother people who gave us asylum to take care of our lives. It hurts me to leave the country for political reasons, but I will always be attentive. Soon I will return with more strength and energy". The proposal

for asylum in Mexico will be a possible way out for the overthrown and endangered president.

No government

In Bolivia, the coup bloc has not yet been able to form a government. After the resignation of Evo Morales, Vice President Alvaro García Linera, the President of the Senate, the Vice President, should assume the third front, Jeanine Añez, who landed in Bolivia. However, she should assume the presidency with the agreement of the legislative power, where in both chambers the Movement Towards Socialism, the party that was forcibly displaced, has a majority.

So there is no interim coup government visible after more than 24 hours of consummated coup d'état. On the other hand, there are powers that are deployed in repressive and persecutorial actions, with the announcements in social networks of Fernando Camacho, visible face of the civil wing of the coup, the actions of the PNB and the FAB.

The latter issued a communiqué on Monday night under the reading of Commander General Williams Kaliman: the FAB will deploy actions in the streets to accompany the PNB. There is no formal government, but there is the power of arms.

The scenario is not the one foreseen by those who led the coup d'etat. The question is really: did they have an organized scenario that was beyond simply overthrowing and persecuting Morales and the leaders of the process of change?

The coup bloc is heterogeneous; it contains civil, business, police, military, religious and international sectors. This last dimension was expressed in the complicity of the Organization of American States (OAS), which did not qualify what happened as a coup d'état, and in the declarations of the United States, which described the overthrow as a return to democracy.

The conjunction of forces that achieved the coup seems to have a clear objective: to decapitate the process of change, from its officials to the political leaders. That has translated into persecution, as evidenced by asylum applications in embassies, particularly in Mexico.

There is instability within those who led the offensive, as well as a mobilization reaction, not only in El Alto - with a strong level of radicalism - but in various parts of the country.

Thus, for example, the Confederación Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (Csutcb) announced blockades throughout Bolivia on main roads, "general resistance to the coup d'état throughout the country," as well as the expulsion of leaders who became part of the overthrow.

The situation is more unstable than the promise sold by Camacho and those who celebrated on Sunday afternoon and night. There is a country that they denied, despised, despite their efforts to be democratic and inclusive, and that country began to mobilize, to challenge, to confront the conservative restoration seeking revenge.

For the moment, there is no visible direction of the resistance processes. What is clear is that the decision of those conducting the coup will be to respond with repression on every possible level. By Monday night you could see the tanks in the streets of La Paz and the people who celebrated the overthrow and burning of Whipalas now applaud the militarization.

Source [*Internationalist 360°*](#)



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