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Los Angeles protest hits Bolivia coup

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January 25, 2020



Photo: Insook Lee

About 35 Bolivians and other activists demonstrated in front of the Bolivian Consulate in Los Angeles on Jan. 22, demanding that the U.S.-backed coup government of Jeanine Áñez step down.

Speakers denounced the vicious repression against supporters of President Evo Morales, who was forced into exile in November. Protesters chanted support for the candidates of Morales' party, the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), in the May 2020 national election: Luis Arce for president and David Choquehuanca for vice president.

Immediately after the coup took place, the U.S. government announced its support for the illegitimate regime that took over. Supporters of the MAS are still being arrested, physically attacked and jailed on a daily basis.

In spite of the repression, many tens of thousands—mostly Indigenous people—marched in Cochabamba on Jan. 22 to show their determination to continue the struggle. The same day in Argentina, President Morales spoke to a massive solidarity rally in a sports stadium. The new Argentine government has granted Morales sanctuary.

Jan. 22 is a national holiday in Bolivia that commemorates the inauguration of Evo Morales in 2006. On the same date in 2009, Bolivia’s “re-foundation” was carried out with a new constitution, and the name of the country was officially changed to the Plurinational State of Bolivia, in recognition of the country’s Indigenous cultures.

President Morales said at the time that the new constitution “protects all Bolivians equally” and enshrines “the deepest aspirations of the most abandoned sectors,” referring to Indigenous peoples and the working class. It’s advances like these that Washington and its Bolivian allies seek to roll back.

