

MAS denounces dynamite attack against Bolivia's President-elect Luis Arce

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The Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) has charged that newly elected president Luis Arce was the target of a bomb attack on Thursday night while attending a meeting at the party's headquarters in La Paz, the capital of Bolivia. The explosion left no one injured.

The episode was reported this morning by MAS spokesman Sebastián Michel to the national television networks Televisión Universitaria and Red Uno. He stated: "We were victims of a group that planted dynamite in the campaign headquarters where our elected president, Luis Arce, was attending a meeting."

Only days before Arce's inauguration ceremony this coming Sunday, the coup regime of self-proclaimed president Jeanine Áñez issued no statement on this grave episode, which appears to have been an assassination attempt against the elected president.

According to Michel: "We have not seen any statement from Government Minister Arturo Murillo; thus, we feel that we are at the mercy of ourselves, totally unprotected and nobody gives us the necessary guarantee for the security of our authority."

The Bolivian media has also barely reported the event. In an effort to summarily dismiss the accusation made by MAS, the newspaper of Santa Cruz, *El Deber*, published an article with the title: "Police rule out use of dynamite in 'attack' on MAS campaign headquarters."

In the article, *El Deber* reported the case closed on the basis of a completely vague statement by the departmental director of the Special Force to Fight Crime (Felcc), Alfredo Vargas. Vargas declared that "there is a report from firemen mentioning that if it is not an explosive device, it would be fireworks."

The attack on Arce occurred on the same day that fascist and extreme-right groups initiated new rounds of protest and "civil stoppages" demanding the

overturning of the presidential elections and the repeal of a recently approved measure that lifts the requirement of a two-thirds majority for certain votes in the Legislative Assembly.

The protests were called in the cities of Santa Cruz, Cochabamba and Potosí by the Civic Committees of each of these cities. In La Paz, where a demonstration of about 300 people took place, *Página Siete* reported that "a group protesting against the election result passed in front of the place [where the explosives would have been planted]."

The demonstrations this Thursday and Friday continue the protests that have been taking place since last week, headed by the Civic Committees and, especially, by their armed branches, such as the Cruceñista Youth Union (UJC) and the Cochala Youth Resistance (RJC).

In Santa Cruz de la Sierra, the largest city in Bolivia and center of the right-wing opposition, the coup protests gained direct support from the departmental government. The government's general secretary, Roly Aguilera, declared: "The government will not only comply, but will be an active part of the Committee's mobilization. We reject any attempt to undermine democracy. We have to redirect ourselves in Santa Cruz as a single voice."

The right-wing coup mobilization, which is based on completely unfounded accusations of electoral fraud, received another strong boost coming from the Supreme Electoral Court (TSE) itself. The TSE spokeswoman, Rosario Baptista, sent a letter on Thursday to the Organization of American States (OAS), demanding an audit of an alleged "alternative data block ... beyond the reach of those who have verified the integrity of this record so far and which, in this and other elections, may have induced or

conditioned the final result.”

Rosario retracted her absurd remarks the following day, sending a new letter to the OAS today saying that she “does not specifically question the outcome of the October 18, 2020 election process.” Her action, however, served to fuel the fascistic conspiracies and violence.

The response of the MAS to the escalation of political violence in the post-election period—which included the assassination of miners’ union leader Orlando Gutiérrez, according to every indication, by the far right—is to reinforce its calls for “national unity” and the “pacification of the country.”

On Wednesday, while the fascists were organizing demonstrations to overthrow his presidency, Arce tweeted: “This is a time for unity, to reconstruct and live in peace. Let us not respond to provocations.” This appeal was seconded by former president Evo Morales, responding to the attempt on Arce’s life. Morales wrote on Twitter: “Small groups are trying to generate a climate of confusion and violence, but they will not succeed. Let’s not fall into any provocation.”

The MAS also showed great nervousness in the face of reports that a sector of the party, in El Alto, had proposed the creation of “armed militias” within legal frameworks to defend itself against “people in Santa Cruz who are convulsing” the country. In his interview denouncing the dynamite attack, Sebastián Michel stressed that Arce will not allow any irregular armed group and will not allow the use of weapons.

The objective of the MAS is to prove to the Bolivian bourgeoisie, its true social base, that it is ready to suppress any attempt at resistance by the working class, whether against fascistic violence or the austerity measures that the Arce administration itself will enforce on behalf of the entire ruling class and international capital.



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