
Evo Morales Denounces Acts of Violence by Striking Miners

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Bolivian President Evo Morales denounced the recent acts of violence carried out by a group of striking miners.

Bolivian President Evo Morales denounced the kidnapping and assassination of the country's Vice Minister of the Interior Rodolfo Illanes, calling it an act of "conspiracy" against his administration during a press conference on Friday.

His comments take place after government officials confirmed Thursday evening that striking miners from the Federation of Mining Cooperative in Bolivia, known as Fencomin, were responsible for the kidnapping and murder of Llanes.

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The striking miners in Bolivia seized Illanes Thursday morning in a move authorities slammed as a "kidnapping" amid an escalating conflict between mine workers and President Evo Morales' administration.

More than 100 arrests had been made in relation to the murder. Bolivian authorities early Friday morning said that they had recovered Illanes' body which reports say has signs of torture.

In his remarks on Friday morning, Morales said the recent actions carried out by the Bolivian miners were rooted in self-serving political interests rather than genuine social change.

"This mobilization of the Fencomin was a political conspiracy and there was no genuine social demands for the sector," President Morales told the media on Friday.

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The Fencomin miners, formerly allied with Morales, launched the indefinite strike after a series of deadlocked negotiations. They demand better working conditions and pay and reform of the country's mining act, including elimination of certain environmental obligations, among other points.
