

South American leaders to hold emergency meeting on Bolivia

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, September 14, 2008

Xinhua 14 September 2008

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

BUENOS AIRES, Sept. 13 (Xinhua) — The Argentine government said Saturday that leaders of the Union of South American Nations will hold an emergency meeting on Monday to help solve the political crisis in Bolivia.

The meeting will be held in Santiago, capital of Chile, which holds the rotating presidency of the Union, the Argentine government said in a statement.

Leaders of countries across South America have reached an agreement to support Bolivian President Evo Morales and his government against the opposition insurrection, said the statement.

They urged opposition forces in the country to show respect for its Constitution and iron out their differences with the government through dialogue.

Condemning the violent protests that have caused casualties and economic losses, the statement said countries in South America are ready to provide all necessary assistance to help end the political crisis in Bolivia.

The Bolivian government on Friday imposed martial law in the northern province of Pando, the site of recent rampages that have claimed at least 18 lives.

Anti-government protesters have blocked roads, occupied public building and destroyed public properties to vent their discontent with Morales' social and economic policies.

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