



INTERVIEWS: Inside Bolivia's deepening political turmoil, hopes meet revolt

Description

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Bolivia

Bolivia is in full-scale political [crisis mode](#) over one week into an indefinite [general strike](#). Workers are organising against the neoliberal US-aligned administration led by President Rodrigo Paz.

A massive crowd assembled in La Paz's working class twin city, El Alto, to demand Bolivian President Rodrigo Paz resign

Indigenous-led demonstrations come as the Bolivian regime was caught preparing to launch a US-backed operation to kidnap Evo Morales with 2,000+ troops & cops

pic.twitter.com/DWwwaLGGf8

Wyatt Reed (@wyattreed13) [May 17, 2026](#)

The South American state is fraught with [popular mobilisations](#), fuel and [inflationary crises](#), widespread discontent and blatantly escalating US interference.

Many demonstrators direct their anger against the relatively new Paz-led government. Unions are leading strategic [road blockades](#) and walkouts to pressure Paz's neoliberal regime to not betray the promises which brought him to power.

Security forces have clashed with strikers and protestors in multiple cities, allegedly under [government direction](#) to shoot even live ammunition at protestors.

Caravans numbering [thousands](#) of marchers are converging on administrative capital La Paz. Unions representing peasant and proletarian workers are leading the charge.

Unions in significant industrial regions, Potosí and Santa Cruz, have now joined. These represent dominant mining and agro-industry regions respectively.

Unionised medical worker Almin Arminda Iglesias explained the situation directly to the *Canary*:

“the situation here in Bolivia is serious. The workers’ representatives submitted their list of demands as they do every year, but this government turned a deaf ear to our requests, especially the wage increase – in other words, it doesn’t want to raise our salaries.

The cost of the family food basket has gone up, this government is favoring big businessmen by lowering their taxes and allowing free export of certain foods, leaving the population without adequate supply. It has already been several days of strikes and mobilizations.

On top of that, the persecution of workers’ leaders has begun.

Bajan de lo mas profundo de Bolivia los campesinos, indígenas, a sumarse al clamor popular por una Bolivia soberana y rechazar los planes impuestos por el BM, FMI, bajo la anuencia de Rodrigo Paz y sus marionetas serviles e inmundicia con el gran capital extranjero. pic.twitter.com/jJ5oc74oFp

El Fantasma (@AITopeyPunto891) [May 21, 2026](#)

Bolivia – On the edge of revolution?

Bolivia’s staunchly militant indigenous, peasant and industrial working classes have sustained peaceful but effective road blockades in the countryside. Demonstrators in the cities have clashed with police forces.

One militant wing, the *ponchos rojos* (Red Ponchos), was recorded practicing [combat-style formations](#) and promising to take up arms against their right-wing government if necessary. They vow to defend their class, their 36 national communities and their natural world by any means necessary.

This is what Bolivia’s general strike looks like in rural areas. All the villages occupy the stretch of highway nearest to them, cutting off all trade and travel between cities.

This is in Tiraque Province, Cochabamba. pic.twitter.com/QNLL3ZYPU6

Ollie Vargas (@Ollie_Vargas_) [May 18, 2026](#)

Os ‘Ponchos Rojos’ estão liderando ENORMES rebeliões populares contra o governo de extrema direita de Rodrigo Paz na Bolívia 🇧🇴🔥

VÃdeos mostram a polÃcia RECUANDO diante de manifestantes armados com chicotes, paus e pedras em El Alto, enquanto bloqueios e greves se espalhamã?!

<pic.twitter.com/gRTfUyObUS>

ã?? O Papo (@O_Papo_) [May 17, 2026](#)

The Paz government was elected in 2025 on a promise of what was called â?? [centre-right](#) â?? reform by the global corporate media. Paz campaigned on a platform of â?? [capitalism for all](#) â?? and quickly [bowed](#) to the US.

One of Pazâ??s immediate moves in office was to [cut fuel subsidies](#) which were a lifeline for many in the low-income country but which also drained the stateâ??s coffers. Bolivia became dependent on imports following the commodity boom and then sold these imported petro-fuels at a discount.

Speaking directly to the *Canary*, unionised indigenous Bolivian food seller Vilma Paredes said:

The people endure, the people have memory, they neither forget nor forgive. A people that removed two presidents in this century, you think they wonâ??t be able to do it now? More and more lies are being exposed, coming

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If the president doesnâ??t come clean with the indigenous peoples and ask for forgiveness, thereâ??s no going back. The government is sinking deeper and deeperã?!

La policÃa es corrida a LATIGAZOS por los ponchos rojos de Bolivia.
La revoluciÃ³n obrera y campesina estÃ¡ triunfando.
El rÃ©gimen de Rodrigo Paz estÃ¡ en sus Ãºltimas horas. <pic.twitter.com/AXCEwXPPuG>

ã?? The Chad Grabois gordo geopolÃtica (@ChadGrabois) [May 17, 2026](#)

 [#Bolivia](#) Members of the indigenous â??Ponchos Rojosâ?? movement have threatened an armed uprising against President Rodrigo Paz amid Boliviaâ??s worsening economic and fuel crisis and the ongoing nationwide unrest.

The group, historically linked to Aymara mobilizations and alliedã?!

<pic.twitter.com/RwTgEuwUCL>

ã?? POPULAR FRONT (@PopularFront_) [May 19, 2026](#)

Not without costs

The popular uprising underway in Bolivia is not without costs. â??Struggleâ?? bears its name for a reason.

Unionised psychiatrist Roger Peñã told the *Canary* that, although many understand the Paz administration appears to be set on directing wealth upwards, there is genuine need for some reform around fuel. But the illegal US-Zionist [war on Iran](#) has exacerbated fuel crises further, and the people are reacting, Peñã said.

Some people understand that Evo Morales and the [popular movement](#) are trying to carry out a coup, according to Peñã, or see it as sedition by the COB. (I contend that the name of a "coup" driven from below, rather than imposed from above, is rightly called a revolution.) Others support the COB but with great difficulty:

There are people who, if they do not work a day, they cannot eat. ã? Sadly, itã??s the poorest.

Certainly, there are people who are against these mobilisations. ã?

But itã??s the government who are presenting charges for sedition.

Miles de mineros y obreros bolivianos se movilizaron contra el rãgimen de Rodrigo Paz, tãtere de EEUU, que quiere entregar los recursos del país para entregãrsele al imperio.

El imperialismo quiere que Bolivia sea otra Argentina, el pueblo mandã³ a parar y estã luchandoã? <pic.twitter.com/ChMd9vfQXU>

ã?? Daniel Mayakovski (@DaniMayakovski) [May 22, 2026](#)

Yet clearly the mobilisations have drawn out [many thousands](#) if not millions, across the country. Two contacts in Boliviaã??s union movement, more and less sympathetic, confirmed to the *Canary* that itã??s led overwhelmingly by [indigenous](#) and [peasant](#) workers. As white power reasserts itself over the historic progress made by indigenous Americans nationally and regionally, Morales [wrote on X](#)

[Paz,] Being a foreigner, he surely hates Bolivians. He criminalizes, persecutes, and represses indigenous people. He thinks and acts like an imperialist, neoliberal, and neocolonialist.

Separately, Morales wrote of US hypocrisy [on X](#)

The US does not defend democracy nor respect International Law. It finances right-wing coups dã??ãtat. It invades countries and steals their natural resources. It defends submissive and sellout governments. The US supported the 2019 coup dã??ãtat of the Gringo against the Indian to seize our lithium.

The Bank of Bolivia

Now Bolivians charge, against Paz, that his government seemingly intends to sabotage any potential incoming popular government. Footage emerged of armoured private bank vehicles [vacating](#) the Bank of Bolivia, with [accusations](#) that they seek to empty it like was done to [Venezuela](#) under the US-backed anti-democratic [Juan GuaidÃ³ coup](#) in 2019. The Bank of England holds [Venezuelan gold](#) for ransom years later.

In one [heart-breaking video](#) shared online, an older man tells viewers that his own son, a policeman, is [there to repress me.](#) It underscores the structures and divisions that can tear apart a society. See it below:

Bolivian worker on strike: My own son is standing over there to repress me.

pic.twitter.com/a00OyIIAFq

[Ollie Vargas \(@Ollie_Vargas_\)](#) [May 20, 2026](#)

There appears to be no end in sight [for many](#) until the resignation of Rodrigo Paz. Many doubtless recognise that, whatever [mediate costs](#) of popular revolt, the cost of subservience to [US empire](#) are greater.

Day 9 of the general strike in Bolivia. People are competing to sing protest songs while doing night shift at the barricades pic.twitter.com/FnY5OZYTEa

[Ollie Vargas \(@Ollie_Vargas_\)](#) [May 22, 2026](#)

Featured image taken from X via the Canary

By [Cameron Baillie](#)

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