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Panama: Private & Public Sector Labor Unions Organize Nationwide Protests

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Nov. 17 on the University of Panama campus in the capital city, 225 leaders of 63 public and private sector labor unions met to organize a march scheduled Dec. 4, and a 24-hour national work stoppage set for Dec. 5. The plans are described as a response to the government's decision to ignore a series of requests for wage hikes submitted a month ago. The labor union groups recently established a coordinator called "Por El Derecho a La Vida." On Nov. 16, Vice President Guillermo Ford said the government would not accept threats from public employees, and asserted that workers who participate in a strike would be fired. Ford, also economic policy and planning minister, said officials would not return to the negotiations table as long as public employees continued promoting the strike. (Basic data from ACAN-EFE, 11/17/90)

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