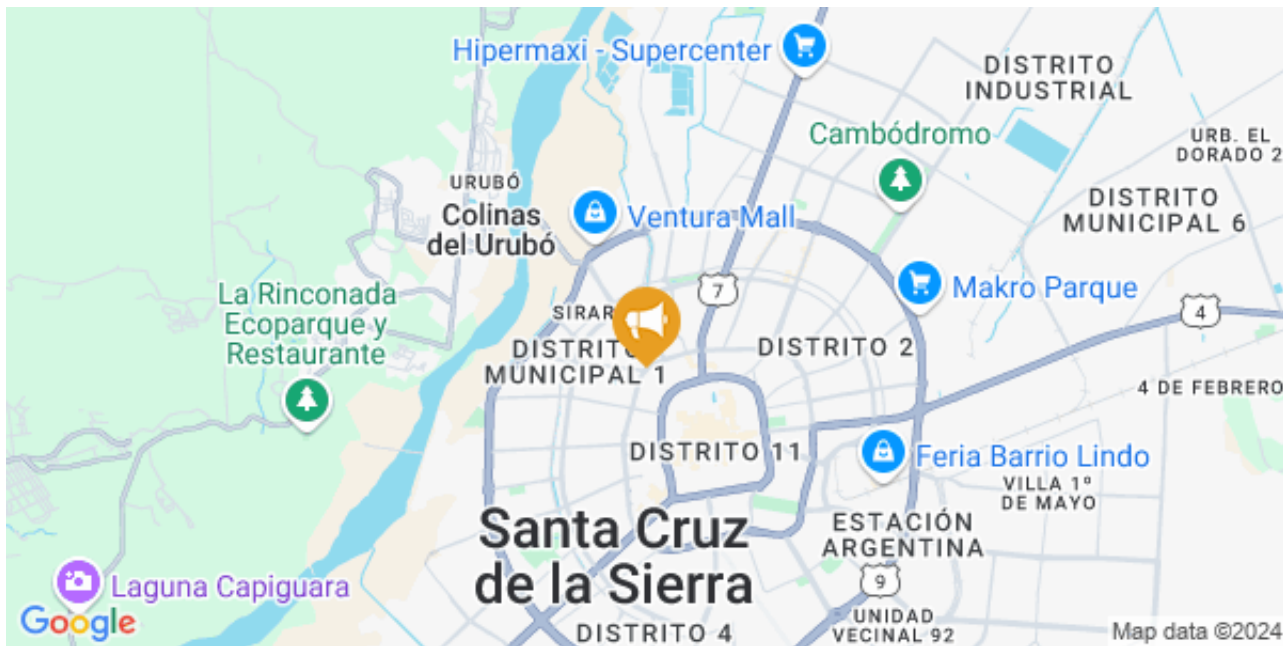


Protest



27

DEC

19:39 UTC

Bolivia Tactical: Caravan demanding former Governor Camacho's release slated in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Santa Cruz department, on December 28; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation

- Multiple citizen platforms and opposition political parties including Creemos, Unidad Nacional, Comunidad Ciudadana, and Libre have called for a vehicular caravan in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Santa Cruz department on December 28.
- The caravan is organized to demand the release of Santa Cruz's former Governor Luis Fernando Camacho, who remains imprisoned since December 28, 2022, under charges linked to his alleged role in the political unrest and alleged coup against former President Evo Morales in 2019.
- Activists will gather at the intersection of Segundo Anillo and Avenida Busch at 16:00 (local time). From there, protesters will proceed south along Segundo Anillo, passing through Madre India, Avenida Paragua, and Cristo Redentor. The route will then turn north onto Avenida Cristo Redentor until reaching Avenida Cuarto Anillo, where participants will continue onto Avenida Pedro Velez, concluding the caravan.



Source: [Zvonko Matkovic Ribera](#)

Assessments & Forecast

1. Multiple Creemos leaders including Walthy Eguez have denounced Camacho’s incarceration as “kidnapping” and an act of “political persecution”. Although Camacho’s arrest was carried out on the pretext of the 2019 coup allegations, it closely followed the 36-day protests and blockades held between October and November 2022. These protests were centered on demands to advance the national census from May-June 2024 to 2023. Camacho and proponents of an early census argued that the population data from 2022 was outdated, resulting in underrepresentation in legislative seats and inadequate funding for public services. Given this context, Camacho’s supporters contend that his arrest did not adhere to legal procedures and was instead a retaliatory measure for his role in the census protests, rather than the coup allegations. Although the government ultimately conducted the census in March 2024, public dissatisfaction persists due to the authorities’ handling of the blockades and Camacho’s subsequent arrest. This has fueled widespread criticism and growing discontent against the ruling Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) party.
2. An associated caravan was also held on the same day in 2023, marking the first anniversary of Camacho’s arrest. The event featured the participation of over 600 vehicles, primarily consisting of heavy trucks. In conjunction with the caravan, intermittent blockades were reported along sections of the Segundo Anillo, Avenida Noel Kempff Mercado, and Cuarto Anillo, resulting in significant traffic congestion that extended to surrounding roads and caused widespread disruption throughout the city. Unlike the protests that followed Camacho’s arrest on December 29, 2022—marked by incidents of unrest, including the burning of vehicles during blockades—the demonstrations on December 28, 2023, remained peaceful.
3. **FORECAST:** Given Creemos’s strong mobilization capabilities and the expected adherence of other MAS-opposing groups, such as the civic group Comité Civico Pro Santa Cruz, the slated

caravan is expected to draw a turnout in the high hundreds-and-low thousands of vehicles. Based on the 2023 precedent, Santa Cruz transportation associations, such as Sindicato de Transportistas Santa Cruz, are likely to join the event. In addition, ad-hoc blockades are likely along the march route or along major thoroughfares, such as the Segundo Anillo and Cuarto Anillo, from the afternoon hours onwards on December 28. These blockades are expected to draw an attendance ranging in the high dozens-to-low hundreds each.

4. **FORECAST:** The likelihood of localized, low-scale confrontations between protesters and drivers remains, albeit low. For instance, during a transport union strike in Santa Cruz de la Sierra on December 2, union activists deflated the tires of vehicles operated by drivers opposing the blockades, resulting in isolated incidents of physical altercations. Additionally, growing dissatisfaction with the MAS party over Camacho's continued detention increases the risk of his supporters engaging in low-intensity incendiary attacks at security personnel, burning vehicles, and committing acts of vandalism—particularly targeting security forces stationed along the caravan route. Similar incidents of unrest occurred during the protests immediately following Camacho's arrest on December 29 and December 31, 2022.
5. **FORECAST:** Therefore, bolstered security measures can be expected along the caravan route to divert traffic and monitor proceedings. Should security forces resort to the use of force, such as tear gas or baton charges, to disperse the crowd, clashes between security personnel and protesters can be expected. Regardless, significant disruptions to vehicular and pedestrian traffic are expected in the vicinity of the aforementioned locations and throughout downtown Santa Cruz de la Sierra from the afternoon onward.

Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in Santa Cruz de la Sierra on December 28 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance along the route of the caravan due to the potential for unrest.
2. Allot for disruptions to travel in the vicinity of the aforementioned locations due to the slated caravan from 16:00 onwards.