

Congress also accused Raúl Cubas and Lino Oviedo of being responsible for the killing of Vice-President Argaña, their political rival.

The decision to bring forward the impeachment process led thousands of pro and anti government demonstrators to congregate outside the Congress building in the centre of Asunción. Clashes began after police fired water cannons and reportedly charged the anti-government demonstrators.

Several officials of the Cubas administration, including the Chief of Police, have been charged in connection with the deaths of the demonstrators. They were accused of failing to deploy security forces when snipers -- believed to be supporters of the ex-president -- fired at demonstrators outside the Congress building. One person, identified from television footage of the attack, has been arrested in connection with the shooting.

Paraguayan judicial officials announced their intention of bringing charges of “negligent homicide” (*homicidio por omisión*) against the former president stemming from the deaths of the demonstrators. However, the newly appointed Interior Minister rejected a senior state prosecutor’s request for the arrest of Cubas, on the grounds that he “cannot be arrested unless his immunity is revoked by the Senate”. On Monday 29 March, Raúl Cubas fled to Brazil where he was granted political asylum. Senate leader Luis González Macchi was sworn in as head of state on Sunday as constitutional successor to Cubas.

Former General Lino Oviedo, who fled Paraguay shortly before Cubas resigned, was granted political asylum in Argentina.

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