

# *Evo Morales Chastises Barack Obama for Anti-Drug Fight Criticisms*

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La Paz, September 15 (RHC)-- Bolivian President Evo Morales described U.S. President Barack Obama's criticism of Bolivia and Venezuela as "ridiculous" after the White House released its annual global drug trafficking memorandum Monday to the U.S. State Department.

Evo Morales Tweeted Wednesday, stating that the U.S. ought to "first suspend secret banking, eliminate tax havens, and stop producing weapons and invading countries."

Obama singled out a number of Latin American countries as major drug transit and producing countries on Monday. Evo Morales said that the U.S. has targeted his country for political reasons.

In the annual memorandum to the U.S. Secretary of State, the U.S. president named 22 countries - 17 of which were from Latin America - as being accountable for the majority of the world's drug trade.

"The U.S., as the largest consumer of drugs in the world, has no moral authority to dismiss the fight against drug trafficking of other peoples," Morales tweeted.

Obama said that Bolivia, Burma, and Venezuela were not adequately adhering to the U.S. led international anti-narcotics efforts and had “failed demonstrably during the previous 12 months to adhere to their obligations under international counter-narcotics agreements.”

Bolivian officials, however, say that the blacklisting is political. Morales hit back, saying that the countries mentioned on Obama’s list were being targeting for refusing to fall in line with international U.S. back drug policy.

"You have to be neo-colonialist, pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist to be recognized by the U.S. in the fight against drug trafficking," Morales tweeted.

Morales pointed out that many pro-U.S. states have failed to meet international agreements, with increasing drug trafficking but were not on Obama’s list. Hugo Siles, Bolivian Minister of Autonomy said Bolivia has been on the U.S.'s bad list after the country expelled the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA, in 2008.

Bolivian President Evo Morales said that without the DEA, his country has taken its own positive steps in anti-narcotics efforts, which have been given international praise. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC, reported that Bolivia has in fact decreased coca cultivation in the last year.

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