

# *Red Cross refuses to send Venezuela aid without state approval*

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Bogota, February 7 (RHC)-- The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies will not violate governmental mandates to send humanitarian aid to Venezuela, the international group said in a statement. Earlier this week, Juan Guaido, an opposition lawmaker who declared himself “interim president” after an attempted coup on January 23rd, illegally called on a multinational coalition to send humanitarian aid through third parties in Brazil, Colombia and the Caribbean.

However, in a statement, the health organizations' Colombian branch denounced the international coalition as counter-intuitive. “The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Colombia reaffirms that in order to guarantee the fulfillment of its exclusively humanitarian mission and in accordance with the fundamental principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence, it cannot participate in the initiatives of delivery of assistance for Venezuela from Colombia,” the letter said.

“Likewise, in compliance with our mission we will continue with the humanitarian support to Colombia’s vulnerable, rural population,” said the document which was posted on the group’s Twitter page.

The joint statement was signed by the chief of Cluster of Andean Countries of the International Federation

of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Michele Detomaso; the head of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Colombia, Christoph Harnisch, and the president of the Colombian Red Cross, Judith Carvajal.

The aid contributed by the U.S. amounts to roughly 20 million dollars, considerably less than the amount of damage being done by President Donald Trump's multi-billion dollar sanctions. There have been rumors in Washington that the Donald Trump administration is "seriously considering" a military intervention in Venezuela if Maduro does not step down or is not ousted internally. The United States and right-wing governments in the region have been calling on the Venezuelan military to overthrow Maduro.

However, the military has stayed at Maduro's side throughout the last few weeks, in full support of his legitimate claim to the presidency and rejected such interventionist demands and a breach of the Venezuelan sovereignty.

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