

Bulgaria blocks transfers worth millions of euros from Venezuela oil firm



Sofia, February 18 (RHC)-- Bulgarian authorities say they have blocked money transfers out of a number of bank accounts that have received millions of euros from the Venezuelan state-owned oil and natural gas company, PDVSA.

Following a meeting with the U.S. ambassador in Sofia, Bulgaria's Chief Prosecutor Sotir Tsatsarov announced the news at a press conference, saying the money was being sent to other accounts abroad. The prosecutor, however, neither specified the exact amount of money nor named its next destination.

"We have established that there were money transfers from Venezuela, namely from the state oil company of Venezuela to these accounts," Tsatsarov said at the presser. He said his country's security services acted on a tip-off from Washington and began checking several accounts held at a local bank, all by a man who holds a number of citizenships, including a Bulgarian one.

"All measures have been taken so that the funds that are still in the accounts, which are not in small amounts, will be fully under our control and not leave the country on false grounds," Tsatsarov added. He also said that prosecutors would scrutinize all the transfers into and out of these accounts before deciding whether to bring money laundering charges.

Separately, Dimitar Georgiev, the head of the State National Security Agency, noted that there were millions of euros in the blocked accounts now, adding that the Bulgarian central bank was cooperating in the process.

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