

# *Venezuelan foreign minister denounces Ecuador's persecution of Ricardo Patiño*

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Caracas, April 20 (RHC)-- Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza has condemned the Ecuadorean government's lawsuit against former Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño.

"The persecution against leaders of the Citizen Revolution in Ecuador has been constituted in an updated modality of Operation Condor of the 20th century. All our solidarity with our compañero @RicardoPatinoEC. No desperate measure will prevent the Ecuadorean people from returning to power," Arreaza said on Twitter.

Earlier this week, the Ecuadorean Attorney General's office announced the request for Interpol to capture the former foreign minister, a vocal critic of the current government who served under former President Rafael Correa. Ecuador says Patiño is wanted for the crime of "instigation."

Patiño said he is being persecuted for a speech he gave in an internal meeting of the political movement Citizen Revolution in October 2018, where he called for members "to accompany the Ecuadorean people on the streets and protests at government offices without using violence."

According to the Attorney General's office, this statement amounts to "instigating people," a crime that could land a person in jail for up to two years, according to Ecuador's Penal Code (COIP).

In response, Patiño tweeted: "We are victims of a fierce persecution that is carried out to hide the corruption of Moreno and his close circle #INAPapers. We will fight this and keep fighting."

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