

Venezuelan opposition leaders seek refuge in embassies throughout Caracas to avoid arrest



Caracas, May 11 (RHC)-- A Venezuelan opposition legislator has sought refuge in the Argentinian embassy in Caracas following the arrest of the National Assembly's vice president Edgar Zambrano. An Argentinean foreign ministry source told Reuters that Richard Blanco of the Brave People's Alliance party was in the embassy as a guest.

Blanco was one of the ten opposition lawmakers who was stripped of parliamentary immunity by the Supreme Court this week. He appeared with opposition leader Juan Guaidó in the rallies meant to stir a military uprising against President Nicolas Maduro last month.

Zambrano was arrested on Wednesday by intelligence agents who towed away his car with him inside. A tweet on his account said: "We were surprised by intelligence agents who towed away our vehicle when we refused to leave it in order to transfer us to the Helicoide (a Venezuelan prison)." It was reported that when Zambrano refused to get out of his car, authorities decided to take it away with him inside.

Another opposition figure, Marianella Magallanes, who had her immunity removed, sought refuge in the Italian embassy. She was later joined in the Italian embassy by another opposition leader, Américo de Grazia.

Italy's foreign ministry confirmed that Ms Magallanes, who is married to an Italian and has applied for citizenship, had come to their embassy and would "be extended all possible protection and hospitality." Italy also confirmed that Grazia was in their Caracas mission.

Meanwhile, Spain has vowed to protect another opposition figure, Leopoldo López, who fled to their Caracas embassy after escaping from house arrest last week.

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