

# *Venezuelan officials condemn latest U.S. sanctions on food system*

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Caracas, July 26 (RHC)-- Venezuelan authorities have condemned the newest set of sanctions by the U.S. government aimed at cutting off food aid for the poor in the South American country. In a statement issued by Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza, the government denounced "the repeated aggression of the United States against the Venezuelan people."

"The Trump Administration has blocked bank transactions, purchases of food and medicine, and has carried out countless actions in order to deny the Venezuelan people their sovereign will and force a change of government through unconstitutional means," the text reads.

Venezuela denounces to the international community the repeated practice of economic terrorism by the U.S. government against the Venezuelan people, announcing measures whose criminal purpose is to deprive all Venezuelans of their right to food.

This time, the U.S. administration under Donald Trump is making it more difficult for President Nicolas Maduro to carry out his Local Committees for Supply and Production (CLAP) program that provides food

to millions of people throughout the country.

Arreaza called the latest sanctions, which target over a dozen people, including Maduro's stepson, "coercive, unilateral and illegal." He added that this move by the White House constitutes "economic terrorism and has been rejected by the international community given that it violates the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter."

The foreign minister says the Maduro government it won't succumb to U.S. blackmails, but will "will face them with courage, dignity and democratic conviction."

Sanctions against Venezuela, its politicians and people began over a decade ago under the Barack Obama administration, and have made it possible to block and freeze government assets, accounts and funds, and suspend and cancel visas and other documents belonging to officials and citizens.

However, the Trump administration has upped the sanction severity exponentially. In August 2017, his U.S. Executive Order 13808 prohibited all transactions aimed at financing Venezuela, banned direct or indirect purchases of Venezuelan government securities, which included bonds, loans, credit extensions, loan guarantees, credit letters, drafts, bankers acceptance, invoices or discount notes and commercial papers. This single decree granted legal status to the financial boycott, making private banks an openly active partner in the U.S. administration's isolation policy.

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