

# *Cuba blasts Washington's new plan for regime change in Venezuela*

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Havana, March 31 (RHC)-- And while the world watches in shock the spread of the novel coronavirus, and deaths in the U.S. surpass 3,500 people, the U.S. State Department presented on Tuesday its latest attempt to achieve regime change in Venezuela.

Cuba reacted to a proposal announced by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as a threat to peace and security in the hemisphere.

Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez denounced on a tweet the White House new strategy, which proposes the end of sanctions against Caracas if Nicolás Maduro and Juan Guaidó step aside and allow a transition government.

"Cuba rejects Pompeo's plan for Venezuela, which only confirms the United States' neocolonial pretense in line with the Monroe Doctrine," Rodríguez wrote. "It constitutes a threat to the peace and security of our hemisphere. Sanctions must be lifted without any conditions," he added.

The State Department's initiative proposes forming a transitional government appointed by parliamentarians from the ruling party and the opposition and insists on ignoring the legitimacy of Nicolás Maduro as Venezuelan leader, elected in 2018.

Pompeo and the U.S. Special Representative for Venezuela, Elliott Abrams, presented the strategy on Tuesday. The framework estimates that presidential elections would be held within the next six to 12 months.

According to the proposal, the president of the transitional government would not be eligible to run as a candidate for the elections.

The U.S. Secretary of State suggested that if these steps are taken, the sanctions against Venezuela would be suspended.

In response, Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza rejected Washington's proposal even before the announcement of Pompeo and Abrahams was made.

"Decisions on Venezuela are made in Caracas, at the Miraflores Palace, under the Venezuelan Constitution," Arreaza said in a telephone interview with the Colombian network Blu Radio.

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