

Venezuelan opposition closes embassy in U.S. after Guaido ouster

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This file photo shows Embassy of Venezuela in Washington, DC, during the sit-in to prevent it from falling into Guaido's hands.

Washington, January 7 (RHC)-- Venezuela's opposition has shut down its "embassy" in Washington after removing U.S.-backed Juan Guaido and dissolving his so-called "interim government."

The fake mission said: "We inform the Venezuelan community in the United States, and the public in general, that the Venezuelan embassy in the United States and all its officials formally ceased functions on Thursday, January 5, 2023."

Guaido's associates seized control of the official Venezuelan embassy in 2019 after the opposition-controlled National Assembly rejected the 2018 legal presidential election results and established an "interim government" led by Guaido. The United States, eventually joined by some 50 other countries, then recognized Guaido as interim president.

The development came after the now-defunct opposition-controlled National Assembly agreed last month to eliminate the "interim government" of Guaido. Three of the four major Venezuelan opposition groups — Justice First, Democratic Action, and A New Era — backed the ouster of Guaido as well as the creation of a five-member commission to manage the country's foreign assets, especially U.S.-based refiner Citgo, a subsidiary of state-owned oil company PDVSA.

Guaido, whose Voluntad Popular party rejected the effort, had urged the lawmakers at the National Assembly to replace him instead of dissolving the "interim government." The decision for ouster was made within the framework of peace talks between the Maduro administration and the country's opposition groups to promote national unity and advance the recovery of the Latin American state from years-long sanctions imposed by the United States.

The fight for the control of Venezuela's embassy in Washington, DC was hard-fought -- with solidarity activists in the U.S. refusing to hand over the keys to the building in April 2019. Activists occupied the building for 36 days in a demonstration of solidarity with Venezuela and DC police had to violently break into the embassy -- a clear violation of international law -- to arrest those inside. The building was then turned over to representatives of Juan Guaido and his fake government. It now remains to be seen what will happen to the building in Washington, DC -- as the United States still does not recognize the Venezuelan government of President Nicolas Maduro and has no diplomatic relations.

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