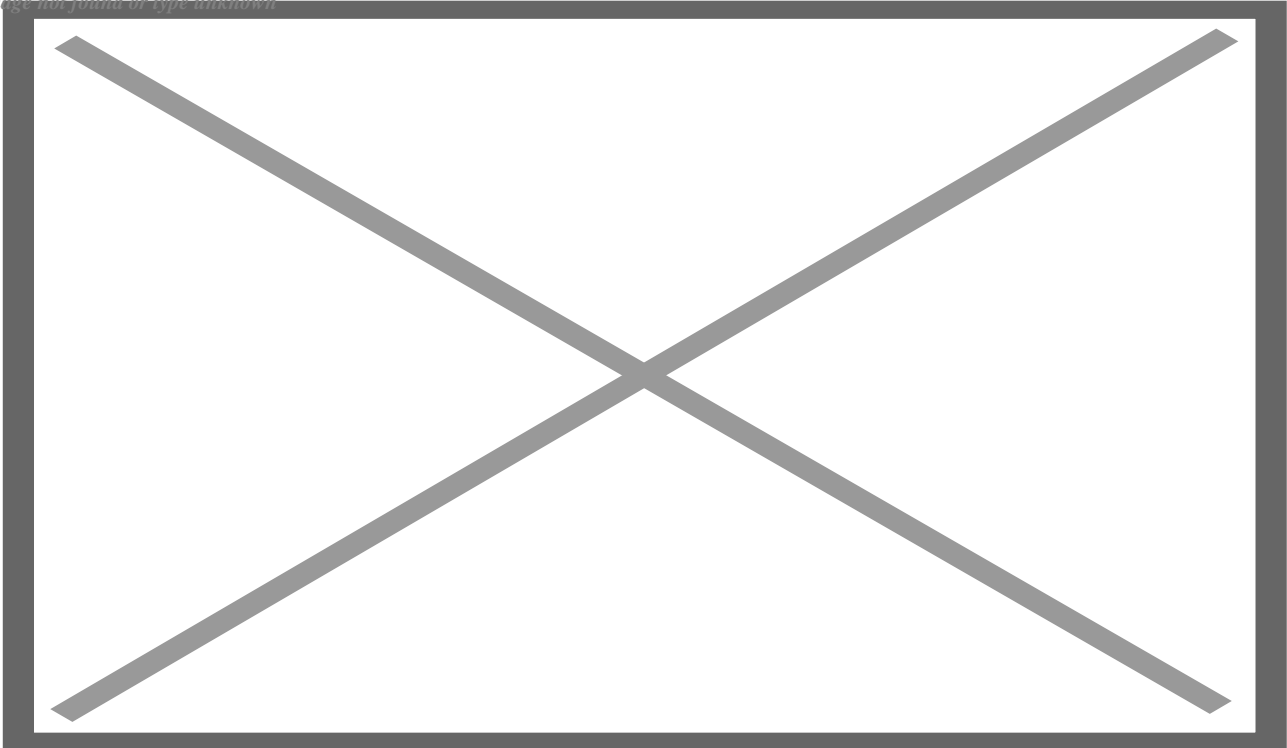


Colombia to reopen four consulates in Venezuela

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**Facade of the Colombian consulate in Caracas, February 2023. | Photo: Twitter/
@iamnotclarkson**

Bogota, March 1 (RHC)-- The Colombian Foreign Affairs Ministry has announced that it will reopen its consulates in Caracas, Maracaibo, Tachira, and San Cristobal in Venezuela within a maximum of four months.

Colombians who reside in Venezuela had previously complained about the consulates' closure, which former Colombia's President Ivan Duque approved after both nations broke diplomatic relations. His decision forced them to travel to Colombia each time they needed to carry out any procedure.

"After seven months of President Gustavo Petro's inauguration ceremony and the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Caracas, nearly four million compatriots who live in Venezuela expect the consular system to operate normally," said the Colombian Public Prosecutor's Office.

The consulate in Caracas needs maintenance and adaptation works, which the Foreign Affairs Ministry currently prioritizes to appoint consuls and relocate the officers who will exercise the main administrative functions.

"We must search for places for lease to reopen the consulates in Maracaibo, Tachira, and San Cristobal cities. We are trying to do so as soon as possible," Colombian official Fernando Grillo stated.

In 2019, Bolivarian President Nicolas Maduro broke diplomatic relations with Colombia after Duque recognized opposition lawmaker Juan Guaido as interim president of Venezuela.

In August 2022, a few weeks after Petro's electoral victory, both countries normalized their relations. Colombian Ambassador Armando Benedetti then visited Caracas, where he signed bilateral trade agreements to increase the purchase of Venezuelan goods, including gasoline.

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