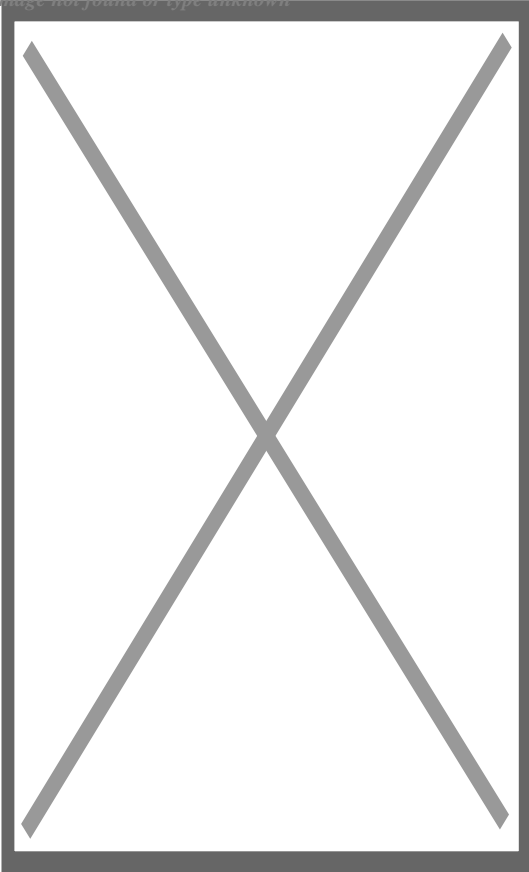


Spain says recall of Argentina's ambassador to Madrid is permanent as countries edge toward diplomatic break

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Madrid, May 21 (RHC)-- Spain says the withdrawal of its ambassador to Argentina will be “permanent,” as a diplomatic spat between the two countries continues to escalate following derogatory remarks by far-right Argentinian President Javier Milei.

“The ambassador will permanently stay in Madrid,” Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares told reporters on Tuesday, using stronger diplomatic parlance than in previous days. “We have no interest in nor desire for any escalation, but it’s the government’s obligation to defend the dignity and sovereignty of Spanish institutions, especially when the aggression occurs in the capital of Spain.”

The Spanish government recalled its ambassador to Buenos Aires after Milei levied corruption allegations against Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez’s wife Begona Gomez during an event in Madrid.

“The global elites don’t realise how destructive it can be to implement the ideas of socialism ... even if you have a corrupt wife, let’s say, it gets dirty, and you take five days to think about it,” Milei said.

Sanchez spent five days last month mulling his political future after a court opened a preliminary probe into his wife for suspected influence peddling and corruption. The prime minister dismissed the allegations against Gomez as part of a campaign of political harassment by right-wing forces.

The comments by Milei, a far-right libertarian, came as Argentina and Spain had traded barbs in recent weeks over a range of issues, including drug use and poverty.

On Tuesday, Milei said Spain’s decision to pull its ambassador from Buenos Aires was “absurd.” “It is absurd, typical of an arrogant socialist,” Milei said in an interview with broadcaster LN+, adding that the Spanish prime minister has an “inferiority complex” and should seek out “a psychologist for him to mature.”

“This stains the international image of Spain and [shows] how arrogant they are, like believing that they are the state and that no one can tell them anything,” the Argentinian president said.

Asked whether Argentina would in turn withdraw its ambassador from Spain, Milei replied: “No, not at all.”

Meanwhile, Albares – the Spanish foreign minister – said the country’s embassy in Argentina would be headed by the charge d’affaires. He added that while ideological differences were debatable, “certain things aren’t.”

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