

Colombia welcomes returned deportees who are treated with dignity



Colombian President Gustavo Petro published a photo of himself on board the plane on social

Colombia welcomes free and dignified deportees; migrants are not criminals

Bogota, January 29 (RHC)-- The first flights carrying migrants deported from the United States to Colombia after a major diplomatic row have arrived in the capital Bogota.

The Colombian government confirmed on Tuesday that two planes carrying migrants had landed. A total of 201 migrants — 110 sent from California and 90 from Texas — were on board.

Colombia, which had rejected U.S. military planes bearing migrants over the weekend, argued that their passengers should not be treated as criminals. Some flights to Latin America reportedly carried migrants in handcuffs and leg-irons.

“The well-being of our fellow citizens and the guarantee of their rights is a priority of the Colombian government,” Colombia’s Foreign Ministry said in a social media post on Tuesday.

Colombian Foreign Minister Luis Gilberto Murillo said earlier this week that his country would resume accepting deportees in “dignified conditions” and use the presidential plane to help bring migrants back.

Bogota had been allowing Washington to send deported Colombian citizens back to their home country under previous US administrations. But Petro’s government objected to how the deportees were transported under Trump.

The Colombian president said on Sunday that his country never refused to accept migrants. “But do not demand that I accept deportees from the U.S., handcuffed and on military aircraft,” Petro wrote in a social media post. “We are not anyone’s colony.”

On Tuesday, he shared photos of one of the deportation flights — a Colombian air force plane — that landed in Colombia. “They are Colombians. They are free and dignified, and they are in their homeland where they are loved,” Petro wrote.

“The migrant is not a criminal. He is a human being who wants to work and progress, to live life.”

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