

# *U.S. Has No Power to Legislate Against Venezuelan Officials*

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Caracas, December 20 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Venezuelan Minister for Communes and Social Movements Elias Jaua said his country rejects U.S. sanctions and dismissed the so-called authority of the U.S. government to legislate against Venezuelan officials.

U.S. President Barack Obama signed into law sanctions against Venezuelan officials Thursday on claims that they repressed right-wing opposition protesters who took part in violent protests between February and May of this year with the aim to overthrow the government of Venezuela's democratically-elected president, Nicolas Maduro.

In an exclusive interview with teleSUR, Jaua said that Venezuela is a sovereign country and defended the officials that acted to preserve the public peace against the coup attempt that began in mid-February. At the time, there was an orchestrated wave of right-wing political violence in the country which left at least 43 people dead. The overwhelming majority were killed by clashes at deliberately violent opposition barricades.

Venezuela has already received support from other countries in the region and regional blocs such as MERCOSUR and ALBA.

President Nicolas Maduro said on Twitter: "President Obama has taken a false step against our country, by signing the sanctions, despite the national and continental rejection of them. On the one hand, he

recognizes the failure of the aggression against and blockade on Cuba ... which with dignity, has resisted and won, and on the other hand he has started a stage of increased aggressions against (Venezuela).”

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