

Venezuelan President Slams U.S. Intelligence Report



Caracas, February 5 (RHC-Xinhua) -- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has rejected a recent U.S. report which predicts an outbreak of violent anti-government protests in the South American nation in 2015.

The report was presented to the U.S. Congress on Tuesday by the new director of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, Vincent Stewart, foreseeing a new wave of street protests by political opponents and student activists in the lead up to Venezuela's legislative elections later this year.

"Don't waste your time with plots to destabilize (Venezuela). National unity will triumph here," Caracas-based news network Telesur quoted Maduro as saying in a message directed at Stewart.

Maduro made the remarks at the Military Academy in Caracas, the capital of the oil-rich country, during an event commemorating a 1992 military rebellion led by late Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez.

The Venezuelan-U.S. relations have been particularly antagonistic recently, with U.S. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki announcing on Monday that several Venezuelan officials would have their visas revoked for "violating basic freedoms" at home.

On December 19, 2014, U.S. President Barack Obama signed the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act, which calls for "targeted sanctions," such as freezing assets and denying visas to

Venezuelan government officials deemed to have violated so-called "fundamental freedoms."

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