

The Sea's the Limit: Bolivia Minister Fired for Chile Ocean Dig



La Paz, April 01 (teleSUR-RHC) Bolivian President Evo Morales sacked his defense minister on Tuesday for wearing a jacket bearing a politically provocative slogan while delivering water to the victims of torrential rains in Chile.

Jorge Ledezma was given marching orders after he was seen to be wearing the item of clothing with the words, "The sea is Bolivia's," referring to the feud between the two nations over access to the sea.

Chile is suffering terrible effects from extreme weather, with at least 17 dead, making it the worst flooding in 80 years.

"To ask for forgiveness from the people of Chile, to beg pardon from the people of Atacama. We never handle humanitarian issues with political motives," Morales said on announcing the dismissal of Ledezma, who "personally" chose to use the phrase during the delivery of water.

The disgraced politician will be replaced by Reymi Ferreira, who pledged to "faithfully carry out the policies of the government."

Foreign minister of Chile, Heraldo Muñoz, also condemned the jacket's insensitive inscription, RT reports. "This tragedy should not be used for political purposes," he said.

At least 20 are still missing in the heavy rainstorms and landslides in northern Chile, and thousands remain without drinking water. Bolivia celebrated its Sea Day last week, calling for access to Pacific seaports lost in a late-19th-century war.

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