

# *Venezuela Repudiates U.S. Interference*

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Caracas, February 21 (RHC) -- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro says Washington is interfering in his country's internal affairs, adding that it is promoting ongoing violence by siding with rioters and opposition leaders.

In a communiqué on Friday, Maduro hit out at U.S. President Barack Obama over his call for the release of prisoners in Venezuela, saying Washington's position regarding the ongoing unrest is "gross interference" in the internal affairs of the South American state.

The Venezuelan leader also demanded that the U.S. explain its motives in "financing and defending" members of the opposition that promote violence against the country.

Maduro and other regional leaders have repeatedly accused Washington of trying to regain dominance over the South American country, saying: "There is an international campaign to justify a foreign intervention in Venezuela."

Earlier this week, Caracas ordered the expulsion of three U.S. consular officials for their involvement with far-right groups trying to destabilize the country.

An official statement on Thursday said: "The government of Venezuela reaffirms it will continue to monitor and take the steps necessary to impede U.S. agents seeking to sow violence and instability and inform

the world about the nature of the interventionist policy of the Barack Obama administration in our country."

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