

Lima Group Excludes Venezuela from the Summit of the Americas



Lima, Feb 14 (RHC)-- The Lima Group has aligned itself with Washington and has withdrawn an invitation of Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro to attend the Summit of the Americas slated for April 13 and 14.

Maduro had been invited earlier and had confirmed his participation.

On Tuesday, the Group --made up of a coalition of 14 nations hostile to Caracas-- held a 5-hour meeting in the Peruvian capital that was attended by President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski. It kept silence on the military threats against Venezuela coming from the White House.

"Maduro's presence will no longer be welcome in said meeting," Peruvian Foreign Minister Cayetana Aljovin said of Maduro's invitation to the Summit of the Americas.

In justifying the decision, Aljovin invoked the declaration issued in the Summit of the Americas held in Quebec, Canada, in 2001, which states that the alteration of the democratic rule in a country of the region is an "unsurmountable obstacle" for its participation in the Summits.

Representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Saint Lucia also insisted in that the snap elections called for April do not meet international standards.

The Lima Group asked Venezuela to reconsider its decision to hold the elections and come forward with a new electoral timetable with the participation of the opposition.

The group also urged Maduro to allow a humanitarian corridor to provide relief for Venezuela's people, which the government considers is a result of internal and US-backed economic sabotage.

The Lima Group gathering eluded any mention of the recent remarks by US Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, supporting a coup in Venezuela, or the military threats against the South American country.

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