

# *Venezuela denounces unlawful seizure of diplomatic premises in the U.S.*

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Caracas, March 19 (RHC)-- Venezuelan Foreign Affairs Minister Jorge Arreaza has denounced that the country's diplomatic premises in the United States have been forcibly seized by Washington-backed agents.

"In a clear violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, our diplomatic buildings have been seized", said Arreaza in an official statement, adding that according to the 1961 Convention "Venezuela's diplomatic assets in the U.S. can only be used by the official personnel that represent the democratic and constitutional government of President Nicolas Maduro."

Representatives of the Venezuelan lawmaker and self-proclaimed "interim president," Juan Guaido, took control of two buildings belonging to Venezuela's defense ministry in Washington and one consular building in New York, said Guaido's envoy Carlos Vecchio, with the blessing of the U.S. government.

This latest attack on Venezuela's sovereignty comes as a blatant disregard of international law. According to Article 22 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, "the premises of the mission shall be inviolable." The article continues by assuring that the receiving State may not enter them, except

with the consent of the head of the mission and is under a special duty to protect the diplomatic mission against any intrusion or damage.

Even in a rupture in diplomatic relations and supported by Article 45, the receiving nation must continue respecting foreign properties, as the Venezuelan government has done with the U.S. Embassy in Caracas.

Arreaza has asked the Donald Trump administration to “take the necessary measures to immediately reverse this forcible occupation.” He said “that if the U.S. government continues to disregard international obligations, Venezuela's government reserves its right to take legal action and reciprocal measures in its territory.”

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