

# *Russian president urges Venezuelan opposition leader to dialogue*

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Rome, July 5 (RHC)-- Russian President Vladimir Putin, while addressing the current situation in Venezuela, said on Thursday that since opposition lawmaker Juan Guaidó proclaimed himself president "before God" yet received no heavenly "signs," it's time to get back to earth and dialogue.

During an official state visit to Italy, Putin recalled that on January 23rd Guaidó raised his eyes to heaven and, addressing God, proclaimed himself the "interim president" of Venezuela, in violation of the Constitution of the Latin American nation.

"But God did not tell us what his reaction to this message was, he did not give us any sign, that's why I believe he should return to sinful earth and abide by democratic procedures," the Russian head of state remarked.

Putin emphasized the need to renew a "peaceful dialogue without any sort of interference" that in turn makes things "worse for all Venezuelans." Even though the majority of world leaders, including Russia and China, have not recognized Guaidó's "leadership", the United States and its regional allies, especially the right-wing "Lima group" continue to do so. Thus, and with U.S.-backing, the opposition lawmaker has

tried and failed to oust democratically elected President Nicolas Maduro.

The last attempt was carried out on April 30, when Guaido urged the armed forces to support his effort to oust Maduro. The lawmaker appeared outside an air force base with dozens of National Guard members, which later turned out that had been tricked into showing up at the highway interchange of Altamira.

Guaido and opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez, who violated his house arrest, tried to get the army and people to join their coup but failed.

Despite it all, the Venezuelan government has continued to push for mediated talks with the opposition, through the Montevideo Mechanism launched between Mexico and Uruguay with the support of 15 state-members of the Organization of American States (OAS).

On Wednesday, Chinese Foreign Affairs Minister, Wang Li, urged that "the international community must insist in the respect of the objectives and principles of the U.N. Charter, as well as the basic rules of international relations," and that the U.S. "should not interfere with (Venezuela's) domestic affairs."

Meanwhile, President Maduro confirmed the commitment of his government to hold talks in Norway and assured that next week he will announce "good news."

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