

Uruguayan foreign minister says his country won't vote for Luis Almagro



Montevideo, July 27 (RHC)-- Uruguay's government says it won't support a re-election bid from its own Luis Almagro as Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS).

During a Friday press conference, Uruguayan Foreign Minister Rodolfo Nin Novoa, told reporters: "We do not support the re-election of Dr. Almagro. We believe that he has lost the conditions to be a secretary general. He who holds that position must seek to temper differences between countries and foster dialogue, not confrontation," the minister asserted.

The Uruguayan diplomat reiterated that Almagro has not sought to cultivate dialogue among the 35 OAS members states, but has instead fostered "political conflict in Venezuela (by) strongly criticizing the Venezuelan government under President Nicolas Maduro."

Since entering office, and particularly since 2017, Almagro -- who served as Uruguay's foreign minister from 2010 to 2015 and ambassador to China, prior to that -- has on a number of occasions supported military intervention in Venezuela with the intent of regime change.

Aligning with U.S. President Donald Trump and right-wing Lima Group states, Almagro continues to support Washington's illegal sanctions on Cuba and Venezuela, tweeting Friday afternoon: "We support the expansion of sanctions on the Cuban military," referring to a July 26 U.S. State Department sanction on Cuba for again supporting Venezuela.

On the other hand, the current Uruguay administration repeatedly offered to host mediations between the Maduro government and national opposition, an act now being carried out by Norway.

The OAS leader has also tried to intimidate the United Nations-backed, anti-corruption leader in Guatemala, Ivan Velasquez.

Almagro was kicked out of his political party back home last December for saying that "no option should be discarded," regarding a "military intervention to topple Nicolas Maduro's regime." He has been the OAS leader since 2015.

"Almagro's reelection is going to be under discussion in March, if it is presented and the support of other countries. His term began in March 2015, and after five years it will change," Nin Novoa commented Friday.

An official OAS statement published in December 2018 over Twitter read: "The ambassadors of Colombia and the U.S. support his (Almagro's) candidacy for reelection as Secretary General of the OAS. So he has decided to accept." Nin Novoa said that this U.S. support is because "that country has interests in Venezuela."

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