

# *Venezuela rejects Washington's smear campaign against officials*

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Caracas, August 2 (RHC)-- Venezuela's foreign ministry has denounced the smear campaign, coming from the United States, that has without evidence portrayed top officials as involved in criminal activities. The latest accusation came via Twitter from the notorious U.S. migration agency ICE. On their official account, they stated that Economy Minister Tareck El Assami is 'Wanted' for drug smuggling and links to Hezbollah.

Venezuela's official response came from Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza who said: "Venezuela repudiates the obsessive harassment by US Government against Venezuelan democratic institutions, which adds to the campaigns to discredit the dignity of our country's authorities, we reiterate our total support for our comrade and economy minister Tareck El Aissami"

El Aissami also rejected the allegations, posting a video on his Twitter account. Standing by a hydroelectric plant in Bolivar State, he said: "They can accuse us of what they want, we'll continue working to realize the dream of Bolivar, of our homeland"

President Nicolas Maduro supported his minister, stating: "I repudiate the fallacious and manipulative attacks that have been made against the minister and I ask the support of the Venezuelan people. And Maduro continued: "As Commander Hugo Chávez taught us, we know that these attacks are intended to break the morale of the Chavista leadership. They will not achieve it. Now more than ever we ratify our

steadfastness in following the path of Chávez."

El Aissami is now on the U.S. governments 'Most Wanted List', despite the fact that there is absolutely no credible evidence against him.

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