

Leaked recordings between diplomats cause scandal in Colombia



Bogota, November 21 (RHC)-- The release of the audios of a conversation between Colombian Ambassador Francisco (Pacho) Santos and Foreign Minister Claudia Blum in a Washington restaurant has caused a national uproar in Colombia, according to the daily *Semana*. President Ivan Duque, himself, is said to have asked the ambassador to return to Bogota to personally discuss the issue.

During the controversial dialogue, revealed by *Publimetro*, Santos criticized the administration of President Donald Trump, ex-Colombian Foreign Minister Carlos Holmes, some decisions made by Duque, as well as the strategies that should continue to be used against Venezuela.

The evidence of their talk damages the image of the current government of Colombia and it shows cracks in its foreign policy and divisions and competencies between the "Uribismo" records for the presidential elections of 2022.

Santos criticized the outgoing defense minister, Guillermo Botero, who had to resign from his position after a debate in Congress, where senator Roy Barreras revealed that he had covered up the deaths of at least eight children during a bombing carried out in Caquetá. "I don't have a partner in Defense because

Botero didn't work," he said.

However, Blum expressed concern that the most important country for her, at the moment, is the United States, now that 2020 presidential elections are close; because the U.S. president "is going to get tough against drugs, migration and Venezuela." She also acknowledged that "people no longer believe the humanitarian aid was a fiasco."

"Trump is not going to invade Venezuela. But if this man (Nicolás Maduro) does not leave, Colombia has no future. If this man does not leave, he will make our lives impossible," Santos said. "The only solution I see is covert actions there, to generate noise and support the opposition that is very lonely there."

The leaked audio shows that the new Colombian foreign minister was expressing desperation because there was no coup in Venezuela, Juan Guaidó does not work, Donald Trump does not intervene, the CIA does not act, and the OAS is not moving fast enough against Venezuela.

Observers say that after the revelation of the recording, the confusion in Colombia's foreign policy, the divisions and competition among its political leaders, and the practices promoted by the Colombian government to interfere in Venezuelan affairs have been clearly exposed.

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