

Trump claims he has legal right to interfere in criminal cases



Washington, February 16 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump dismissed rare criticism from his attorney general Friday, tweeting that he has the "legal right" to intervene in criminal cases whenever he likes.

The Republican businessman has been accused by opponents in Congress of trying to strip away the Justice Department's independence to benefit himself and his allies.

He denies this, but he earlier came under fire from his own attorney general, Bill Barr, who complained that Trump's frequent tweeting about ongoing criminal cases meant "I cannot do my job." Barr told ABC News television that "it's time to stop the tweeting."

The attorney general's unusual outburst followed controversy over former Trump advisor Roger Stone, who has been convicted of witness tampering and lying to Congress. When prosecutors recommended a sentence of seven to nine years, Trump tweeted that this was a "miscarriage of justice."

Shortly after, in a move that shocked many in Washington, the Justice Department announced it was seeking a less severe sentence. Four prosecutors quit the case in protest. Barr, who has been frequently accused of being too cozy with the president, told ABC that Trump "has never asked me to do anything in a criminal case."

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