

# *Venezuela says sanctions are crimes against humanity*

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**Arreaza said that the International Criminal Court must pronounce on the issue of sanctions as a crime against humanity. | Photo: EFE**

Caracas, August 12 (RHC)-- Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza described the coercive measures imposed by the United States and the European Union against his country as a "crime against humanity."

"UN human rights experts qualify as a 'punishment' against the 'innocent population' the sanctions adopted against Venezuela and other countries. There is no doubt that this is a crime against humanity that the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) must investigate," Arreaza

expressed on his Twitter account.

The Venezuelan foreign minister pointed to a recent report by a group of independent experts on human rights at the UN, saying that sanctions and coercive measures mainly harm ordinary citizens.

According to the UN text, in countries such as Venezuela, Cuba, Syria and Iran, sanctions have made it impossible for most citizens to access essential services such as electricity, water, gas and fuel, medicines and food.

The UN Human Rights Council also warns that illegal sanctions deny countries' right to development and affect the health of entire populations. "The punishment of innocent civilians must end," the statement of the independent HR experts specifies.

In this regard, the experts called on countries that impose "unilateral sanctions" to withdraw them in order to "ensure that the rule of law and human rights, including the right to development, are not affected."

The Venezuelan Government indicates that in the last five years, the United States and its allies have applied nearly 350 illegal and coercive unilateral measures against the country, hindering the purchase and import of goods and services, acquisition of inputs and other essential steps for people's welfare.

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