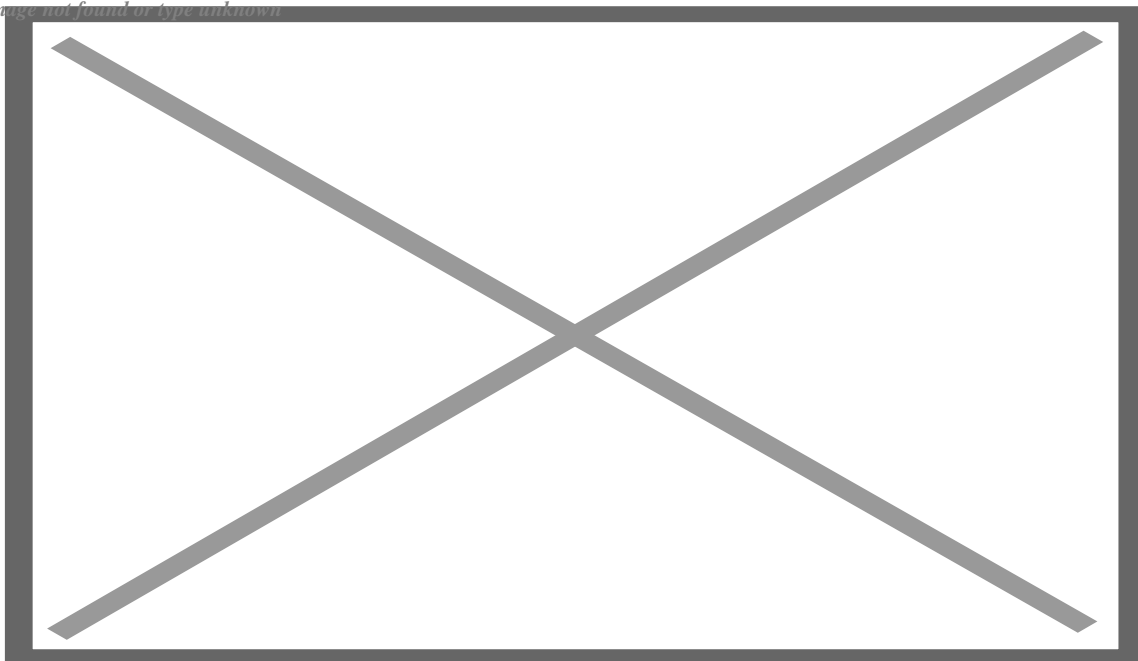


Venezuelan vice president affirms U.S. sanctions are extortion and blackmail

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Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodríguez at the Russia Energy Week 2023 International Forum, Oct. 12, 2023.

Moscow, October 13 (RHC)-- "U.S. unilateral coercive measures against Venezuela are part of a system of sanctions, extortion and blackmail," Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodriguez said Thursday from Moscow.

"It is a system of sanctions... that sought to asphyxiate the Venezuelan economy to pressure the Venezuelan people to change their political course," Rodriguez said during her speech at the international forum of the sixth Russian Energy Week.

"The 930 unilateral coercive measures, that are illicit and illegitimate, are still intact against Venezuela," said Rodriguez. She argued that the sanctions have caused extreme damage to the Venezuelan oil industry, which historically generates the highest percentage of foreign currency for the South American

country.

"In 5 years, Venezuela lost the production of 3,995 million barrels of oil and has lost revenues of US\$600 billion," Rodriguez said, emphasizing that these losses have directly deteriorated the well-being of Venezuelans.

"The impact on the Venezuelan economy is brutal," she said. Although since 2021, the country "has been experiencing a process of economic recovery and growth."

Rodriguez said that the "geo-strategic" targets of U.S. sanctions have been oil exporters such as Iran, Russia, and Venezuela. She warned that the strategy of sanctions plus wars has become the "central axis" of U.S. foreign policy.

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