

# *France Backs Venezuela Dialogue, Opposes EU Sanctions*

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Paris, August 5 (RHC)-- The French government has expressed support for dialogue between the administration of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and the right-wing opposition, which has sought to forcibly remove him from power.

In a statement, Paris condemned ongoing acts of violence in the South American country, stressing that dialogue is the only way to address political turmoil. "France, in concert with its European partners and in support of the efforts of the countries of the region, will continue to support all mediation to resume a dialogue," the statement said.

France also rejected previous European Union plans to impose sanctions on Venezuela, which it has since shied away from. Moreover, Paris officials affirmed that their ambassador in Venezuela, Romain Nadal, is in contact "with all parties." Nadal has expressed his willingness to support attempts at promoting peace through dialogue.

Earlier this week, the EU refused to recognize the result of Venezuela's National Constituent Assembly, ANC, and said it was ready to "gradually step up" pressure on Maduro. The bloc told Maduro to "take urgent measures to rectify the course of events" and that it was "ready to gradually step up ... response in case democratic principles are further undermined and the Venezuelan Constitution is not respected."

Venezuela, however, reaffirmed that the ANC is legal, constitutional and supported by a majority of citizens seeking an end to ongoing political turmoil.

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