

# *Colombian ambassador to U.S. admits he tried to overthrow Maduro*

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Washington, December 18 (RHC)-- The Colombian Ambassador to the United States, Francisco Santos, said on Monday that he 'underestimated' the Venezuelan President, Nicolas Maduro, and his ability to stay in power, and acknowledged that they miscalculated his departure from the government.

While at the Colombian Embassy in Washington,, among a small group of journalists, Santos said that "we underestimated the ability of Maduro to stay in power and his ability protect their environment, which is Caracas, and the rest of the country."

The former vice president of Colombia (2002-2010) excused himself by attributing the "dollarization" to the fact that in Venezuela there are things that according to Santos, a year ago were not in the nation.

He said that one of his roles as Ambassador to Washington was to keep Venezuela in an important place on the foreign agenda in the United States; however he acknowledged that although "the sanctions are fulfilling their role, they have not yet achieved the breaking point, and that's what you keep looking for. "

Last month, a conversation between Francisco Santos and Foreign Minister Claudia Blum was made public in a local newspaper in Colombia, where the ambassador criticizes the Government of President Donald Trump and Iván Duque, and makes a strong statement about the Venezuelan political situation.

In the audio, Santos revealed that the situation in Venezuela was "a bit halted", but that he had prepared to reactivate it by inducing European parliamentarians to take an interest in the border activity to keep the idea of 'the crisis' in their minds. In addition, he confessed to Blum: "It is my turn to invent things so that they have Venezuela in the top of mind (in the head). That is the task with which I am with Venezuela."

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza confirmed, after hearing the audio, the complicity of interference with the affairs of Venezuela.

Santos also reiterated his support for Juan Guaidó , claiming that it is an advance that the Venezuelan opponent has the recognition of 60 countries.

Guaidó, in an interview published Monday in the newspaper El País, said he did not accept a breakdown of the opposition, despite the fact that he himself states that "31 deputies are out, one is in prison and 30 in exile", and that one or another "spectrum of the opposition" is in at an "alleged dialogue table."

He acknowledged that he did not have enough support from the Venezuelan Armed Forces, and that although he had the support of an important group at the time, "some backed out." Hence, he stressed: "You have to analyze the messages to the armed forces, you have to improve them, not that they are worthless, but that you have to look for alternatives."

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