

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro Says All U.S. Diplomats Could Be Expelled



Caracas, October 3 (RHC)-- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro threatened to expel all U.S. diplomats from the country, days after he ordered the expulsion of three U.S. embassy diplomats, accusing them of plotting to sabotage the economy.

The Bolivarian leader said: "First, I threw out their advance team working to destabilize the nation. Now if they push it with funny stuff, I will throw them all out." During a live TV appearance on Monday, Maduro said chargé d'affaires Kelly Keiderling and two other diplomats would have 48 hours to leave the country.

Maduro said the diplomats had met with the Venezuelan far-right to "encourage actions to sabotage the power system and the economy." The Venezuelan president said: "We will not allow an imperial government to bring money and see how they can stop basic companies and stop the electricity to turn off all of Venezuela."

On Tuesday, the U.S. expelled three Venezuelan diplomats in reprisal. The U.S. State Department said that it had given Venezuelan chargé d'affaires Calixto

Ortega Rios, Second Secretary Monica Alejandra Sanchez Morales at the Washington embassy and Consul Marisol Gutierrez de Almeida at the Houston consulate 48 hours to leave the United States.

Caracas and Washington have been without ambassadors since 2010, when late President Chavez refused to accept a newly-named U.S. ambassador to the country.

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