

# *Venezuela's Foreign Minister Denounces EU for Ignoring Its Regional Elections*

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Caracas, October 14 (RHC)-- Venezuela's Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza has denounced the European Union and the U.S. President Donald Trump's government for ignoring the transparency of the South American nation's regional elections on Sunday.

In a televised address, Arreaza also condemned the E.U. for following in Washington's footsteps by considering the imposition of sanctions.

"Venezuela's friends in Europe inform us that the European Union is following in the footsteps of US President Donald Trump, analyzing alleged sanctions against Venezuela, its economy, its officials and its government," Arreaza said.

He said the bloc is using reports, which appear to have been drafted by the Venezuelan right and corrected by the U.S. government to say the polls are fraudulent.

"The European Union is using a report, which has a clear political inclination, to take a position on Venezuela," he told members of the foreign mission of the international accompaniment program for the

October 15 elections and members of the Council of Electoral Experts of Latin America (Ceela).

He added that some "governments believe they merit the right to recognize or discredit the institutions of another country."

Arreaza said the Venezuelan people would provide a lesson in democracy as they did during the National Constituent Assembly, ANC, vote at the end of July.

International electoral experts will be taking part in the process and have access to the electoral audits.

More than 1250 observers are in Venezuela to accompany the ballot.

The 1.5 percent of voting centers which had been threatened with election-related violence have now been relocated - but Arreaza said no country spoke out against the threats.

He also said Venezuela is proud of its electoral system.

The President of the National Constituent Assembly Delcy Rodríguez has rejected the US State Department's decision to question the legitimacy of the regional polls in Venezuela.

Rodriguez said: "The State Department issued a statement that interferes in the internal affairs of the country...and we reject this action."

She urged opposition leaders who have sought support from imperial powers to take part in the democratic electoral process instead and said the ballot would consolidate the nation's participatory democracy.

Meanwhile, the National Electoral Council (CNE) President Tibisay Lucena, confirmed that everything is ready for the polls.

"The table is laid for a new electoral process in Venezuela, no one can stop it, on October 15 we will go out to exercise our right to vote peacefully," she told a news conference.

Speaking at the same news conference, the Venezuelan Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino Lopez called for civil and peaceful behavior on election day.

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