

Venezuelan opposition leader and associates investigated for crimes against state



Caracas, September 6 (RHC)-- Venezuela's Vice President Delcy Rodríguez says opposition lawmaker Juan Guaidó heads a criminal organization whose main purpose is to transfer the country's assets to foreign countries, especially the United States.

"The Venezuelan people know who Juan Guaidó is. He does not (represent) a political project, basically it's a criminal group," Rodríguez said in a press conference.

During the media encounter, Rodríguez played a taped phone conversation between Manuel Avendano, identified as an "outside adviser" to Guaidó, and Vanessa Neumann, a Venezuelan-American and member of Guaidó's inner circle.

Avendano and Neumann can be heard discussing the need to change Venezuela's stance regarding its territorial dispute with neighboring Guyana over the Essequibo region, which is currently under Guyana's jurisdiction.

Neumann, who according to Rodriguez works for the U.S. Department of Defense, said on the tape it was necessary for Venezuela to renounce its claims to the region.

The revelation led Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro to ask prosecutors to undertake "an exhaustive investigation of all of the crimes that are being committed there," Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez described Guaido as "a project prepared and planned by the government of the United States to commit crimes."

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