

Venezuelan President Maduro's Life Threatened?

Latin America opposes Syria War and NSA Spying

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Security concerns have prompted Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro to cancel plans to attend the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

On Wednesday, Maduro accused former United States officials Otto Reich and Roger Noriega of being involved in "crazy provocations" that he said put his life in danger.

Maduro stated that he hasn't ruled out the possibility that the US government may have also been aware of the alleged plans.

"There were two serious provocations, one more serious than the other, how I understand it," Maduro stated.

The president said he made the decision to abandon the US trip during a layover in Canada, after visiting China. Maduro was expected to fly onward to New York, where he was slated to speak at the UNGA for the first time as head of state. Instead however, he returned to Venezuela.

"When I got into Vancouver I evaluated the intelligence which we received from several sources," he stated.

"I decided then and there to continue back to Caracas and drop the New York trip to protect a key goal: safeguarding my physical integrity and protecting my life," Maduro said.

However, he didn't provide any further information about the alleged plot.

"I will not give details because they might discover our source of information," he said.

Venezuelan foreign minister Elias Jaua will instead take Maduro's place at the UNGA.

The decision follows a diplomatic dispute between the US and Venezuela last week, when Maduro stated that US authorities had denied his plane access to US airspace. He has also accused Washington of withholding visas for some of his staff. The US State Department has rejected both accusations.

However, these weren't the only hiccups in Maduro's latest trip abroad. According to the president, he may take legal action against the French company Airbus after his plane, which recently underwent maintenance, developed a technical problem.

“A serious fault appeared in one of the wings of the plane after five months at Airbus in France,” Maduro stated.

At the last minute, Maduro substituted his Airbus A319CJ for a Cuban aircraft.

“To fly with them [Cubans], is to fly with brothers who love us,” Maduro said.

Calls to Move the UN Headquarters

On the same day that Maduro announced he wouldn't travel to the US to attend the UNGA, Bolivian President Evo Morales called for the UN headquarters in New York to be moved.

“How can we be safe at a meeting of the United Nations here in New York? Some do not believe in imperialism and capitalism and feel totally unsafe,” Morales stated during his address to the UNGA on Wednesday.

“The headquarters should be in a state that has ratified all UN treaties,” he said.

Morales also spoke out against international military action in Syria- something which Maduro has done regularly in the lead up to this week's session at the UN.

“Those who decide wars are large arms industries, the financial system and the oil companies. Plutocracy has replaced democracy,” Morales argued.

Other Latin American heads of state including Brazil's Dilma Rousseff and Argentina's Cristina Fernandez have also spoken out against a potential military intervention in Syria.

“There are no just wars; only peace is fair,” Fernandez stated.

During her address, Rousseff argued that any unilateral military strike against Syria would be a violation of international law, and “will do nothing other than worsen the political instability in the region.”

During his speech, US President Barack Obama stated that his “preference has always been a diplomatic resolution to this issue”.

“When I stated my willingness to order a limited strike against the Assad regime in response to the brazen use of chemical weapons, I did not do so lightly,” he stated.

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