

Bolivia expels US diplomat for 'conspiracy'

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Bolivia orders a US diplomat to leave the country within 72 hours after accusing him of participating in a 'conspiracy' against La Paz.

Francisco Martinez, the second secretary of the US embassy in La Paz, was ordered to leave the country by Bolivian President Evo Morales on Monday for conspiring with opposition groups in recent unrests.

Anti-government unrest had rocked much of the country in September 2008.

"Today, I've decided to declare Francisco Martinez... persona non grata," Morales told a news conference in La Paz.

'Deep investigations' had determined that the US embassy's second secretary had been 'in permanent contact with opposition groups'.

Last September, the Bolivian President expelled the US ambassador to Bolivia, Philip Goldberg, to leave the country for the same reason.

Leftist Morales has frequently accused Washington of meddling in his country since he was elected in 2006.

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