

Like Russia, Bolivia Expels USAID for Supporting Political Destabilization Activities

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Bolivian President Evo Morales followed the example of his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, expelling Wednesday the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) from the country.

Morales accused USAID of “manipulating” local public groups in order to destabilize Bolivia, the country’s news agency ABI said.

The expulsion was also a reaction to US Secretary of State John Kerry calling Latin America “the backyard” of the United States, Morales said in a May Day speech.

Kerry made his remark last month at a meeting with US Congressmen, where he argued against cuts to US financial aid to the region.

USAID and the US State Department both expressed regret over Morales’ decision.

Since 1964, USAID has invested more than \$2 billion in various projects in Bolivia, according to the agency’s own figures. Morales said the Bolivian government will foot the bill for all projects deprived of funding due to his decision.

USAID lists health and environmental projects among its main activities in the Latin American country, but it has also campaigned against the cultivation of coca, a practice strongly endorsed by Morales.

The Bolivian setback for USAID comes just months after the agency [was expelled from Russia by the Kremlin](#), which accused it of meddling in the country’s politics. The agency, which spent about \$2.7 billion in Russia since 1992, has supported, among other things, various NGOs that criticized the Kremlin for alleged rigging of the recent presidential and parliamentary elections.

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