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Venezuela Urges Colombia to Talk on Bilateral Issues

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Venezuela insisted on Monday to open talks on bilateral issues with Colombian government and in turn strengthen border security, Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza stressed.

During an interview to Televen private television program 'Jose Vicente Hoy,' the Foreign Minister ratified Caracas' willingness to talk, despite Bogota's evasion after three letters were sent by the Foreign Ministry to Colombia, and no answer has been received.

'We are concerned about the Colombian case, we have a very large border area, and common problems. We sent a monthly letter to Foreign Minister Carlos Holmes, where we raised the need to deal with border issues. The situation in Colombia is very complex,' Arreaza said.

'President Duque is experiencing a very complex situation, students and peasants protest and use Venezuela to distract public opinion of the immense, deep, serious and alarming problems the Colombian society has,' the foreign minister added.

He also denounced that the Colombian government insists on violating the bilateral agreements established for the orderly and voluntary return of Venezuelans through the 'Vuelta a la Patria' (Return to the Homeland) government plan.

Arreaza said that Colombia prevented on Sunday a bus carrying 42 Venezuelans to pass into Venezuela through the border area, and forced the repatriates to cross walking as an example of the most basic human rights violation, regardless of children, women and adults.