

## Russia Denounces External Interference Worsens Venezuelan Crisis

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Foreign interference in Venezuela's internal affairs worsens the crisis in that country, especially when a president in charge is inconceivably named from the outside, Russian Foreign Minister Serguei Lavrov denounced on Tuesday.

'We evaluate the situation (in Venezuela) as alarming and resulting from the serious violation of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states,' the minister said in a press conference.

It is worrying, he said, that initiatives aimed at promoting Venezuelan dialogue are rejected and replaced by other ideas aimed at implementing a change of government.

Mexico and Uruguay were in favor of holding a conference in Montevideo, scheduled for this week, where they invited all Venezuelan political forces, recalled Lavrov. He commented that the legitimate president of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, repeatedly expressed his willingness to participate in that dialogue, but the opposition deputy, appointed president in charge, categorically refuses to participate in that process.

Some of our colleagues, including those from the European Union (EU), seemed to initiate mediation by creating a contact group, where they invited a dozen countries from that bloc and other Latin American nations, the foreign minister said.

In his opinion in the EU itself, its main member states do not know Maduro as a legitimate president and insist on recognizing an opponent as interim president, while demanding presidential elections, without any dialogue.

The constructive approach, he said, which implies a national meeting and agreement on a generally acceptable agenda, is replaced by certain formats built on the logic of ultimatum and impositions.

It is contradictory, he said, that our interest and that of China in participating in the search for opportunities for negotiation between the Venezuelan parties is not taken into account.

We believe, he said, that only by sitting at the negotiating table between the government and the opposition can we get out of this crisis.

Otherwise, there will be the same attempt to depose a government, as in other cases, in which the West has already been involved. There is not a single country where that change has been for the better, said Lavrov.