

Bolivia: The lukewarm and delayed U.S. response after coup attempt in La Paz

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Coup attempt in Bolivia.

While the governments of different countries and international organizations unanimously condemned the coup attempt in Bolivia, the U.S. showed a lukewarm reaction in which it avoided qualifying what happened in that way.

According to EFE, a White House spokeswoman issued a short written statement in which she stated that the U.S. was “closely following the situation in Bolivia” without giving further details and urged “calm and restraint.”

Although the U.S. Embassy in La Paz published in its X account a more specific message than the spokesperson’s statement, it did so at the end of the day after General Juan José Zúñiga, who led the attempted coup d’état in Bolivia against President Luis Arce’s administration, had already been arrested.

“We are closely following the situation in Bolivia. We reject any attempt to overthrow the elected government and call for respect for the constitutional order,” reads the interaction uploaded to the platform after 8:00 p.m. (local time).

A couple of hours before that publication, the diplomatic headquarters issued a security [alert](#) warning that there was a “large military presence in the Plaza Murillo,” the seat of the Executive and Legislative branches, and recommended that its citizens “avoid the area.”

These reactions of Joe Biden’s Administration contrast with the rapid response in Latin America to the failed attempt to break the constitutional thread in the Andean country. The Governments and Foreign Ministries of Honduras, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Cuba, Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico pronounced themselves against the coup attempt, as did Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, and even Uruguay, the foreign minister of Argentina, among others.

Tension with the U.S. Embassy

Precisely, the U.S. Embassy in Bolivia has been the focus of tensions between the

two governments after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Andean nation summoned the U.S. Chargé d’Affaires, Debra Hevia, to complain to her about alleged interference in internal affairs.

Although no further details were provided in the letter, the Bolivian Foreign Ministry’s decision came ten days after the U.S. Embassy rejected the statements of the Minister of Economy, Marcelo Montenegro, who, according to La Razón, accused the U.S. Embassy in La Paz of plotting a “soft coup.”

On that occasion, Montenegro stated that there was a plan from the U.S. Embassy and other diplomatic offices “that are somehow involved in a “plan for a soft coup to the economy”, he mentioned.

On June 14, the highest U.S. diplomatic representation in Bolivia published in its X account that it “categorically rejected the false statements” made by Montenegro and regretted “that a government authority accuses a diplomatic mission without any basis.”

Both countries have not had ambassadors since September 2008, when then President Evo Morales expelled U.S. Ambassador Philip Goldberg after accusing him of meddling in the South American nation’s internal affairs. Washington made a similar decision with Bolivian representative Gustavo Guzmán.

Maduro’s warnings

Two months before tensions between Washington and La Paz increased, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, whose country is a strategic ally of Bolivia, warned about the strategy of U.S. authorities and the Bolivian right wing to “divide the popular, socialist and revolutionary forces” of the Andean country.

In this message, Maduro asked the Bolivian people not to “allow the prognosis and prophecy of the imperialist plan, which is being directed from the US Embassy in La

Paz, to come true.”

Likewise, he referred to Hevia, whom he pointed out as having the capacity to promote Washington’s plans because she has “world experience in making color revolutions” and in “dividing revolutionary movements in some places of the world.”

In his opinion, these attempts to subvert the constitutional order are aimed at appropriating the lithium of the Andean country, which has 24 % of the world reserves of that mineral.

Source: [RT](#), translation [Resumen](#) Latinoamericano - English

