

# Russia Denounces Venezuela Coup Attempt as 'Monstrous' U.S. Meddling

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Juan Guaido (Miguel Gutierrez / EPA / TASS)

Russian lawmakers have slammed what they called the United States' interference in Venezuela's affairs as the country's opposition leader declared himself interim president in a coup attempt.

Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido declared himself interim president on Wednesday, winning the backing of Washington and many Latin American nations and prompting socialist Maduro, who has led the oil-rich nation since 2013 and is a Russian ally, to sever diplomatic relations with the United States. Last month, Maduro said Venezuela and "brother country" Russia had [signed](#) a \$6 billion investment deal in Venezuela's oil and gold sectors.

**Related article:** [Russia Signs \\$6 Billion Investment Deals With Venezuela, Maduro Says](#)

Senior Russian deputies blasted the U.S. response to the coup after President Donald Trump

formally recognized Guaido shortly after his announcement and praised his plan to hold elections.

“All of current U.S. policy toward Venezuela, including Trump’s latest statements, are a direct and unceremonious interference in its internal affairs,” Senator Konstantin Kosachev, the head of the Federation Council’s Committee on Foreign Affairs, was [cited](#) as saying.

Leonid Slutsky, the State Duma’s foreign affairs committee chief, called Venezuela’s coup attempt “very rough and destructive.”

“The U.S. continues [its] policy of external pressure and interference in the affairs of sovereign states,” he [told](#) reporters.

His deputy, the Communist Party’s Dmitry Novikov, [said](#): “it’s hard to imagine a more monstrous example of interference in internal affairs.”

Moscow previously accused the U.S. of “shameless” meddling in cash-strapped Venezuela after Maduro was sworn in as president earlier this month.

The South American country is entering a sixth year of recession caused by a crash in oil prices and an unraveling socialist economic model. Three million Venezuelans have fled violence, hyperinflation and shortages of basic goods, most since 2015, according to the United Nations.

*Reuters contributed reporting to this article.*

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