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Russia Says World Should Foster Venezuela Talks, Not Impose Agenda

By Reuters

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ZUMA Wire / TASS

The international community should continue fostering dialogue between the government in Venezuela and the opposition, but not in order to impose its own agenda, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told reporters during a visit to Havana.

In the joint news conference with his Cuban counterpart Bruno Rodriguez, Lavrov said Havana and Moscow agree that Venezuela's political crisis should be resolved pacifically through dialogue and without foreign interference, in a jibe at the West.

Both countries are staunch allies of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, while most Western powers have recognized opposition leader Juan Guaido as the country's legitimate leader, arguing that Maduro's 2018 re-election was fraudulent.

Talks between the Venezuelan government and the country's opposition are continuing in

Barbados, the foreign ministry of mediator Norway said late last week in a rare statement about the progress of the discussions. This was the latest round of talks that began in Norway in May in an effort to resolve the stalemate resulting from Maduro's disputed re-election.

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"Regarding the contacts stimulating direct dialogue between the government and opposition — we want these to develop but again we want to mention that these should strengthen dialogue and not aim to impose" certain results, Lavrov said.

Russia's foreign ministry website on Tuesday cited interviews Lavrov had given in Latin America in which he said the situation in Venezuela was changing for the better.

Moscow had been in touch with Venezuela's opposition and told it not to "decide its domestic problems by provoking external interference," Lavrov was quoted as saying.

Rodriguez said on Wednesday Cuba remained profoundly loyal to the administration of Maduro.

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