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## Comment by Deputy Director of the Information and Press Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry N.T. Lakhonin on Washington's illegal actions to extradite Special Envoy of the Government of Venezuela to the United States A. Saab

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We would like to draw attention to the egregious situation around Venezuelan Special Envoy A. Saab, who in June 2020, despite his diplomatic passport, was detained at the request for extradition to the United States during the technical landing of his plane in Cape Verde.

The practice of seizing citizens of other countries, including the Russian Federation, in third countries on fabricated charges by U.S. law enforcement agencies, has become the infamous "business card" of the United States. Now Washington seems to have decided to "go to a new level", setting a harmful precedent for the extradition of an authorized person with diplomatic status.

We strongly condemn these actions, the politicized background of which is beyond doubt. We consider unacceptable attempts to apply U.S. law extraterritorially, including to settle political accounts with "undesirable" governments through repression against their official representatives. At the same time, the humanitarian nature of A. Saab's activities, who was fulfilling his mission to receive assistance in the fight against coronavirus infection, is ignored. This once again highlights the double standards of Washington, which tirelessly criticizes the Government of N. Maduro for "the suffering of the Venezuelan people".

We are convinced that the desire of the U.S. authorities to extradite a third-country diplomat may have a negative impact on international relations and may have a "boomerang effect" for any country, including the United States itself, as well as other states involved in dangerous games with international law.



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