



Allende's niece and a Latin woman member of Biden's cabinet will attend the inauguration of Boric in Chile



Surprise turnaround of Ukraine invasion: Washington and Maduro regime hold weekend talks



Jeremy Corbyn and Dilma Rousseff, special guests to Chilean president Boric inauguration Friday

## Duque tells Biden Colombian crude available if needed

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*"The United States and Colombia continue to demand the establishment of democracy in Venezuela and to call Nicolás Maduro a dictator," Duque stressed*

President Iván Duque has made Colombian oil available to the United States if the Joseph Biden administration needs to stabilize global energy prices following Russia's military operations in Ukraine, it was announced in Bogotá Thursday.

A US delegation met in recent days with Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro in Caracas to negotiate the purchase of oil from that country, in what was perceived as a sign of softening from Washington after having declared that Maduro was not the legitimate President of Venezuela.

"Colombia today is a country that has more capacity to supply hydrocarbons than Venezuela has," Duque claimed in a press conference at the Colombian Embassy in Washington after meeting with Biden at the White House.

The first meeting between the two leaders was marked by last weekend's US mission to Venezuela to discuss both the oil crisis and the release of US prisoners.

Duque confirmed that he spoke with Biden about the energy issue and told him that "Colombia is an actor that can contribute much more" than Venezuela.

He added that Colombia produces more than 890,000 barrels per day, that it has the goal of reaching one million, and that currently Colombian crude represents 3% of US imports.

The Colombian head of state added that the Colombian oil company **Ecopetrol** has in Texas the "largest investment" of a foreign oil company in the United States.

"Colombia will contribute to increasing its market in the United States to the extent that the United States requires it and to the extent of our capabilities," Duque promised.

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Nevertheless, Duque insisted that despite the recent mission to Caracas, "Colombia and the United States have not recognized the dictatorial regime (of Maduro) as an interlocutor."

"It is important to say that the United States and Colombia continue to demand the establishment of democracy in Venezuela and to call Nicolás Maduro a dictator," he stressed.

White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki also stressed Thursday that the United States still does not recognize Maduro as "leader of Venezuela," a country with which it broke diplomatic relations in 2019 by recognizing Juan Guaidó as interim President.

Psaki underlined, however, that the main goal of the trip was the release of US prisoners and, although the energy issue was discussed, there was no negotiation to import Venezuelan crude or to lift sanctions on the oil sector of that country.

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