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White House says Colombia agreed to Trump's deportation terms after tariff standoff

The saga began earlier Sunday when Colombia denied entry to deportation flights from the U.S., prompting Trump to threaten retaliatory tariffs, among other measures.



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"The Government of Colombia has agreed to all of President Trump's terms, including the unrestricted acceptance of all illegal aliens from Colombia returned from the United States, including on U.S. military aircraft, without limitation or delay," White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said in a statement.

Leavitt said Trump's proposed actions on tariffs and sanctions "will be held in reserve, and not signed, unless Colombia fails to honor this agreement."

Other measures announced earlier Sunday, including visa sanctions and "enhanced inspections" by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, "will remain in effect until the first planeload of Colombian deportees is successfully returned."

Colombian Foreign Affairs Minister Luis Gilberto Murillo said in remarks delivered in Spanish that the country "will continue to receive Colombians deported, guaranteeing them dignified conditions as citizens subject to rights."

"The government, under the leadership of Gustavo Petro, has at its disposal the presidential plane to receive the Colombians that would have been deported today," he continued on the brief livestream. "Colombia reiterates that the diplomatic channels for interlocution will be open to maintain the rights, the national interest and the dignity of our citizens."

Colombia's Foreign Ministry also said in a statement written in Spanish that "the chancellor Luis Gilberto Murillo and the ambassador Daniel Garcia-Pena, will travel in the following hours to Washington, D.C., to sustain high-level relationships that follow up with agreements, resulting in the joint work and the exchange of diplomatic notes that were sent today between both governments."

The saga began earlier Sunday when Colombia denied entry to deportation flights from the United States, prompting Trump to threaten retaliatory tariffs, among other measures.

"These measures are just the beginning. We will not allow the Colombian Government to violate its legal obligations with regard to the acceptance and return of the Criminals they found into

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The flights, carried out on U.S. military C-17 aircraft, departed from California carrying about 80 Colombian migrants each, the defense official said.

In response, Trump announced on Truth Social sweeping retaliatory measures that include tariffs on Colombian imports, visa sanctions on government officials and allies, enhanced customs inspections and financial penalties, as the United States accuses Colombia of violating its obligations to accept deported nationals.

Trump justified the measures by writing that "Petro's denial of these flights has jeopardized the National Security and Public Safety of the United States."

He added that the tariffs on Colombian imports would start at 25% on all goods and would rise to 50% in one week.

The retaliatory measures also include "A Travel Ban and immediate Visa Revocations on the Colombian Government Officials, and all Allies and Supporters," Trump wrote, as well as "Visa Sanctions on all Party Members, Family Members, and Supporters of the Colombian Government."

Petro [responded by saying](#) that Trump's actions "do not scare me," [adding that Colombia](#) is "not anyone's colony." [He directed](#) Colombia's foreign trade minister to raise tariffs on imports from the United States by 25% and to direct exports to "the whole world other than the U.S."

He added that U.S. goods whose prices would rise in the national economy must be replaced by nationally produced goods, which the government would purportedly help accomplish.

According to the [Office of the U.S. Trade Representative](#), the total estimated value of goods and services trade between the United States and Colombia in 2022 was \$53.5 billion, with the value of exports slightly exceeding the value of imports.

[According to the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security](#), the top U.S. imports from Colombia in recent years were oils and minerals, lime and cement, totaling over 40% of imports, and agricultural goods, which added up to over 26% of imports.

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— Colombian President Gustavo Petro speaks in Bogotá on June 26, 2023.

Sebastian Barros / NurPhoto via Getty Images file

Initially cleared for landing, the flights were grounded after Petro suddenly revoked all diplomatic clearances for them, the official said.

In a statement later, Petro's office wrote that the flights were halted not because he did not want to facilitate the return of Colombians back into his country but because the government was prioritizing "dignified conditions" for the migrants.

"The Government of Colombia, under the leadership of President Gustavo Petro, has arranged for the presidential plane to facilitate the dignified return of Colombian nationals who were to arrive in the country today in the morning hours, coming from deportation flights," the statement said.

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Mexico temporarily blocked two U.S. planes with 80 passengers each from landing last week, frustrating deportation plans and sparking tensions. While the issue was resolved, Mexican officials have express opposition to the United States' unilateral actions around immigration policy.

In a statement on X, Petro criticized the use of military planes for deportation.

“A migrant is not a criminal and should be treated with the dignity a human being deserves,” he wrote. “We will receive our nationals in civilian airplanes, without treating them as criminals. Colombia must be respected.”

The Brazilian government condemned what it described as the degrading treatment of its nationals who were on an ICE repatriation flight Friday, citing the use of handcuffs, a broken air conditioning system and other violations of a bilateral agreement that ensures humane treatment.

On Friday, Guatemala received about 265 deported nationals on three flights from the United States, two of which were military aircraft, according to the Guatemalan Migration Institute.

The flights are part of the Trump administration's crackdown on illegal immigration, initiated through executive orders during Trump's first week in office. Alongside deportation efforts, the administration has deployed an additional 1,500 troops to the U.S.-Mexico border to strengthen enforcement. 



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