

Venezuela Denies Ending U.N. Bid

Latin American Envoys to Discuss Security Council Seat
The Washington Post
October 25, 2006

CARACAS, [Venezuela](#), Oct. 24 -- Venezuelan officials on Tuesday denied Bolivian President Evo Morales's claim that Venezuela had decided to withdraw from the competition for a seat on the U.N. Security Council and would instead nominate his country as a candidate.

Foreign Minister Nicolas Maduro demanded that Guatemala, its rival for the position, and the United States meet three conditions before Venezuela would drop its bid.

Guatemalan Foreign Minister Gert Rosenthal said a Bolivian compromise candidacy "was apparently a unilateral decision by Venezuela, because they have not notified me." He rejected the idea that Guatemala would step aside in favor of [Bolivia](#).

"We have not pulled out, and we have no intention of doing so," he said in Guatemala City.

Latin American U.N. representatives reconvene in New York at noon Wednesday to consider a consensus candidate. Venezuela and Guatemala jockeyed over 35 rounds of voting last week -- the second-longest bid in U.N. history -- to land one of Latin America's two-year rotating seats on the council, but neither got the required two-thirds majority among U.N. members.

"Comandante Chávez called me this morning and said he could not get the two-thirds he needed for the Security Council," Morales said from El Alto, Bolivia, referring to Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez. "Chávez said he will leave the candidacy to Bolivia."

Like Chávez, Morales has strained relations with the Bush administration, which has backed Guatemala for the Security Council seat.

Maduro said Venezuela required that Guatemala resign its candidacy, that the United States stop "its gross blackmail of the governments of the world, and . . . that we have a transparent process to find some kind of third option to represent the region with dignity."