



VENEZUELA INFORMATION OFFICE
733 15TH STREET NW SUITE 932
WASHINGTON, DC 20005
VOICE: (202) 347-8081
FAX: (202) 347-8091

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CONTACT: Mr. Bernardo Alvarez,
Venezuelan Ambassador to the U.S., 202-342-6805

Venezuelan Ambassador Asks Secretary of State Colin Powell to Pledge Not to Break Venezuela's Election Laws or Fund Former Coup Leaders

Washington, D.C. – In a letter sent June 22, 2004, the Venezuelan Ambassador to the United States requested that Secretary of State Colin Powell ask the National Endowment for Democracy to respect Venezuela's election laws and not fund former coup leaders.

Citing Secretary Powell's condemnation of the U.S. government's backing of the 1973 coup in Chile, Ambassador Bernardo Alvarez pointed out that Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer had spoken favorably of the brief coup that unseated Venezuelan President Chavez in April 2002.

Alvarez asked that Powell request that the National Endowment for Democracy – a group funded by the U.S. Congress – stop funding Venezuelan coup leaders and respect Venezuela's election laws.

A copy of the letter sent by Alvarez is attached.

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