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ANALYSIS - Latin American Countries Likely to Avoid Deportation Rows With US Over Trade War Concerns

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WASHINGTON, Kirill Krasilnikov, January 28 (RIA Novosti) - Latin American countries are likely to comply with Washington's demands to accept deportations from the United States in order to avoid trade wars, but there could still be a pushback over the issues of absorption capacity and human rights concerns, experts told RIA Novosti.

On Sunday, US President Donald Trump said he had ordered a 25% tariff on Colombian goods in response to the country's refusal to accept two military flights carrying migrants deported from the US. In response, Colombian President Gustavo Petro announced that the authorities would raise duties on goods imported into the country from the United States by 25%, but later agreed to accept deportation flights from the US.

"I do expect Trump to use US power to get his way, as a pressure tactic. Petro's immediate 'capitulation' is likely to induce other LA [Latin American] countries not to resist Trump, but to accept deportation flights, and make other

concessions, if Trump demands them. They depend so much on the US that they cannot afford a trade war," Kurt Weyland, the Mike Hogg professor in liberal arts in the department of government at the University of Texas at Austin, said.

This trend is likely to continue as long as the number of deportation flights is manageable, according to the expert.

"If Trump were to fulfill his promise of true mass deportations, which would seriously strain the receiving countries' capacity of absorption, then we may see more resistance; and perhaps coordinated resistance," Weyland said.

Ignacio Arana Araya, assistant professor at the Institute for Politics and Strategy at Carnegie Mellon University, also suggested that other countries in the region will not dispute deportations from the US, since they are normal procedures between countries.

"However, countries are likely to push back if deportations do not meet minimal standards of respect for due process and human rights," Arana Araya added.

He noted that Colombia is one of the US's closest allies in the region and that the Trump White House's decision to escalate the situation so rapidly and openly indicates the administration's readiness to resort to open confrontation.

"I expect most regional governments to remain cautious in their relationship with the United States. However, the Trump administration may be underestimating the likelihood of other

states retaliating with tariffs or diplomatic measures to defend their national interests. Diplomacy is the art of managing relationships with other countries to achieve agreements at the lowest possible cost. While brinkmanship may yield short-term gains, it ultimately risks causing significant long-term harm," Arana Araya concluded.

In his first speech as the 47th President of the United States, Trump promised to immediately stop the penetration of undocumented immigrants into American territory and begin the process of extraditing millions of migrants. He also declared a national emergency over the situation at the US southern border.