

Maduro Seeks Dismissal of Charges

Former Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro is seeking the dismissal of drug trafficking charges, with his attorneys arguing that his position as head of a country grants him immunity.

According to Maduro's lawyers, the "unprecedented prosecution violates the absolute immunity from criminal jurisdiction to which heads of state and foreign officials acting in their official capacities have been entitled for hundreds of years, the Executive Branch's immunity determination is entitled to no deference."

"Complete immunity for sovereign heads of state is a bedrock principal of customary international law and is firmly embedded within the common law. Foreign official immunity is analyzed through the application of common law," his lawyers argued, again doubling down on what they called an "unprecedented prosecution" in "flagrant violation of common law principles."



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The attorneys further argued that the conduct described in the charges involved official acts taken on behalf of Venezuela.

"The Indictment makes clear that his alleged criminal acts were performed in his official capacity and allegedly undertaken through Mr. Maduro's exercise of official powers and state instrumentalities," they wrote. "Because such actions are attributable to the Venezuelan state itself, permitting the prosecution to proceed violates the axiomatic principle that courts may not adjudicate the actions of a

foreign nation performed in its sovereign capacity.”

According to the indictment against Maduro, Venezuelan leaders have “abused their positions of public trust and corrupted once-legitimate institutions to import tons of cocaine into the United States” for over 25 years. Maduro is “at the forefront of that corruption and has partnered with his co-conspirators to use his illegally obtained authority and the institutions he corroded to transport thousands of tons of cocaine to the United States.” The indictment states that Maduro “moved loads of cocaine under the protection of Venezuelan law enforcement.”

Maduro also provided “Venezuelan diplomatic passports to drug traffickers and facilitated diplomatic cover for planes used by money launderers to repatriate drug proceeds from Mexico to Venezuela,” the document adds.

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