

Cuba Vows To Protect Hijackers

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MIAMI, April 19 (AP)—The Cuban government says it will not turn away anyone who pirates a plane for the purpose of obtaining political asylum.

There have been U.S. diplomatic efforts to win extradition of hijackers and thus help end air piracy.

Cuba's position was outlined in a broadcast over the government-controlled Havana Radio. The broadcast, monitored in Miami, reported on remarks it said Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, a top Cuban official, made at a news conference in Lima, Peru.

The radio quoted Rodriguez as saying, "One cannot demand that Cuba hand over men who in many cases seek asylum on its soil from the oppression they suffer in their countries."

The broadcast was unclear on whether hijackers who are not political refugees would be kept in Cuba.

Rodriguez, a minister without portfolio and a Fidel Castro confidant, was quoted as saying, "Cuba is not pleased at such hijackings, because they leave open the possibility of a fatal accident."

He was reported to have made the remarks last week while attending a meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America.