U.S. cuts millions in aid to Central America, fulfilling Trump's threat to 'cut off' money

By Camilo Montoya-Galvez

WASHINGTON -- President Donald Trump's administration has announced that it will cut millions of dollars in aid to Central American countries over their handling of migrants, fulfilling the president's threat to 'cut off' funding for those nations.

The decision, announced in a letter Monday from Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to Guatemala's foreign minister, Alvaro Collado, comes as the president 'opposes aid to countries that do not control their borders,' according to the State Department.

Pompeo's letter stated that the aid, which was provided for the fiscal years 2019 and 2020, 'will not be distributed if these countries take no meaningful action to combat illegal migration and drug-trafficking,' the letter said.

The aid, which is part of the overall U.S. foreign assistance to Latin America, is aimed at helping Central American countries develop and enforce laws and policies to reduce illegal migration towards the U.S. It is allocated in both fiscal years and is not a one-time item.

The aid is part of a larger package of aid that the U.S. provides to Central America, which includes funding for education, development, and anti-corruption programs. The State Department has said that it plans to continue providing aid to the region, but that the aid will be 'more conditionally, more targeted, and more tied to concrete actions' in order to ensure that the countries are using the funds effectively.

The announcement drew quick reaction from Democrats in Congress, who said that the administration's actions were not in the best interests of the region.

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