

Venezuela conducts drills as Trump authorizes CIA operations, sends B-52 bombers near Caracas

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A B-52H Stratofortress taxis on the flight line at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam,

January 30, 2024. Photo: Airman 1st Class Alyssa Bankston/U.S. Air Force/File photo

Caracas ([OrinocoTribune.com](https://www.orinocotribune.com))—President Nicolás Maduro has hailed the Operation Independence 200 military drill—conducted in Caracas and Miranda state to protect strategic services and fine-tune military preparedness amid potential attacks from the U.S. empire—as a success.

During a televised interview this Wednesday, October 15, President Maduro noted that “nothing stopped the exercise” despite heavy rains. “Our military personnel went out with the highest morale to defend the Homeland. Our people, in perfect civic-military-police fusion, were there [to support them] in the streets.”

He explained that amid U.S. imperial military threats—whose naval deployment in the southern Caribbean poses a serious threat not just to Venezuela, but to regional peace—Venezuela “is winning peace, zone by zone, territory by territory, state by state. And who wins peace? It is won by the entire society. A united society, the people united in perfect national unity.”

Earlier on social media, the Venezuelan head of state [stated](#) that the drill allows for the comprehensive defense of “mountains, coastlines, schools, hospitals, factories, markets, communities, and our people, to continue achieving peace,” without affecting economic and day-to-day life.

He stated that Caracas and Miranda state have a population of nearly seven million “good, hard-working, and studious people,” emphasizing the importance of fine-tuning the activation of the Communal Militia Units and the Popular Bases for Comprehensive Defense. This aims to provide, essentially, a “war of all people” approach to protecting Venezuela.

President Maduro explained that these “militia communities” are “very important”

alongside “the popular bases for comprehensive defense,” and added, “Peace is our destiny, our blessing. United, we will continue to win.”



CIA authorization and B-52 flights

The drills come as the president of the U.S. empire, Donald Trump, admitted on Wednesday that he has authorized the CIA to operate in Venezuela, a sharp escalation in the renewed regime change efforts from the U.S. entity. He did not specify what that authorization is supposed to entail.

At a news conference, Trump was asked, “Why did you authorise the CIA to go into Venezuela?” to which he responded by reiterating the U.S. empire’s fictional claims the Venezuelan government sends drugs, mental-health patients, and criminals to the U.S. colony.

“I authorized for two reasons, really,” he explained. “Number one, they have emptied their prisons into the U.S.. The other thing is Venezuela’s role in drug-trafficking.” He neglected to mention the reports from the UN and international experts indicating that only about 5% of the cocaine consumed in the U.S. empire transits at all through Venezuela, and none is sourced in the nation. The drug is produced in Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia, as Venezuela has been labeled by international specialized agencies as a drug cultivation-free country.

“We have a lot of drugs coming in from Venezuela,” Trump continued to insist. “A lot of the Venezuelan drugs come in through the sea. So you get to see that. But we’re going to stop them by land also.”

According to U.S. imperial officials—cited by the colonial outlet The New York Times—Trump is pursuing these strategies to force the ousting of President Maduro. The U.S. entity’s ruler declined to answer when asked if the CIA has the authority of the government to execute President Maduro, saying instead, “I think Venezuela is feeling heat.”

The authorization would “allow” the CIA (under the authority of the U.S. colony) to carry out lethal operations on Venezuelan territory or coordinate joint actions with the armed forces of the empire. A U.S. imperial naval contingent of eight warships, a submarine, and some 10,000 troops is currently deployed in the Caribbean.

This move comes as Washington halts diplomatic dialogue with President Maduro’s government and continues extrajudicial killings on small boats it claims are transporting drugs, despite no evidence for their claims.

In a separate incident viewed by analysts as a military provocation, three B-52H bombers from the U.S. empire were spotted by flight monitoring services flying on Wednesday near Venezuelan airspace, following Trump’s announcement regarding CIA involvement in attacking Venezuela.

Flight tracking service Flightradar24, along with multiple open-source intelligence social media posts, identified the trio of bombers. The aircraft, with tail numbers 61-0010, 60-0052, and 60-0033, departed from Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana and flew through the Gulf of Mexico, before approaching Venezuela and circling over the Caribbean Sea inside the Maiquetía Flight Information Region, just a few kilometers north of Caracas.

The provocative mission is part of Trump's intense pressure campaign for regime change in Venezuela. This effort includes raising the bounty for President Maduro's capture to \$50 million last August, strikes on alleged drug-running boats leading to the extrajudicial killing of 27 civilians, and a significant military buildup in the region. So far, neither officials from the U.S. empire nor Venezuela have commented on the incident.

Drill deployment and objectives

Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello was in charge of activating the defensive military drill in Miranda state. "We are responsible for conducting an assessment in each of the Miranda regions," the top official said, quoted on the publicly-owned news channel VTV, "such as Guarenas, Guatire, Barlovento, Altos Mirandinos, Valles del Tuy, and others, within our framework of 27 territorial actions."

Minister Cabello explained that the defensive drill is part of a project of national unity and an active, long-term defense strategy drawn up by the nation to fully prepare for foreign aggression, while, at the same time, keeping the country's life and economy unaffected.

"They know," Cabello said, "the imperialists, the traitors to the country, those who wait for us to come and do their job [with an invasion] that under any circumstance we will maintain national unity." He explained that in Miranda state, "468 militia units" were activated to work with state authorities on protecting electrical transmission networks, fuel distribution, drinking water, food, and other fundamental areas.

Military commanders participating in the drill explained that the objective is to optimize civic-military preparedness, and preserve the forces and resources of the Bolivarian National Armed Force (FANB) by deconcentrating military unit equipment and arsenal.

Plans to protect and secure strategic facilities are being refined. These include power stations, water pumping stations, gas filling stations, hydrological systems, telecommunications, the healthcare sector and hospital networks, transportation, medicines, and food distribution.

Since 2001, the U.S. empire has tried unsuccessfully, using a variety of strategies, to drive Chavismo from power, first against the late President Hugo Chávez, and now against President Nicolás Maduro.

[Special for Orinoco Tribune by staff](#)

