

Commotion across Latin America over the violation of Venezuelan sovereignty

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Havana, Jan. 7 — On January 3 Latin America awoke shaken by one of the most serious and dramatic episodes in international relations in recent decades. The bombing of military facilities and residential neighborhoods in Caracas and three other states of the country by the United States, followed by the kidnapping—rather than the “extraction,” as the corporate media presents it — of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro Moros and his wife, Cilia Flores, marks a breaking point in an

already weakened regional system. For broad political, social, and religious sectors of the region, the operation represents a flagrant violation of a state's sovereignty and a definitive blow to what for years had been called the "rules-based world order."

The military action, directly attributed to the administration of Donald Trump, was confirmation of an openly belligerent foreign policy. The U.S. president, who has been promoting himself as a "president of peace" including his claim for a Nobel Peace Prize, is now regarded as one of the most warmongering leaders in modern times. We cannot forget the massive financial and military aid provided carte blanche to the Israeli genocide of the Palestinian people while exerting European governments to finance and sustain the war effort of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky; not to mention the bombing of Iran.

In this context, Venezuela is once again the target of a policy that, according to corporate analysts, never had the defense of democracy, justice, or human rights at its core, "much less in this part of the world," according to voices from Caracas and other Latin American capitals. The history of interventions and blockades explains the peoples' rejection of the humanitarian arguments put forward by Washington.

Following the attacks, the Venezuelan government decreed seven days of national mourning. The acting president, Delcy Rodríguez, announced the measure "in honor and glory of the young women and men who died, defending Venezuela." The decree seeks to pay tribute to the victims of the bombings, which, in addition to military targets—32 of them Cubans—caused collateral damage in civilian areas, increasing domestic and regional outrage.

At the same time, a contradictory event occurred that reignited the debate over the construction of narratives to justify aggression. The U.S. Department of Justice published a revised indictment against Nicolás Maduro in which it tacitly acknowledges that the so-called "Cartel of the Suns" is not a real criminal

organization. This admission dismantles one of the most widely disseminated media narratives of recent years, which portrayed the Venezuelan leadership as part of an alleged continent-wide drug-trafficking structure.

For years, that narrative made front-page news in major international media outlets, fueled by alleged leaks from agencies such as the DEA and the CIA, and amplified by journalists and news agencies. However, recent documents reinforce the denial: the DEA's own 2025 National Drug Threat Assessment details drug-trafficking routes in the Americas with precision, but does not include Venezuela as a main transit country nor does it mention the "Cartel of the Suns." Reports from the UN and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction reach the same conclusion, further weakening the arguments used to criminalize the Venezuelan state.

The regional reaction was swift. Governments, political movements, and social and religious organizations across Latin America and the Caribbean condemned the U.S. aggression. Venezuelan Foreign Minister Yván Gil denounced what he described as "Marco Rubio's hatred toward Latin America," asserting that the Secretary of State "does not serve the interests of Americas, but rather the Miami mafias that finance his lobby."

From Havana, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel described the attack as a "criminal act" and "state terrorism," and demanded a firm response from the international community. Former Bolivian President Evo Morales also expressed his repudiation, joining a long list of leaders who consider the bombing a dangerous precedent for regional stability.

Political organizations such as the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity denounced that imperial interests continue to shatter global harmony, pointing to a line of continuity between the aggression against Venezuela, the genocide in Gaza, the blockade against Cuba, and acts of "piracy" against countries that do not align

with Washington. In the same vein, the Communist Movement of Latin America and the Caribbean condemned the military aggression as a “slap in the face to international law” and a desperate attempt to regain control of the region’s strategic resources through terror and force.

The condemnation transcended the political sphere and reached spaces of faith. The Council of Methodist Evangelical Churches of Latin America and the Caribbean (CIEMAL) rejected any military intervention that fails to respect the sovereignty of peoples and promotes “ideologies of death.” In a statement, the organization recalled that from the Christian faith there is a call to raise a prophetic voice so that peace, justice, and healing may reign on earth, warning that violence will never be an effective solution to conflicts.

The impact of the episode also extended to Colombia. President Gustavo Petro called for a national mobilization in defense of sovereignty, after Donald Trump accused him of promoting drug production and suggested a possible military incursion into Colombian territory. Petro described those statements as a direct threat and called on the people to take to public squares to reject any attempt at foreign intervention.

Also, the Political and Academic Forum of the Puebla Group issued a strong condemnation of statements made by President Donald Trump directed at Colombian President Gustavo Petro and Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum, describing such language as a form of intimidation against democratically elected governments and an attempt to reimpose a logic of coercion incompatible with peaceful coexistence among sovereign states. According to the Group’s statement, these remarks cannot be separated from the context of the recent U.S. military action against Venezuela and the detention of President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores—acts the forum characterized as an unjustifiable violation of international law and the United Nations Charter. In its declaration, the Puebla Group reaffirmed its solidarity with Petro and Sheinbaum and reiterated its

commitment to the principles of sovereignty, self-determination, non-intervention, and the peaceful resolution of disputes in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Thus, the attack on Venezuela not only reopened old wounds but also reshaped the region's political map. For many governments and social movements, what happened confirms that Latin America once again faces the challenge of defending its sovereignty against a power willing to ignore international law. Amid mourning, outrage, and mobilizations, these questions echo across the continent: how far will this escalation go, and what cost will it have for regional peace?

Alejandra Garcia is a news anchor on Telesur TV and a correspondent for Resumen Latinoamericano in Havana.

Bill Hackwell is the editor of Resumen Latinoamericano in the U.S.

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano](#)



From the Monroe Doctrine to Caracas: how a declining empire turns to force

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The jets over Caracas in the early hours of Jan. 3 were not an aberration. They were a signal.

By the time the sun rose, Venezuela's president had been kidnapped by U.S. special forces and flown north. Washington called it law enforcement. But no police action requires the suppression of a country's air defenses or the use of military bases across a hemisphere.

What happened in Caracas was not about one man — it was about power and how that power is now being exercised.

Jets over Caracas were not an aberration

What happened in Venezuela was not a sudden break with the past, but a clear expression of how U.S. power now operates when other means fail.

Across Latin America, the message was unmistakable. The United States no longer feels bound by international law. It is willing to act with open belligerence, directly and militarily, to remove governments that stand in its way. This was not a covert operation hidden behind deniability. It was meant to be seen.

The original Monroe Doctrine: rule by conquest

From the beginning, U.S. dominance in the hemisphere was enforced through

violence, with independence tolerated only so long as it did not interfere with expansion and profit.

The Monroe Doctrine did not protect the Americas from empire. It cleared the field for one. European powers were warned off so Washington could expand without competition. Governments were toppled. Land was seized. Resistance was met with occupation and massacre. This was colonialism in its direct form, backed by the gunboat and the army.

After World War II, dominance without constant invasion

With much of the world's industry in ruins, U.S. capitalism could rely on production, credit, and the dollar to secure control without permanent occupation.

After 1945, the United States emerged as an industrial giant, producing close to half of the world's total output. Its factories supplied reconstruction. Its banks financed recovery. The dollar became the main currency of trade and reserves. Under these conditions, control could be exercised through loans, trade access, and investment rather than constant military force.

When production ruled, force stayed in the background

Military power never disappeared, but it functioned mainly as insurance, rarely needed when economic leverage could achieve the same ends.

Governments that aligned with U.S. interests were rewarded with access to markets and credit. Those that resisted faced isolation or destabilization. The threat of force remained, but it did not have to be used everywhere. Economic dominance did the work.

This arrangement also helped stabilize conditions inside the United States, unevenly and temporarily. The empire could afford concessions at home because profits

flowed in from abroad.

The long industrial decline since the 1970s

As factories closed and production moved abroad, the material basis for U.S. economic dominance steadily eroded, even as the empire tried to maintain its reach.

Beginning in the 1970s, U.S. capitalism shifted production overseas in search of cheaper labor and higher returns. Manufacturing hollowed out. The economy leaned more heavily on finance and debt. By the early 2000s, the U.S. share of world production had fallen dramatically; today it stands at around 17%. The dollar still dominates, but increasingly through pressure rather than unmatched strength.

From economic leverage to open coercion

When loans, sanctions, and diplomatic pressure no longer deliver submission, the system falls back on its most direct instrument.

Sanctions that once bent governments now often harden resistance. Proxy forces falter. Sanctioned governments build alternative trade routes and alliances. In this context, force is no longer a last resort. It becomes the primary tool.

Why Venezuela became a test case

A government that retained control of key resources and resisted U.S. subordination presented an obstacle that economic pressure alone could not remove.

Venezuela sits atop the world's largest proven oil reserves. U.S. corporations once dominated that sector before nationalization broke their hold. Years of sanctions and political pressure failed to restore control. Caracas maintained ties with Russia, China, and Iran. Economic leverage no longer worked. The response was force.

Drugs and courts as cover for seizure

Criminal charges and moral language serve to disguise an act of force that is, at bottom, about control over labor, land, and oil.

Claims about drugs and terrorism do not explain the operation. They are an attempt to justify it. Imperialism has always required a story to tell, especially when it acts openly. Today that story is law enforcement. Yesterday it was anti-communism. The function is the same.

An empire that can no longer afford consent

Where influence once flowed through credit and trade, it now comes through sanctions and military force.

U.S. leaders now speak openly about seizing resources and running other countries. This bluntness does not reflect strength. It reflects the exhaustion of older methods. The empire can no longer afford consent, so it imposes obedience.

What imperial decline means for working people everywhere

As U.S. power abroad weakens, working people are made to pay in familiar ways: lower wages, longer hours, higher rents, heavier policing, and more war aimed at securing resources that once flowed automatically.

The same system that sends special forces into Caracas squeezes wages, evicts tenants, militarizes police, and criminalizes migration. The operation was sold as targeting drug cartels, but its real aim — control of Venezuelan oil — benefits corporations, not working people who still pay the same inflated prices at the pump.

These are not separate problems. They reflect a system losing its grip and relying more heavily on force.

The use of force is meant to settle the question of control. Instead, it exposes the

struggle for what it is: a declining empire seizing by violence what it can no longer secure through production — against governments that refuse to submit.



Trump threatens war on Iran as U.S. economic stranglehold tightens

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On Jan. 2, Donald Trump posted a threat on Truth Social that should alarm anyone paying attention. “If Iran shots [sic] and violently kills peaceful protesters, which is their custom, the United States of America will come to their rescue. We are locked and loaded and ready to go.”

Read that again. The president of the United States just promised to invade Iran if its government kills protesters — something U.S. state forces have done many times from the Civil Rights movement to police and National Guard killings at Jackson

State and Kent State in 1970 to the 2020 Black Lives Matter uprisings.

This isn't empty bluster.

Last June, while U.S. and Iranian diplomats were still talking, U.S. and Israeli warplanes launched coordinated strikes against Iran's nuclear facilities in a 12-day assault. The United States deployed B-2 bombers to strike the underground sites at Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan with bunker-buster bombs specifically designed to penetrate the fortified facilities.

The conflict killed over 1,000 people in Iran and injured thousands more, most of them civilians, according to Iran's Health Ministry. In December, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee said Iran "didn't get the full message."

Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met at Mar-a-Lago that month to coordinate the next strike. Trump told reporters afterward that he could "knock out their missiles very quickly" and that the consequences for Iran would be "maybe more powerful than the last time."

So when Trump says "locked and loaded," he means it. The question is why.

The economic vise

The protests Trump claims to care about started in early December when shopkeepers in Tehran's Grand Bazaar went on strike. The Iranian currency, the rial, had hit a record low against the dollar. Prices for basic goods were soaring. The strike spread. People took to the streets, furious about the cost of living.

This didn't happen by accident. For decades, the United States has waged economic war against Iran through sanctions that target its oil exports, its banks, its shipping industry. In late 2025, Washington reimposed United Nations "snapback" sanctions, tightening the noose further. Economist Jeffrey Sachs calls this "economic

strangulation” — a form of collective punishment aimed at an entire population.

The numbers tell the story. According to the International Monetary Fund’s projections from October, Iran’s economy is expected to grow just 0.6% in 2025, down from 3.1% the year before. Inflation is forecast at 42.4%. The rial has collapsed, wiping out people’s savings and their ability to buy food, medicine, fuel. Then came the June airstrikes, which caused billions of dollars in damage on top of everything else.

So yes, Iranians are protesting. They’re angry. Many blame their own government for corruption and mismanagement, and they have every right to. But the crisis itself — the currency collapse, the runaway inflation, the shortages — was engineered in Washington. The sanctions are designed to create exactly this kind of desperation, to turn people against their government, to make the country ungovernable.

Trump’s offer to “rescue” Iranian protesters is a sick joke. The U.S. created the economic disaster that drove them into the streets. Now it wants to use their suffering as a pretext for war.

The response from inside

Here’s what makes this moment different from past U.S. threats: Iranians aren’t playing along.

After the June airstrikes, something unexpected happened. People who had been protesting the government rallied against the foreign attack. In January, massive counter-protests erupted in Fars and Hamedan provinces. Demonstrators chanted “Death to America” and condemned what they called the “destructive actions” of rioters. The message was clear: We have grievances with our government, but we won’t let you use them to destroy our country.

The most striking example came from death row. Pakhshan Azizi is a Kurdish social

worker sentenced to death by the Iranian government. The U.S. State Department made her case a cause célèbre, holding her up as proof of Iran's brutality.

From her cell, Azizi smuggled out a [statement](#) rejecting what she called "American sinister instrumentalization of her case." She wrote: "If the United States government truly believes in the principles of human rights and humanity, it must first cease its warmongering, aggression, and crimes in the region. It must also end its explicit support for the Zionist regime, which has committed genocide against the people of Gaza."

A woman facing execution told the U.S. government she doesn't want its help. That tells you everything about how Iranians see this offer of "rescue."

Iran's government, for its part, has responded with defiance. The Foreign Ministry called Trump's threat a "gross violation of the fundamental principles of the UN Charter" and "incitement to violence." Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf warned that any U.S. attack would make "all American centers and forces across the entire region" legitimate targets. President Masoud Pezeshkian said Iran is in a "full-fledged war with America, Israel, and Europe."

What this is really about

The official story is that the U.S. opposes Iran because of its nuclear program, its support for regional militias, its human rights record. These are pretexts. The real issue is that Iran refuses to be controlled.

Since the 1979 revolution, when Iranians faced the Shah's bullets to overthrow a dictator installed by CIA coup, Iran has refused to return to its former status as a U.S. client state. It trades with countries the U.S. wants isolated. It trades with countries the U.S. wants isolated. It supports movements the U.S. wants crushed. Most importantly, it sits at the crossroads of two major projects that threaten U.S.

dominance: China's Belt and Road Initiative, which would create a land route from China to Europe through Iran, bypassing U.S.-controlled sea lanes, and Russia's International North-South Transport Corridor, which would connect Russia to India via the Caspian Sea and Iran, giving Russia access to the Indian Ocean.

Both projects depend on a sovereign, stable Iran. That's what the U.S. cannot allow.

The conflict with Iran is fundamentally about preventing countries from building economic and political systems outside U.S. control. Any nation that seeks real sovereignty — the ability to trade with whom it chooses, build the infrastructure it needs, control its own resources — becomes a threat to Washington's dominance. General Michael Flynn, Trump's former national security advisor, said the quiet part out loud when he admitted the ultimate goal of a war on Iran is to "weaken China" and ensure "U.S. global dominance."

The preferred outcome is regime change — installing a government in Tehran that will take orders from Washington the way the Shah did before 1979. Analyst Behrooz Ghamari Tabrizi describes the goal as forcing Iran back into being a "client state" that "lacks the authority to challenge American regional influence."

But if that proves impossible, the fallback is a failed state. Think Syria or Libya: a country torn apart by civil war, no longer capable of challenging anyone. U.S. planners have discussed this option since the 1970s, when internal documents floated the idea of breaking Iran "into ethnic parts" to neutralize it as a regional power.

This is what's at stake. Not preventing nuclear weapons or protecting protesters. Control. The U.S. empire requires that Iran remain weak, divided, and compliant. An Iran trading freely with China and Russia, helping to build new infrastructure and new financial systems outside U.S. control, aligned with other countries resisting Washington's dominance — that is the real threat.

Where we stand

Trump's threat is reckless and dangerous, but it's also a sign of weakness. The U.S. has been trying to break Iran for more than 40 years through coups, sanctions, assassinations, cyberattacks, proxy wars. Iran is still standing. Its alliances with China and Russia are deepening. New trade routes, financial systems, and economic partnerships are being built despite U.S. opposition.

The danger is that Washington, facing the limits of its power, will lash out. The June airstrikes killed a thousand people. Another attack could kill many more. A ground invasion — which Trump's threat implies — would be catastrophic.

The lie is transparent. This has nothing to do with human rights or democracy. It's about empire, oil, and a desperate attempt to maintain dominance over countries building economic ties outside Washington's control.

When workers in Tehran go on strike because they can't afford food, the answer isn't U.S. bombs. The sanctions strangling their economy come from Washington. The military threats hanging over their heads come from Washington. The same forces of capital and empire that exploit workers in Iran exploit workers everywhere. The fight against imperialist war abroad and the fight for justice at home are one fight.



And then 2026 arrived

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Nicolás Maduro remains in Miraflores Palace, and Cuba celebrates the 67th anniversary of the Revolution today. January 1, 2026, dawns with this uncomfortable truth for the opinion machine that has spent months predicting the imminent fall of both governments, while Trump's gunboats prowl the Caribbean.

There is no honest way to deny the crises both countries are experiencing — they are visible and socially painful — but the point is to understand why the narrative of the “inevitable fall” returns time and again and, time and again, fails. What collapsed in 2025 was not power in Caracas nor the institutions in Havana.

What collapsed was a type of interpretation, convenient for certain elites, that reduces politics to a mechanical equation of pressure and collapse, confuses desire with prediction, and, above all, presents Latin America as a chessboard where Washington moves pieces and the peoples of the South simply fall by inertia.

“Maduro won't make it to Christmas,” shouted Rep. Carlos Giménez, of Cuban

origin, when Trump declared his “peace through strength.” Giménez’s allies in Miami echoed this sentiment, but with the added twist of a “Castro-communist end.” This determinism, repeated ad nauseam by Florida politicians led by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, has served to normalize collective punishment and transform social suffering into a tool of “political engineering.”

In 2025, headlines and columns treated the collapse as an imminent, almost inevitable event: all it took was “one more push,” “a definitive closure,” “one final turn of the screw.” In Venezuela, opposition media even narrated the fall as if it were happening in real time. Nobel Peace Prize laureate and enthusiast of a U.S. invasion, María Corina Machado, promised Trump massive privatizations of her country’s oil fields and free rein for U.S. companies.

In the Cuban case, think tanks and commentators insisted that the combination of energy crisis, inflation, and social unrest opened a window for “regime change” in 2025. In the U.S. political arena — and especially in the media ecosystem based in Florida — the escalation of hardline rhetoric, with explicit references to “regime change” as the desired outcome, was presented as the prelude to a total victory against communism: first Caracas, then Havana; all by association, as if societies were dominoes.

But reality is stubborn. There are structures, interests, memories, and state capacities that do not evaporate with the first blow. When punishment becomes the norm, societies learn — sometimes creatively, sometimes painfully — to survive within the anomaly. Peoples are not a footnote in geopolitical calculations: they are political subjects with the capacity to interpret what is happening, to organize collective knowledge, and to accumulate experiences. They have support networks, forms of cohesion, and a practical intelligence forged by memory and the harsh realities of daily life.

In Cuba, blackouts, the erosion of purchasing power, shortages, migration, and

deprivations of all kinds were interpreted as an automatic threshold for collapse. The idea that the economic crisis “can only end” in political downfall was repeated. But Cuban history — with all its contradictions — is also the story of a state that has already survived extreme shocks, including the Special Period, through a combination of partial economic reorganization, institutional leadership, and community and family networks that cushion the blow. This doesn’t make the crisis any less real. It simply explains why the crisis doesn’t automatically translate into collapse.

Both Venezuelans and Cubans identify Washington as the main factor in the economic suffocation they are suffering, and this awareness, far from sparking a rebellion against their governments, tends to activate reflexes of national dignity. If what the U.S. power sought was to turn hunger, blackouts, and uncertainty into leverage for insurrection, the purpose has failed. They have created societies willing to resist, not to rise up.

Perhaps it would be wise to change the question to alter the policy. It’s not “when will they fall,” as if the fall were a spectacle. It’s “how much life are we willing to destroy to try to bring them down?” That is the ethical question that the prophets of collapse avoid, because it forces them to consider the human cost of their recipe, and for anyone with a memory in Latin America — with coups, blockades, invasions, and tutelage — that question should be a red line: no “democracy” imposed by gunboats is worth the price of punishing millions of innocent people.

Source: [La Jornada](#), translation [Resumen Latinoamericano - English](#)



While Trump spoke of peace, the CIA escalated war against Russia

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While the Trump administration spoke publicly of peace talks, the CIA escalated a covert war on Russia's oil infrastructure with the president's approval.

A recent [New York Times](#) report documents this dual track, detailing how covert attacks continued even as public diplomacy gestured toward negotiations. The contradiction reflects divisions within the U.S. ruling class over how to keep wars going without provoking opposition at home.

What follows draws in part on New York Times reporting.

Two wars, one state

Within the administration, rival groupings clashed over Ukraine policy, not over whether U.S. imperialist interests should be defended, but over how. One current, associated with Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, argued

that the Ukraine war was bleeding U.S. military stockpiles needed for a larger confrontation with China. From this standpoint, Ukraine was a secondary theater draining resources from the main strategic priority.

Another current, represented by figures such as Gen. Jack Keane and Gen. Keith Kellogg, insisted that failure in Ukraine would signal a dangerous retreat. For them, NATO expansion eastward and the subordination of Russia were central to maintaining U.S. dominance in Europe. Failure on that front would expose the limits of U.S. power after decades of expansion.

Hegseth acted on his assessment. Military aid to Ukraine was repeatedly frozen, including critical artillery shipments. Senior officers described what amounted to a de facto suspension of Pentagon support. Those within the military who favored continued backing for Ukraine found themselves sidelined.

This paralysis did not restrain U.S. war policy. It merely shifted where decisions were made.

The Agency steps in

As the Pentagon stalled, the CIA moved forward. Under Director John Ratcliffe, the agency's operations in Ukraine continued uninterrupted and, in some cases, expanded. Funding increased even as official military aid was frozen. When Trump briefly ordered a cutoff in intelligence sharing, the armed forces complied. The CIA did not. After Ratcliffe warned of the risks to agency operations, the White House quietly authorized continued intelligence flows.

Working in tandem with select military elements, the CIA intensified a campaign of drone strikes on Russian oil refineries and tankers. These operations were not conducted through Ukraine's regular armed forces. They were carried out through Ukraine's intelligence services, which relied heavily on networks of far-right and

openly fascist paramilitaries.

At the center of this effort was the Russian Volunteer Corps, led by Denis Kapustin, a neo-Nazi organizer with long-standing ties to transnational fascist circles. That the CIA chose such forces was not an aberration. Imperialism has long promoted and relied on mercenary forces.

Trump approved the campaign privately. According to U.S. officials, he viewed covert escalation as a way to strike Russia while avoiding the political risks of open confrontation. Deniability was not an accident; it was the method.

Targeting the weak points

By early summer, CIA and military planners refined the campaign. Rather than symbolic attacks on easily repaired facilities, the focus narrowed to specific refinery components that were difficult to replace. The aim was not spectacle but sustained covert disruption.

The U.S. role remained indirect. Intelligence and targeting assistance were provided, but weapons and equipment were not. The attacks themselves were carried out by fascist paramilitaries, made effective by U.S. intelligence support.

The campaign later expanded to include Russia's so-called shadow fleet — oil tankers operating outside the sanctions blockade in the Black Sea and Mediterranean.

Measuring the damage

U.S. intelligence estimates claimed the strikes were costing Russia up to \$75 million per day. Officials spoke of gas lines and economic strain. One senior figure declared, "We found something that is working."

Independent assessments told a different story. Analysts noted that even the highest estimates represented a small fraction of Russia's annual oil and gas revenue. Reported shortages were linked to temporary logistical disruptions, not structural damage. Russia retained refining capacity well beyond domestic needs.

This divergence is not incidental. Intelligence estimates under imperialism are not neutral measurements; they are tools used to justify policy. In this case, inflated figures helped sell the program to a president looking for leverage. The damage was real, but it was manageable. Russia's capacity to fight was not broken.

What the contradictions reveal

Publicly, the administration pressured Ukraine to accept territorial concessions in negotiations that bore little relation to the realities on the ground. Russia's position was explicit: demilitarization, denazification, and the removal of NATO infrastructure. These demands are considered by Moscow to be nonnegotiable. Russian forces now control the Donbass, which was incorporated into Russia's constitutional framework in 2022. (See "[Why Russia recognized the Donbass republics.](#)")

Washington's proposals ignored these facts. There was no negotiating space on terms that would require Russia to surrender territory it already holds militarily and claims politically.

Alongside this public track ran a covert one: economic warfare aimed at raising the costs of continued resistance.

This was not confusion. It was the expression of real divisions within the U.S. ruling class over how to allocate shrinking resources in defense of global dominance. One faction sought to conserve military capacity for Asia. The other refused to accept limits in Europe, fearing that failure to subordinate Russia would expose the

weakening grip of U.S. imperialism after decades of expansion.

The CIA's role was not an exception but a confirmation of how imperialism operates in periods of decline. When open policy stalls and consensus fractures, the most unaccountable arms of the state move to the foreground. Covert war becomes the preferred instrument precisely because it bypasses public debate, conceals failure, and allows imperialist violence to continue without political reckoning.



Ukraine: The erased evidence

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Since 1991, the year Ukraine became an independent republic after the dissolution of the USSR, NATO has been building a network of ties within the Ukrainian armed forces. Simultaneously, through the CIA and other intelligence services, neo-Nazi militants are recruited, funded, trained, and armed. Photographic documentation shows young Ukrainian neo-Nazi militants from UNO-UNSO being trained in Estonia in 2006 by NATO instructors, who teach them urban combat techniques and the use of explosives for sabotage and attacks. This neo-Nazi paramilitary structure came

into play on February 20, 2014, in Maidan Square in Kiev, during a political demonstration where supporters and opponents of Ukraine's accession to the EU clashed. While armed and organized groups stormed government buildings, "unknown" gunmen (who later turned out to be snipers recruited in Georgia) fired with the same sniper rifles at both protesters and police officers, causing dozens of deaths. On the very day of the Maidan Square coup, the NATO Secretary General addressed the Ukrainian armed forces in a commanding tone, warning them to "remain neutral" under penalty of "serious negative consequences for our relations." Abandoned by the top brass of the armed forces and by a large part of the government apparatus, President Yanukovich was forced to flee.

The Maidan Square coup was followed by an immediate attack against Russians in Ukraine and Ukrainians friendly to Russia. It was a wave of terror, organized with a precise strategy: headquarters of the Communist Party of Ukraine and other political movements were devastated, leaders were lynched, journalists were tortured and murdered; activists were burned alive in the Odessa Labor House; unarmed residents of eastern Ukraine of Russian origin were massacred in Mariupol, and white phosphorus bombed in Sloviansk, Luhansk, and Donetsk. Faced with the offensive against Russians in Ukraine, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Crimea—a Russian territory transferred to Ukraine during the Soviet era in 1954—voted for its secession from Kiev and its re-annexation to the Russian Federation. The decision was confirmed with 97% of the vote in a popular referendum. On March 18, 2014, President Putin signed the treaty granting Crimea the status of an autonomous republic in the Russian Federation.

While in the Donbass the self-proclaimed People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk, inhabited by Russian populations, resist attacks from Kiev that have caused 14,000 deaths, the roadmap for NATO-Ukraine military-technical cooperation, signed in 2015, fully integrates the armed forces and the war industry into those of the Alliance under US leadership. Neo-Nazi groups are integrated into

the National Guard, trained by hundreds of US instructors from the 173rd Airborne Brigade, transferred from Vicenza to Ukraine, along with others from NATO.

Kiev's Ukraine became a breeding ground for resurgent Nazism in the heart of Europe. Neo-Nazis from all over Europe (including Italy) and the USA arrived in Kiev, recruited primarily by Pravy Sektor and the Azov Battalion, whose Nazi identity is embodied by its emblem, a copy of that of the SS Das Reich division. After being trained and tested in military actions against Russians in Ukraine in the Donbass, they were allowed to return to their country with the privilege of using Ukrainian passports. At the same time, Nazi ideology was being disseminated among younger generations in Ukraine. The Azov Battalion played a key role in this, organizing military training camps and ideological indoctrination programs for children and teenagers, who were taught above all to hate Russians.

In the 2019 Ukrainian elections, actor Volodymyr Zelensky—famous for his television series about high-level political corruption in which he played a professor who is unexpectedly elected president—actually became president of Ukraine. During his campaign, Zelensky promised to end the war in the Donbass and clean up the oligarch-dominated government system, accusing the wealthy Poroshenko, then president, of hiding his assets in foreign tax havens. But once elected president, Zelensky did everything he could to fuel the de facto NATO-led war against Russia. Regarding his second commitment, to eliminate corruption, particularly the export of capital to tax havens, the facts speak for themselves in a documented investigation by The Guardian: Zelensky is a co-owner of three companies headquartered and capitalized in Belize, the British Virgin Islands (Central America), and Cyprus. Through these companies, he receives more than \$40 million from obscure financiers. An investigative documentary by Scott Ritter—a career US Marine specializing in intelligence, who headed the UN inspectors in Iraq from 1991 to 1998—shows the luxurious villas Zelensky owns in Miami (this one alone is worth \$34 million), Israel, Forte dei Marmi in Italy, London, Georgia, Greece, and other

countries.

This is a brief summary of an international press review from Friday, December 5, 2025, on the Italian TV channel Byoblu. Translation by Roger Lagassé.

Manlio Dinucci a geographer and journalist. He has a weekly column “The Art of War” in the Italian daily newspaper Il manifesto.



The Alliance of Sahel States launches unified military force and strengthens regional security

written by Struggle - La Lucha

January 10, 2026

The Alliance of Sahel States (AES) has taken a decisive step toward regional self defense after officially [launching](#) a joint military force aimed at combating Islamist insurgency and terrorism across the Sahel. The force was inaugurated on December 20, 2025, during a ceremony held at an air base in Bamako, Mali's capital.

The ceremony was presided over by Mali's Transitional President, Head of State, Supreme Chief of the Armed Forces, and outgoing President of the AES, Army General Assimi Goïta. The event was the formal handover of the Unified Force of the AES banner, marking the operationalization of a long-declared commitment by Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger to jointly secure their territories' sovereignty.

The newly established force, known as the FU AES, brings together approximately 5,000 troops drawn from the three member states. It is designed to integrate air power, intelligence sharing, and coordinated ground operations to confront armed groups that have destabilized large parts of the Sahel for over a decade.



Addressing the gathering, Malian General Aliou Boï Diarra delivered a deeply symbolic and emotional speech, underscoring the historical and moral significance of the banner. He described the banner as far more than a ceremonial object.

"The standard that you are presenting to the unified AES force represents a memory, a will, an irreversible commitment. It profoundly affirms a certainty now deeply engraved in the hearts of our beloved peoples. This is indeed a truly historic and momentous act," General Diarra said.

Diarra declared that the banner embodied sacrifice and struggle rather than decoration: "This sacred standard is not merely a decorative symbol. It is the profound and enduring result of precious blood bravely shed, immense courage

valiantly embraced, and fundamental truth profoundly rediscovered.”

Paying tribute to the fallen, he added:

“To our cherished martyrs, to all innocent civilians, and to the brave soldiers who have fallen in battle, I humbly pay a solemn and heartfelt tribute beneath the eternal snow. They did not die in vain.”



Mali’s leader, General Goïta, in his own address, described the launch as a historic turning point for the Sahel. He began by saluting the defense leadership and troops of the region.

“On this significant occasion, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations and profoundly salute the exceptional courage, unwavering professionalism, steadfast commitment, and resolute determination of the ministers of defense, the chiefs of general staff, and especially all the brave defense and security forces of the AES area for the remarkable achievements they have made in their relentless fight against armed terrorist groups,” he said.

The AES president recalled that since the Niamey Mutual Initiative (NMI) declaration of July 6, 2024, joint military operations have already been underway, noting that they resulted in the neutralization of several terrorist leaders and the destruction of multiple insurgent sanctuaries.

According to Goïta, “All these positive results were achieved thanks to meticulous

planning, timely and effective intelligence sharing, and above all the comprehensive pooling of our collective efforts and resources.”

He further announced key institutional steps consolidating the unified force, including the appointment of a new commander, the establishment of a central command post in the strategic city of Niamey, and the assignment of specialized battalions fully dedicated to AES operations. He stressed that the task ahead would require adaptability to the evolving tactics of armed groups.

“It is now critically important for the new commander not only to anticipate the increasingly complex operating methods of terrorist groups, but above all to resolutely continue this crucial fight to secure the entire Sahel region and ensure lasting peace and stability.”

General Goïta added that the conflict confronting the Sahel is multidimensional, “This war is not only military. It is also political, economic, and informational.”

He identified what he described as three major threats facing Sahelian states: armed terrorist violence, economic terrorism, and media terrorism. In response, he noted that the confederation has adopted a comprehensive strategy that goes beyond battlefield operations.

“We have taken measures to counter these threats not only by establishing this unified force, but also by creating AES Television, AES Radio, and AES print media,” he said, framing these platforms as tools to counter disinformation and psychological warfare.

The military launch follows a series of symbolic and political moves that underline the bloc’s growing autonomy. Earlier in the year, the AES unveiled a new flag, representing the confederation’s shared identity and its intention to redefine political, economic, and security cooperation outside the shadow of French

imperialism and Western neoliberal frameworks. Leaders of the bloc have repeatedly criticized past military partnerships with France and other Western powers, arguing that foreign interventions failed to bring peace while undermining national sovereignty.

The AES summit

Mali hosted a summit of the Alliance of Sahel States in the same week, which concluded on Tuesday, December 23. During the summit, Burkina Faso's leader, Captain Ibrahim Traoré, was appointed as the new head of the Alliance of Sahel States. Following the meeting, the Alliance announced that the summit would be followed by a large-scale military operation.

Earlier this year, the three countries also introduced a joint AES passport, a major step toward deeper integration. This move came after Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger formally withdrew from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), an organization they now openly describe as hostile.

The launch of the unified force also takes place amid rising regional tensions. Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire, both influential ECOWAS members, have been criticized by AES leaders and their supporters for what they see as counter revolutionary postures. In official and popular discourse within the Sahel, these countries are increasingly portrayed as attempting to contain or reverse the radical political shifts unfolding in Bamako, Ouagadougou, and Niamey.

What is clear is that Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger are charting a new path, one that is redefining power, alliances, and resistance in the heart of West Africa.

Source: [Peoples Dispatch](#)



U.S. Christmas bombing of Nigeria to reassert control in West Africa

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 10, 2026

On Christmas Day 2025, while much of the world marked a religious holiday, U.S. warplanes carried out airstrikes in Nigeria's Sokoto State. Washington described the operation as a precise counter-terrorism mission against ISIS-linked fighters, framed as an urgent response to attacks on Christian communities.

That explanation conceals the real political meaning of the strikes. Far from a limited security action, the bombing represents a renewed intervention by U.S. imperialism aimed at reasserting control over West Africa — using military force to discipline states, secure access to resources, and contain the spread of anti-imperialist independence movements in the Sahel.

Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and largest economy, is central to this effort.

Counter-terrorism as a weapon of imperialism

U.S. military operations in Africa are routinely justified as counter-terrorism. In practice, they function as tools of imperialist domination.

Nigeria's armed forces have struggled for years to suppress armed groups in the northwest and northeast. By intervening directly with airpower, Washington presents itself as indispensable to Nigeria's internal security. That dependence is then converted into political influence. Military assistance becomes a means of shaping state policy in ways favorable to U.S. power and Western capital.

Security cooperation under imperialism is never neutral. It binds the recipient state more tightly to U.S. military command structures, intelligence networks, and strategic priorities, limiting its ability to act independently.

Why Sokoto matters

The location of the strikes is not incidental. Sokoto State lies near Nigeria's border with Niger, one of three Sahel countries — along with Mali and Burkina Faso — whose governments have moved to break from decades of U.S. and French military control.

These states expelled Western troops, rejected foreign-directed counter-insurgency programs, and asserted greater control over their own security and economic decisions. This process is often misdescribed as a “geopolitical realignment.” In reality, it is a struggle for national independence against imperialist neocolonial domination.

From the standpoint of U.S. imperialism, such independence poses a threat not because of who these governments cooperate with, but because they have challenged the assumed right of Western powers to dictate military and economic policy across the region.

Preventing Nigeria from breaking ranks

The U.S. airstrikes signal an effort to ensure Nigeria does not follow the same path.

Nigeria has expanded economic cooperation with China and sought development arrangements that reduce reliance on Western lenders and corporations. More importantly, Nigeria's size and regional weight mean that any decisive move toward greater independence would weaken imperialist control across West Africa.

By embedding itself more deeply in Nigeria's security apparatus, the United States aims to lock Nigeria more firmly into an imperialist alignment. Security assistance becomes conditional: Continued U.S. support depends on political obedience and continued openness to Western capital.

This is not a partnership between equals. It is the use of military power to enforce hierarchy.

Oil, minerals, and the economics of domination

Nigeria remains central to imperialist interests because of its resources. In 2023, oil and gas exports generated more than \$45 billion in revenue. The United States is Nigeria's largest export market, absorbing over \$6 billion in goods annually.

Under imperialism, "stability" means uninterrupted extraction of oil and minerals, secure transport routes, and a political order that protects foreign corporate profits. Military intervention is justified as preventing chaos, but in reality it preserves the conditions under which wealth produced in Nigeria is transferred outward to imperialist corporations and financial institutions.

This pattern is familiar. Across the Global South, U.S. military force has repeatedly been used to secure favorable conditions for energy companies, mining firms, and banks — while local populations remain impoverished and politically constrained.

African critics have drawn direct parallels to U.S. policy toward Venezuela, where sanctions and threats of force were justified as humanitarian measures while targeting control over oil revenues.

Sovereignty reduced to formality

Inside Nigeria, the strikes provoked sharp criticism.

Human rights lawyer Dele Farotimi described the operation as a violation of sovereignty, accusing Nigeria's ruling elite of complicity. U.S. officials initially claimed the strikes were carried out "at the request of" Nigerian authorities, a phrase later revised to "in coordination with."

The distinction is revealing. When foreign warplanes strike targets on Nigerian soil and the terms of consent remain deliberately vague, sovereignty exists largely as a legal form rather than a material reality.

Religion as pretext, not cause

The Trump administration framed the strikes as a defense of Christians against ISIS militants. Conditions on the ground tell a different story.

Armed groups in northern Nigeria have targeted Muslims and Christians alike. Communities of all faiths have suffered. The violence is driven by poverty, displacement, land conflict, criminal networks, and decades of state failure — conditions rooted in underdevelopment shaped by imperialist extraction and political interference.

Reducing this crisis to a religious narrative serves U.S. domestic politics and obscures the social causes of violence. It also provides moral cover for expanding U.S. military operations without addressing the material conditions that fuel instability.

Nigeria as an imperialist proxy

Beyond Nigeria itself lies a wider imperialist calculation.

U.S. imperialism has long relied on regional proxies — states strong enough to project force locally but dependent enough to remain subordinate. The Sokoto airstrikes suggest renewed efforts to cast Nigeria in this role: a regional enforcer tasked with containing the spread of anti-imperialist independence in the Sahel.

Under this arrangement, Nigeria need not formally wage war. Its role is to host U.S. forces, coordinate operations, and provide African political cover for interventions designed elsewhere.

Imperialism versus independence

The Christmas Day airstrikes are not an isolated incident. They are part of a broader effort by U.S. imperialism to halt the erosion of its control over Africa.

As more states seek to reclaim sovereignty after decades of neocolonial domination, imperialism responds not with development or democracy, but with coercion. Counter-terrorism becomes the justification. Security cooperation becomes the mechanism. Independence becomes the threat.

What is unfolding in Nigeria is not a contest between abstract “global powers.” It is a struggle between imperialism and the right of oppressed nations to determine their own future.

That is the real meaning of the U.S. airstrikes — and the stakes for West Africa.



Only U.S. imperialism benefits from Thailand-Cambodia war

written by Struggle - La Lucha

January 10, 2026

Dec. 20 — Intense fighting has again erupted along the roughly 500-mile border between Thailand and Cambodia, marking the second major outbreak of hostilities between the two countries in 2025.

Since February, clashes between the two armies have become increasingly frequent, first escalating into full-scale combat on July 24. That round of fighting lasted four days and included air strikes, artillery exchanges, and sustained small-arms fire across the border. Dozens of soldiers and civilians were killed, and tens of thousands of people were forced to flee their homes.

Hostilities again intensified on Dec. 8 and continue as this article is being written.

The current escalation is significantly more severe than the July fighting. Over the past week, Thai Royal Air Force jets have carried out large-scale air strikes on

Cambodian military installations. Both governments accuse the other of targeting civilian areas with long-range missile systems. Fighting continues along much of the border, driving a growing refugee crisis.

Conflict rooted in colonial rule

Mainstream media and official commentary often portray the conflict between Thailand and Cambodia as the result of ancient, unchangeable hostilities. The fighting is frequently reduced to a territorial dispute over the Preah Vihear temple, an ancient Hindu site near the border. Reducing the conflict to an ancient temple dispute hides its real origins.

While Thailand and Cambodia do dispute the precise location of their border, the disagreement is rooted in colonial boundaries, not ancient ones. France and Britain carved up much of the Indochinese peninsula in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, dividing the region with little regard for existing kingdoms, ethnic territories, or historical claims.

The 1896 Anglo-French Declaration effectively split mainland Southeast Asia into spheres of influence, with the Mekong River serving as the primary dividing line. This agreement treated the entire region as colonial property to be parceled out between European powers.

Thailand, never formally colonized, functioned as a buffer state between British-ruled Myanmar and French-ruled Cambodia. Britain exercised substantial diplomatic and economic influence over Thailand, using it as a counterweight to French power in the region.

Thai kings were forced to cede territory, sign unequal treaties, and grant extraterritorial rights to European powers in exchange for maintaining nominal independence. This “independence” came at a steep price: Thailand lost significant

territory to both French Indochina and British Burma through a series of coerced agreements.

French colonial rule in Cambodia was marked by repression and systematic resource extraction. The colonial administration transformed Cambodia into an economic appendage of France, exploiting its agricultural wealth, labor, and natural resources.

The border region between Cambodia and Thailand is rich in rice, fisheries, timber, gemstones, and — more recently — oil and gas. In the early 20th century, France used diplomatic pressure to impose a series of treaties on Thailand, transferring large areas of territory to French-controlled Cambodia.

The 1904 and 1907 Franco-Siamese treaties were particularly significant, forcing Thailand to relinquish provinces including Battambang, Siem Reap, and Sisophon — areas that had been under Siamese control or influence for generations. These colonial-era agreements, drawn up in Paris and imposed on the region, form the basis of today's boundary dispute.

The colonial powers drew borders with deliberate imprecision in certain areas, creating zones of ambiguity that could be exploited later. Maps produced by French colonial cartographers often differed from agreed treaty language, and the location of watersheds and mountain ranges — used as boundary markers — remained disputed. This was not accidental. Ambiguous borders served colonial interests by keeping local populations divided and dependent on European arbitration.

France ruled Cambodia for nearly 90 years, until independence in 1953. British-colonized Myanmar gained independence in 1948, and Thailand asserted greater formal autonomy during the same period. Yet imperialist influence did not disappear.

The United States, alongside former colonial powers France and Britain, has maintained neocolonial relationships with all three countries through economic investment, military aid, and regional security arrangements. The withdrawal of formal colonial administration did not erase the borders, economic structures, or political divisions that colonialism created — divisions that continue to generate conflict today.

Imperialism sows chaos among ASEAN countries

Today, imperialist powers are less likely to launch large-scale invasions than to fuel instability through proxy wars, economic pressure, and military escalation. This can be seen in Ukraine, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Libya, Bolivia, Honduras, and Guyana.

The hand of U.S. imperialism can be clearly seen in the conflict between Thailand and Cambodia. The U.S. has no interest in peace between these countries. Instead, Washington seeks to counter China's growing economic influence in Southeast Asia by flooding the region with U.S. weapons and military advisors. The result is instability, conflict, and war - weakening both countries while U.S. weapons manufacturers profit.

The post-pandemic years have seen economic developments in Southeast Asia that run counter to U.S. imperialist goals. First, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has consistently grown its GDP and regional diplomatic influence since the easing of the COVID pandemic in 2022.

Second, China has played a major role in ASEAN's economic growth. The China-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement was updated in 2025 to deepen trade ties through joint investment in e-commerce and AI. The updated agreement was signed in October of this year and is in part a response to growing U.S. tariffs.

Third, Thailand has been diversifying its military suppliers, with a recent surge in purchases of tanks and armored vehicles from China.

Thailand practices a “balancing act.” While they bought Chinese tanks, they recently purchased U.S. Stryker infantry carrier vehicles and continue to fly U.S. F-16s. They are actively trying to ensure they are not dependent on any single country — China or the U.S.

In response to these developments, the U.S. has intensified its military and economic presence throughout the region. Washington has deepened military ties with both Thailand and Cambodia in recent years, selling weapons to both sides and conducting joint military exercises with each country. For a relatively transparent summary of U.S. goals in the region, read the testimony of Barbara Weisel before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, titled “[Building Bridges, Countering Rivals: Strengthening US-ASEAN Ties to Combat Chinese Influence.](#)”

All of this points to a deliberate U.S. strategy: Flood the region with weapons, deepen military ties with both sides, and create the conditions for conflict. War may be good for U.S. billionaires and their benefactors, but it is terrible for everyone else it touches. Societies find incredible difficulty in establishing healthy economic and political life while embroiled in war. This is a stick that the U.S. has used consistently and effectively for years to weaken its enemies and open markets to its predatory investment.

War profits

Whenever a war erupts – such as the one between Thailand and Cambodia – workers should ask: Who benefits?

The answer to this question is certainly not [Cambodia or Thailand](#). Both countries will face the awful toll of war. This imperialist-fueled conflict will mean death,

destruction, and underdevelopment for both countries.

Prolonged conflict could mean economic collapse. Factories will close. Agricultural production will fall. Trade will decline.

Both countries buy weapons from foreign arms dealers, with U.S. companies like General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin, and Raytheon supplying both sides. Neither country manufactures its own tanks, jets, or artillery. Every bomb dropped and every bullet fired means more profits for U.S. weapons manufacturers.

Only U.S. imperialism benefits from war between Thailand and Cambodia.

Donald Trump has claimed that the United States is committed to peace in the region. At a recent rally, he declared, "I'm going to make a phone call and stop a war of two very powerful countries. We're making peace through strength."

This is empty talk. War is unpopular with most in the U.S., including parts of Trump's own base that are weary of "entanglement in foreign conflicts." But Trump's talk about peace does not change the fact that U.S. weapons manufacturers will make billions from this war.

Just like in Ukraine and Syria, the people of Thailand and Cambodia will suffer while billionaire shareholders in New York and Washington grow richer from war.



Embargo movement exposes Oakland airport's role in weapons shipments to Israel

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 10, 2026

Unions and community organizations demonstrated at the Port of Oakland on Dec. 18 as part of an ongoing campaign to demand an embargo on the shipment of weapons to Israel from both the city's sea port and air port (OAK).

The Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM), in coordination with The People's Embargo for Palestine (PEP), released a report titled "[Exposing Oakland's Military Cargo Shipments to Israel](#)" last August. They were horrified to discover that Oakland, California, a city with a progressive history of solidarity with Palestine, had become one of the most frequent departure points for shipping F-35 bomber components to Israel.

The report details FedEx's routine shipments of components for the Lockheed

Martin F-35 fighter jet to Israel's Nevatim Air Base. It describes OAK as a "dependable conduit for critical military technologies," concluding "beyond a reasonable doubt that military cargo being shipped out of OAK has been used by the Israeli Air Force to carry out airstrikes and commit genocide in Gaza."

"At the same airport where we pick up and send off our loved ones, bomb droppers and surveillance systems for the lethal F-35 jet are being loaded and transported to Israel," said Aisha Nizar of the Palestinian Youth Movement. "Oakland's central role in the global F-35 supply chain was concealed from its union members, educators, city officials, and residents, and is now indisputable. Serving as a hub for military cargo to Israel is an attack on everything this city stands for."

According to their research, the shipments included bomb release units for 2,000-pound bunker-busters, guidance systems, and targeting components — all transported through civilian infrastructure.

The revelation was particularly shocking because Oakland passed one of the first ceasefire resolutions in November 2023, and International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 has long refused to handle Israeli military cargo at the maritime port.

Clarence Thomas, a lifelong resident of Oakland and a retired member of the ILWU Local 10, said at the Dec. 18 protest: "For three generations, my family has made their living working the docks at the Port of Oakland. As an executive board member of the ILWU San Francisco Pensioners, I am here today, speaking in support of the Oakland People's Arms Embargo to demand that the port of Oakland halt the transportation of military materials to Israel, facilitating the genocide, displacement, and human suffering of the Palestinian population in Gaza.

"ILWU Local 10 has a long history of taking solidarity actions in support of workers and people fighting against oppression. Nelson Mandela, speaking at the Oakland

Coliseum in 1990 before 60 thousand people, acknowledged that Local 10 refused to unload South African cargo for 11 days in 1984, contributing to the success of the anti-apartheid struggle.

“This history has served as the foundation for Local 10’s Palestinian solidarity actions for ‘Block the Boat’ by not crossing picket lines of AROC and the Palestinian Youth Movement protesting ZIM shipping lines.

“As a radical trade unionist, I believe that ‘Peace is Union Business,’ which is why I’m lending my voice to stopping the Port’s complicity in genocide. That makes the Port of Oakland junior partners, with the defense contractors, who are benefiting from the killing of our sisters and brothers in Gaza.

“These defense contractors include: Lockheed Martin, which Supplies F-16 and F-35 fighter jets, Hellfire missiles, and components for other systems used in airstrikes; Boeing, which provides F-15 fighter jets, Apache helicopters; General Dynamics, which produces metal bodies for MK-80 series bombs and artillery shells used in Gaza.

“This explains why the Port wanted to keep the supply chain deal for the Oakland Airport transporting weapons of war materials to Israel hidden from the public. No transparency, no democracy, just complete the blood money deal. No one has to know. Well, guess what? Now we know and we want it to stop!! STOP the Genocide! FREE FREE PALESTINE!”

The People’s Embargo for Palestine has built strong roots in the Oakland labor movement, where, along with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10, others have pledged support, including: UNITE HERE Local 2; United Auto Workers Region 6; Oakland Education Association; California Faculty Assoc.-San Francisco State University, SEIU Local 1938; National Organization of Legal Service Workers, UAW Local 2320; Adjuncts Come Together – United Auto

Workers, Local 7902; Bay Area Legal Aid Workers, UAW Local 2320; Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific - San Francisco region; California Nurses Association; Service Employees International Union (SEIU) LOCAL 1021; Berkley Federation of Teachers; Greenliners United - UAW; Local 2103; UAW Local 2350; United Educators of San Francisco (UESF); Labor for Palestine National Network; Trabajadores Unidos Workers United; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees — Local 3299

Contact The People's Embargo for Palestine (PEP):

oakland@armsembargonow.com

<https://www.embargoforpalestine.com>



Two new F-35 fighter jets from the U.S. land at Nevatim Airbase, 14 July 2019. (Israel Defense Forces)

EXPOSING OAKLAND AIRPORT'S MILITARY CARGO SHIPMENTS TO ISRAEL

28 August 2025
Palestinian Youth Movement
oakland@armsembargonow.com

PALESTINIAN
YOUTH
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