

Trump authorizes CIA regime change operations against Venezuela

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16 October 2025

US President Donald Trump confirmed on Wednesday that he has authorized the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to carry out lethal, covert operations in Venezuela aimed at overthrowing the government of President Nicolás Maduro. The *World Socialist Web Site* denounces these criminal plans for the imperialist takeover of Venezuela.

When reporters questioned him at the White House about a *New York Times* report citing several US officials about the authorization, Trump did not equivocate in acknowledging the order. The admission is an extraordinary escalation of US imperialist aggression against Venezuela and beyond.

During the press conference, Trump also boasted that the Pentagon had carried out another deadly attack Tuesday against a speedboat in the southern Caribbean, killing six people. This brings the toll of civilians killed in US military actions against small boats accused—with any evidence—of drug trafficking to at least 27.

Trinidadian media reported that this most recent boat was carrying several passengers from Trinidad and Tobago, with relatives of one victim declaring that he was simply a young, migrant worker returning home.

In parallel with these extrajudicial mass executions, US B-52 strategic bombers were detected Wednesday near the Venezuelan coast, performing maneuvers so intense that a deportee flight from Texas bound for Venezuela was diverted to Puerto Rico. The deployment of these nuclear-capable bombers follows Trump's threat last week to unleash "fire and fury" against Venezuela, as well as the October 2 incursion of five US F-35 fighter jets into Venezuelan airspace.

At present, US forces in the southern Caribbean number approximately 10,000 troops and sailors, establishing a significant capacity for major operations. Trump again threatened Wednesday to extend the attacks to the ground inside Venezuela.

Washington's long history of covert interventions—coups, assassinations, buying off the media, rigging elections, and corrupting unions—now unfolds without even a pretense of seeking plausible deniability.

When asked directly if the CIA had authority "to take out Maduro," Trump said, "Wouldn't it be a ridiculous question for me to answer? But I think Venezuela is feeling heat." This was a clear acknowledgement that the aim of CIA operations is precisely regime-change. Washington has placed a record \$50 million bounty on Maduro's head, accusing him of leading the so-called

Cartel of the Suns, a fictitious organization.

The bombings, deployment and threats are not mere posturing, but an open declaration of an imminent imperialist intervention being prepared on the basis of entirely phony pretexts.

The claim that Venezuela floods the US with drugs is patently false. Numerous reports from drug agencies in both the US and internationally have confirmed that very little cocaine and no fentanyl—the leading cause of overdose deaths in the US—pass through Venezuela.

In reality, the CIA itself is among the organizations responsible for drug trafficking and associated violence. In 1998, CIA Inspector General Frederick R. Hitz revealed cooperation between the CIA and the Department of Justice with drug traffickers under the Reagan administration as part of an illegal scheme to finance the Nicaraguan Contra militias used to attack the Sandinista government during the 1980s.

Jesús Esquivel's book *La CIA, Camarena and Caro Quintero* details with extensive evidence how the CIA helped finance Mexico's first major drug cartel, the Guadalajara cartel, facilitating its alliance with Colombian narco-traffickers, as Mexican kingpin Caro Quintero trained Contra combatants at his ranch in Veracruz.

Trump's assertions that Venezuela "emptied prisons and mental institutions" into the US is also scandalous; in truth, most of the Venezuelan exodus during the past decade has been driven by US sanctions that have devastated Venezuela, causing over 100,000 excess deaths in the country.

Finally, the argument that the Trump administration is supporting democracy is exploded by its own efforts to install a police-state regime in the United States. Moreover, its political proxies in Venezuela are led by María Corina Machado, the new Nobel Peace laureate who openly embraces fascism and war against the Venezuelan people. Machado is a member of the fascist Madrid Forum and participated in the abortive 2002 military coup against the country's elected president, Hugo Chávez.

A regime led by such forces would unleash murderous police state terror against the population to crush opposition against a program of brutal austerity and the privatization and handover to US energy giants of Venezuela's oil reserves, the largest in the world.

During his press conference Wednesday, Trump callously joked that people "aren't deciding to even go fishing" in the southern Caribbean, eliciting laughter from officials. The exchange

confirms that the White House is being run by gangsters who are deliberately murdering innocent civilians.

Historically, US President Richard Nixon and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger both publicly denied CIA involvement in the 1973 overthrow of left nationalist Chilean President Salvador Allende. Now a mountain of declassified documents has proven that the CIA and Pentagon orchestrated his removal and the installation of the brutal Pinochet military dictatorship.

Trump's admission Wednesday forces a clear reckoning: US imperialism has returned to the naked interventionist doctrines of the likes of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, openly invoking the Monroe Doctrine to assert that Washington owns the hemisphere. During that period, the US orchestrated or participated in multiple invasions and coups, including in Mexico (1914), Haiti (1915), Dominican Republic (1916), Nicaragua (1912-1933), Cuba (1906, 1912), and Honduras (1911).

With US imperialism achieving the status of world hegemonic power after World War II, the CIA only continued this bloody legacy in Latin America, stretching from the 1954 overthrow of Guatemala's Jacobo Arbenz—who sought limited land reforms affecting US corporate interests—to decades of covertly organizing coups that installed murderous military regimes responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands suspected of socialist or anti-imperialist sympathies through the 1990s.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union by the Stalinist bureaucracy opened the door for a massive expansion of US militarism globally. After the eruption of the Gulf War, David North explained in a February 1991 lecture:

World history has once again come to the point where it is going to witness a new and horrifying eruption of imperialist wars of plunder and struggle among the imperialist powers themselves for world domination. The working class will now see imperialism as it really is, seeking to subjugate hundreds of millions of people, as it sets the stage for the next round of brutal world conflicts.

Not only has this prognosis by the International Committee of the Fourth International been dramatically confirmed by three devastating decades of US-led wars, but the genocide in Gaza and the threats against Latin America make clear that this process of recolonization has reached a new and dangerous turning point amid the initial stages of a third world war.

“Today we can say that the workers of America and Europe cannot be free while their capitalist governments enslave the workers of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia,” presciently warned North in 1991, and added:

The re-subjugation of the colonial people, the return to colonialism, would inevitably be accompanied by a drastic decline in the social position of the working class in the United States. The struggle of the American working class, its own interests, are inseparable from those of workers all

over the world... The defeat of the American war machine in the Middle East would be a great blow for the liberation of the working class in all parts of the world and, above all, here in the US. We work actively for that defeat by fighting to mobilize the working class against this war...

Today, the military deployments to cities like Washington, Chicago, and Memphis lay the groundwork for a fascistic dictatorship at home, justified with the same fabricated emergencies used as the pretexts for war in Latin America.

The “No Kings” demonstrations against Trump’s authoritarian push scheduled across the US and globally present an opportunity to mobilize workers against the military buildup in the Caribbean and regime-change under the demand of withdrawing all US troops from US cities, Latin America and elsewhere around the world.

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro responded to Trump on Wednesday by calling upon all sectors of American society to remain “alert to avoid war in the Caribbean, in South America.” He then switched to English to declare: “Not war, peace.”

The Chavista administration has itself overseen attacks on living standards far greater than even those under the fascist president of Argentina, Javier Milei. Maduro repeatedly repressed workers’ protests and focused on making appeals to US imperialism, even after Trump broke all diplomatic relations with Venezuela last week.

Maduro represents a section of the national bourgeoisie bound hand-and-foot to the capitalist markets controlled by imperialism and is irreversibly hostile to any mobilization of workers that could turn against its own capitalist interests at home or abroad.

The potential for the unity of workers’ struggles across the hemisphere against all factions of the ruling class is shown by a growing wave of mass protests and strikes in Peru, Ecuador, and Argentina, as well as in the US itself. The brutal and openly murderous neocolonial campaign by Washington will only add tinder to the growing flame of anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist sentiment and give rise to revolutionary struggles across the region.



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