

Sri Lankan government cynically evades US criminal assault on Venezuela

Saman Gunadasa
12 January 2026

The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna/National People's Power (JVP/NPP) government in Sri Lanka and the JVP as a party issued two separate statements on US imperialism's invasion of Venezuela and the kidnapping of President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores. These two statements expose the hypocrisy and subservience of the JVP and the government it leads to US imperialism.

After weeks of mobilising a massive armada, destroying boats and imposing an oil blockade, the US launched military strikes on defence installations in the Venezuelan capital, Caracas, on January 3 and kidnapped President Maduro and his wife on bogus allegations of drug trafficking. This military aggression, which nakedly violates international law and Venezuela's sovereignty, is openly aimed at seizing control of the country's oil resources and reimposing colonial domination over Venezuela, Latin America and beyond.

The JVP formed in 1966 on the basis of Maoism, Castroism and Sinhala populism to wage the "armed struggle" has all but abandoned its claims to be Marxist as it integrated itself into the Colombo political establishment in the 1990s.

Before coming to power in 2024, the JVP hailed the government of Hugo Chávez—Maduro's predecessor—and later defended the Maduro government itself against US oil embargoes and geopolitical threats.

The JVP political bureau did issue a limited statement on January 3 stating that the party "strongly condemns the United States of America's military aggression against the independent and sovereign state of Venezuela" and the abduction of President Nicolás Maduro and his wife.

It continued, "no powerful country has the right to

violate this [sovereignty] principle" and that "modern society and governance should be more civilised... Democracy, human rights, sovereignty and freedom of states are universally accepted principles." Therefore, military aggression violating "these principles cannot be justified... under any circumstances."

The statement, aimed at appeasing the widespread hostility to the blatant US act of aggression including in the JVP's own social base, was a pro forma declaration that did not refer to the Trump administration and its predatory economic motives, or its wider threats against other governments in Latin America or elsewhere.

The following day, however, a cowardly and grovelling official government statement from the Ministry of External Affairs did not even include a token condemnation of the US actions.

Its four short paragraphs simply state that it is "deeply concerned about the recent developments in Venezuela," without saying what these "developments" were. It does not name the US or the Trump administration or even refer to the kidnapping of Maduro and his wife.

The statement simply declares "the need to respect principles of international law and the UN Charter," but without saying who had breached international law. It concludes with, "it is important that the United Nations and its organs such as the UN Security Council be seized of the matter and work towards a peaceful resolution."

The appeal to the UN is meaningless. The fascist Trump administration has repeatedly insisted that it does not care about international law, UN rules or charters. It has not only threatened Latin American governments and Iran but warned that it will seize Greenland from its NATO ally Denmark by military

means if necessary.

When asked by journalists whether the government's position was the same as the JVP's, Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath declared: "No. Political parties have their own views. That is different. The government represents all sides in this country—both the government and the opposition. It is in that sense that we are making this statement."

The government's refusal to reference, let alone condemn, the criminal actions of the Trump administration is not just an act of utter cowardice. The JVP came to power with the backing of important sections of the Sri Lankan ruling class to implement the IMF's savage austerity agenda.

Even prior to assuming office, the JVP openly sought closer ties with US imperialism, Western financial institutions and neighbouring India. An openly confrontational statement against Washington would threaten the desperately needed IMF emergency loan negotiated after the country defaulted on foreign debt in 2022.

It would also risk opening up fissures within the government itself. The NPP formed by the JVP to whitewash its past record contains representatives of the upper middle class as well as of the country's powerful military.

The government has fully embraced the IMF program, committing itself to deeper austerity, fiscal consolidation, and so-called "structural reforms" demanded by global lenders, enforcing these attacks directly against workers and the poor.

Above all, the President Anura Kumara Disanayake regime knows full well that Washington's global hegemonic plans are directed primarily against China. Its onslaught on Venezuela is part of these global military plans.

The Disanayake government has maintained and expanded cooperation with the US through defence dialogues, intelligence sharing and participation in US-led Indo-Pacific security frameworks, while pretending to maintain a "non-aligned" stance.

Its response to US aggression against Venezuela is similar to its evasive attitude to the US-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza. Even as tens of thousands of Palestinians were slaughtered and entire cities reduced to rubble, Colombo limited itself to abstract calls for ceasefires and humanitarian access, avoiding any

reference to Israel or its chief sponsor, the US. The statements treated the aggressor and the victim as moral equals, reducing genocide to a "conflict" requiring restraint on "all sides."

A similar statement was issued by the Colombo government following the US military strikes on Iran in mid-2025. Again, the JVP/NPP government expressed "concern" and urged de-escalation while refusing to identify Washington as the aggressor.

The JVP's limited condemnation of the US gangsterism in Venezuela, as a party, is a transparent attempt to cover up the JVP-led government's craven subordination to US imperialism. Both President Disanayake and Foreign Minister Herath are top leaders in the JVP.

The JVP/NPP government's response is a warning to workers and youth in Sri Lanka. Those who once believed the JVP represented a break from the pro-imperialist policies of previous bourgeois governments must now confront the reality that it continues the subservience to US imperialism.

Its refusal to clearly oppose the genocide in Gaza, US attacks on Iran, or the US assault on Venezuela all point to the same conclusion: the JVP/NPP government and the Sri Lankan capitalist class, tied to international finance capital, are inherently incapable of mounting any genuine opposition to imperialism.

This is a powerful confirmation of Leon Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution, which explains that no faction of the bourgeoisie in countries of a belated capitalist development is capable of carrying out genuinely democratic or anti-imperialist tasks.

The task of opposing imperialist war and defending oppressed peoples internationally falls to the working class, armed with a Marxist—that is, Trotskyist—perspective to build a unified anti-war movement to advance the struggle for world socialism.



To contact the WWSW and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)