

British Military Presence Near Venezuela ‘Extremely Concerning’

By [Phil Miller](#)

Global Research, February 11, 2019

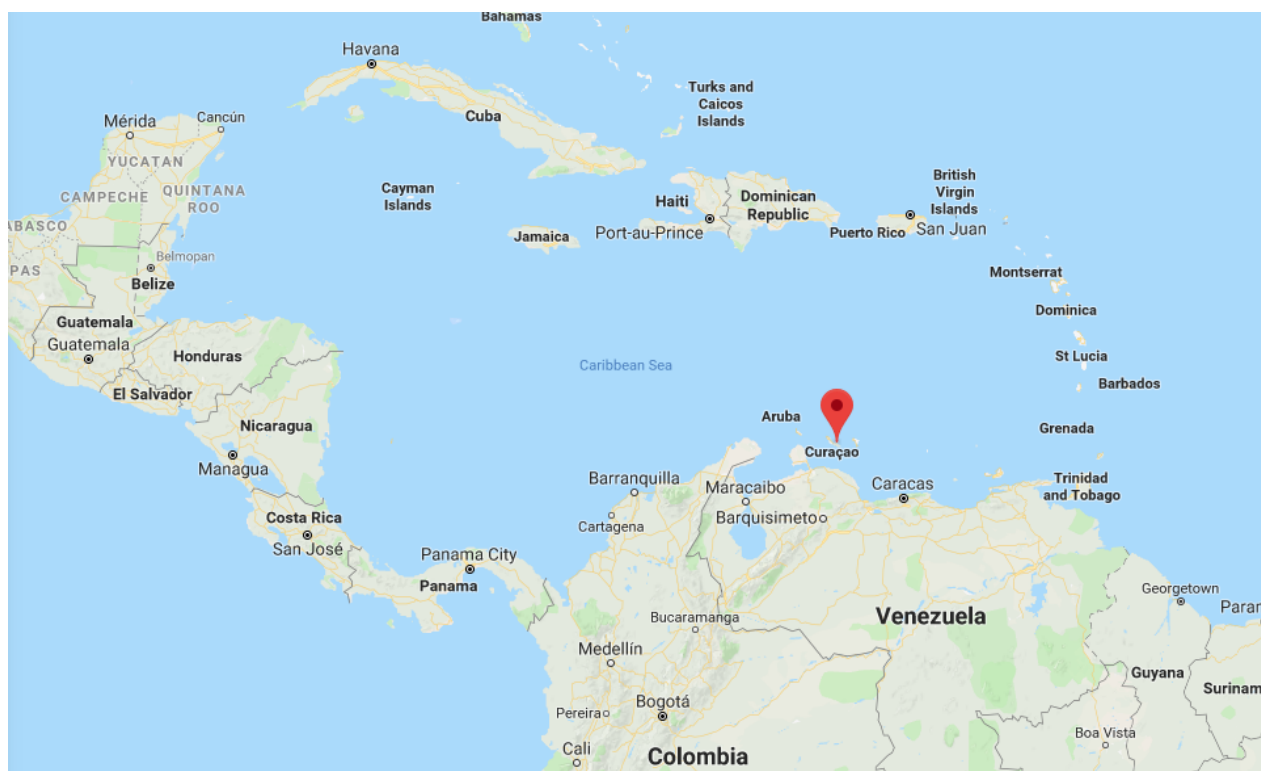
[Morning Star](#) 5 February 2019

Region: [Europe](#), [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

Britain’s navy and marines are conducting military exercises close to Venezuela, the Morning Star has discovered.

The Mounts Bay, a giant Royal Fleet Auxiliary landing ship, spent New Year in Miami embarking a US coastguard helicopter for the first time.



It then sailed south to within 50 miles of the Venezuelan coast and had docked in Caracas Baii, on the tiny Dutch Caribbean island of Curacao, by January 21.

The Royal Navy claims the vessel is working on counternarcotics “take-down” operations with the US Southern Command – though it is this branch of the Pentagon that would lead any attack on Venezuela.

Meanwhile, British marines are conducting jungle warfare training in Belize. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has described their deployment as “routine.”

They arrived there in mid-January, when Britain was ratcheting up its diplomatic and economic campaign against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

Initially, the marines were based at British Army Training Support Unit Belize, a permanent base adjacent to the country's international airport.

Photos show the marines carrying out battlefield drills, including casualty evacuation.

The marines are from 40 Commando's A Company, a highly trained unit that specialises in close combat and is "held at very high readiness by UK MoD for crisis response."

Marines from 40 Commando were among the first British troops to land in Iraq during the 2003 invasion.

Late last year they practised amphibious landings in the Gulf state of Oman, whose royal dictator is a British ally.

In Belize, they are currently accompanied by sappers from the Royal Engineers' 59 Commando Squadron, who provide "close combat engineer support," as well as members of Condor Troop, a unit normally based in Scotland.

Photos show that by January 17 the marines had left the Belize barracks and were practising river crossings at a jungle location in crocodile-infested waters.

This training appears to have continued into this month.

Britain's air force is also active in the region. Flight data shows an RAF transport aircraft from Brize Norton landed in Belize after dark on January 23.

On February 2 the RAF released aerial photos of the Belize coastline, saying that its personnel were supporting "army exercises in Central America."

Venezuela Solidarity Campaign secretary Francisco Dominguez told the Morning Star:

"We are extremely concerned that Britain may join any military attack unleashed by the US against Venezuela."

Stop the War Coalition campaigner Mayer Wakefield echoed this concern, saying:

"Britain's recent history of catastrophic military interventions should rule out any UK participation in Donald Trump's attempts to destabilise a democratically elected government in Venezuela."

*

Note to readers: please click the share buttons below. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

Featured image: The Royal Navy's Mounts Bay docked in Curaçao, a small island just 50 miles away from Venezuela (Source: Morning Star)

[**Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page**](#)

[**Become a Member of Global Research**](#)

Articles by: [Phil Miller](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca