

Trump Has Venezuela in His Sights

As the sabre-rattling statements mount up, just how close is military intervention, asks Tim Young

By [Tim Young](#)

Global Research, October 07, 2018

[Morning Star](#) 6 October 2018

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

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

President Trump has again raised the possibility of regime change in Venezuela, as talk of military intervention against its democratically elected government grows in the United States.

Speaking recently at the UN, he declared:

"It's a regime that frankly could be toppled very quickly by the military, if the military decides to do that" and later added that "all options are on the table."

This comes hot on the heels of Republican Senator Marco Rubio's aggressive remarks in an interview in Miami, in August.

"For months and years, I wanted the solution in Venezuela to be a non-military and peaceful solution, simply to restore democracy," Rubio argued, but he continued: "I believe that the armed forces of the United States are only used in the event of a threat to national security. I believe that there is a very strong argument that can be made at this time that Venezuela and the Maduro regime has become a threat to the region and even to the United States."

Rubio is a longstanding opponent of the Venezuelan government.

In February this year, for example, he openly called for the military to overthrow President Maduro, saying:

"The world would support the armed forces in Venezuela if they decide to protect the people and restore democracy by removing a dictator."

The US government, of course, is always willing to lend a hand to enable military coups to overthrow elected governments in Latin America and elsewhere. The New York Times (September 8 2018) has revealed that the Trump administration held a series of secret meetings with Venezuelan military officers to discuss a coup d'état.

Creating the right media backdrop for such a scenario is vital for its success in the court of world public opinion. Helping the narrative along, US ambassador to Colombia Kevin Whitaker said on September 16 that Colombia can count on US support in the event of "Venezuelan aggression against Colombia."

Two days later, Colombia's new ambassador to the US Francisco Santos, the brother of former president Santos, also said that "all options must be open to deal with the crisis in Venezuela." This was tweeted approvingly by Senator Rubio.

In the previous week, at a rally held after a press conference in Cucuta, a Colombian town on the border with Venezuela, Organisation of American States (OAS) secretary general Luis Almagro said:

"With respect to a military intervention to overthrow Nicolas Maduro's regime, I don't think any option should be ruled out ... Diplomatic action should be the first priority, but we shouldn't rule out any action."

This is effectively saying, supposedly on behalf of the organisation's 35 member states, that the democratically elected government of President Nicolas Maduro should be overthrown, either by "diplomatic action" or "military intervention."

Military intervention against a sovereign state would be illegal under international law without a UN security council mandate.

Mandate or not, such action would involve huge destruction and a massive loss of lives. For comparison, the illegal US invasion in 1989 of Panama, a country one-fifteenth the size of Venezuela led not only to the ousting of the government and enormous damage to infrastructure but to 3,000-5,000 civilians being killed.

Almagro's statement is also shocking because calling for the violent overthrow of the government of an OAS member state violates key chapters of the OAS charter.

These all commit the OAS and its member states to the principles of respect for the territorial integrity of states, respect for national sovereignty, peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for the right to self-determination and non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states.

Almagro's belligerent stance has been opposed by a group of 10 Latin American countries, which issued a statement rejecting violent regime change. This grouping represents the majority of the Lima Group, a set of Latin American and Caribbean nations, as well as Canada, convened in 2017 to put additional pressure on Venezuela.

Their statement was hailed by Bolivian President Evo Morales as a "defeat of Trump's interventionism and a victory for dignity and courage of Venezuela and Latin America."

Undeterred, the US has continued to ratchet up the pressure against Venezuela. The supposed threat by Venezuela to the US has been used again to justify yet more sanctions against the country. The new sanctions are to be enforced against four current or former officials of the Venezuelan government, including Vice President Delcy Rodriguez.

As a permanent observer to the OAS, the British government should condemn Almagro's violation of international law and call for respect for the principles of OAS. Beyond that, opposition to US steps towards the violent overthrow of the elected government of President Maduro must be redoubled, if we wish not to see a repeat of the downfall of Allende's Chile.

*

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

Tim Young is a member of the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign executive committee.

The original source of this article is [Morning Star](#)

Copyright © [Tim Young](#), [Morning Star](#), 2018

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

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Tim Young](#)

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