

# US Pilot Detained in Venezuela; Accused of Recruiting Citizens for Coup

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CARACAS, VENEZUELA – An unnamed American has been detained in Venezuela, [according to](#) Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

Speaking at a rally on Saturday, Maduro said that an “American pilot” with “Latino roots” had been captured near the Colombian border, in the western state of Táchira. The pilot, who was arrested along with five other U.S. nationals over the past few days, is being accused of espionage and attempting to recruit Venezuelan citizens in order to stage a coup and overthrow Maduro’s administration.

The pilot’s capture comes on the heels of four missionaries being detained and questioned on similar charges in Ocumare de la Costa, a coastal town located in the northern part of the South American nation. All four North Dakota missionaries – who have been in custody [since Wednesday](#) – were released on Saturday.

President Maduro stated that the pilot had “all kinds of documentation” to prove his affiliation with the United States.

Earlier this month, the United States [imposed visa restrictions](#) on Venezuelan officials, citing corruption and human rights violations.

The Venezuelan president responded with similar restrictions. Maduro banned certain U.S. officials – including George W Bush, Dick Cheney, Bob Menendez and Marco Rubio – from visiting Venezuela. He charged that these officials encouraged terrorism and also accused them of various human rights abuses, explicitly in Syria and Iraq.

Maduro has also recently accused the United States of collusion in a plot to bomb the presidential palace.

The White House responded to these accusations by labeling them as ludicrous.

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