

Venezuela: Opposition, Colombian Leaders Allegedly Involved in Foiled Terror Plot

The Venezuelan government accused far right leaders Leopoldo Lopez and Juan Guaido of “constant” coup attempts.

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Venezuelan authorities have reportedly dismantled a terrorist plan.

National Assembly President Jorge Rodriguez held a press conference on Sunday and announced the arrest of Juan Gutierrez Aranguren, who was allegedly plotting to bomb the legislative palace in Caracas during a parliamentary session.

“We shall not rest until all those involved in [terror] attacks are captured,” Rodriguez stated, adding that Gutierrez was detained by security forces on the Venezuelan-Colombian border.

The former communications minister pointed the finger at opposition leaders Leopoldo Lopez and Juan Guaido, accusing them of being “constantly” involved in subversive activities.

“Lopez and Guaido have been behind the training of military deserters, alliances with drug traffickers, recruiting criminals in Colombia for violent attacks in Venezuela,” he said.

Rodriguez went on to demand explanations from Spanish authorities for allegedly allowing Lopez to organize efforts to oust the Maduro government. The far right leader sought refuge in the Spanish embassy in Caracas after escaping house arrest in [April 2019](#), and [fled](#) the country 18 months later.

One of the recent high profile coup attempts, in which Gutierrez was also a participant, was the failed paramilitary invasion code named “[Operation Gedeon](#).”

In May 2020, a 60-strong expedition featuring Venezuelan deserting soldiers and two [US mercenaries](#) was neutralized by security forces. Two speed boats were [intercepted](#) when attempting to disembark, with dozens of arrests in subsequent days. According to Rodriguez, Gutierrez managed to escape arrest and continue his activities before being

caught trying to cross back to Colombia.

In video testimony released on public television, the operative corroborated the leading role of the high-profile opposition figures. He added that he deserted from the Venezuelan armed forces heeding the call from self-proclaimed “Interim President” [Juan Guaido](#).

Furthermore, Gutierrez testified that he was involved in training in one of three camps in northern Colombia under retired Venezuelan Major General [Cliver Alcala](#), another key Gedeon figure. The Venezuelan government had publicly [denounced](#) the camps before multilateral organizations.

Gutierrez’s revelations came on the heels of testimony from another Operation Gedeon participant. Yacsy Alvarez Mirabal confessed to having worked as an interpreter for former US green beret [Jordan Goudreau](#), the main organizer of the operation.

In a [video](#) released on social media, Alvarez stressed that the Colombian government and intelligence services were aware of the coup efforts being organized in Colombian territory. She specifically claimed that current President Ivan Duque and former President Alvaro Uribe were informed of the operation and pledged logistical support including landing strips and free border crossing.

In September, Colombian authorities [arrested](#) Alvarez and three other Venezuelan nationals allegedly involved in Operation Gedeon. They are being investigated for arms trafficking after Alcala’s men were arrested with a [shipment](#) in April 2020. The Venezuelan government has requested their extradition.

Operation Gedeon had a significant [fallout](#) amidst the Venezuelan opposition. Guaido attempted to distance himself from the operation and have his advisers shoulder the blame. However, his signature appears on a [contract](#) with Goudreau’s Silvercorp private contractor, which includes a deniability [clause](#) should the plot fail.

The Trump administration likewise [denied](#) any involvement in the paramilitary invasion attempt. Nevertheless, as part of a breach-of-contract lawsuit filed against Guaido adviser Juan Jose (“JJ”) Rendon, Goudreau [claimed](#) to have met White House officials who encouraged the efforts.

The green beret also [stated](#) that a meeting with Trump at the former president’s Mar-a-Lago resort was in the works but did not materialize.

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Featured image: National Assembly President Jorge Rodriguez blasted opposition leaders for coup attempts. (MPPCI)

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