



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on December 2, 2025

Trump Tells Venezuelan Dictator to Flee: Report

An operation that started out as strikes against alleged Venezuelan drug traffickers is being unveiled for what it really is. It's now obvious that the Trump administration is determined to force a regime change in Venezuela.

President Donald Trump reportedly told Venezuelan dictator Nicolás Maduro late last week to immediately leave the country. *The Miami Herald* reported Sunday that the White House gave Maduro a clear message: "You can save yourself and those closest to you, but you must leave the country now." The sources who talked to the *Herald* said the White House told Maduro that "safe passage would be guaranteed for him, his wife Cilia Flores, and his son only if he agreed to resign right away."



AP Images
Nicolás Maduro

Trump held a meeting a few days later, Monday evening, with top national security officials to discuss Venezuela. The meeting included secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Dan Caine and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, White House chief of staff Susie Wiles, and deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller.

Land Operations Ahead

The *Herald* report came on the heels of Trump's announcement last Thursday that military operations against Venezuela's Cartel de los Soles will soon expand from blowing up speedboats to land operations. "We have almost stopped (drug trafficking), it is 85% stopped by sea", Trump [said](#) in a Thanksgiving video call to U.S. troops. "And we will also begin to stop them by land. By land it's easier, but that will start very soon." But this doesn't mean the U.S. government intends to stop blowing up boats. Hegseth said during Tuesday's Cabinet meeting that the strikes will continue.

Maduro Won't Budge

Maduro has, so far, refused to leave. On Monday, he attended a rally with supporters from the United Socialist Party of Venezuela in downtown Caracas. He said that his enemies "will never be able to take us off the path of the revolution, under any circumstances," [according](#) to reports. The communist dictator also addressed D.C.'s threats:

We have lived through 22 weeks of psychological terrorism, which have tested us. The test of love for the homeland.... We are more than a party: we are a force, and we have achieved unity among all Venezuelans in the face of these imperial threats.

Maduro's refusal to leave is reportedly the result of the United States refusing three main requests. According to [the Herald](#):



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“First, Maduro asked for global amnesty for any crimes he and his group had committed, and that was rejected,” said the source, speaking on the condition of anonymity. “Second, they asked to retain control of the armed forces — similar to what happened in Nicaragua in ’91 with Violeta Chamorro. In return, they would allow free elections.” The arrangement, the source added, resembled a “Cuban model” that left the Ortega brothers as the real power behind the scenes and ultimately helped pave their return to government. The administration rejected that proposal as well. The third sticking point was timing: Washington insisted Maduro resign immediately, and Caracas refused.

Regime Change the Goal

The signs that “Operation Southern Spear” is really “Operation Oust Maduro” are becoming more apparent.

On Saturday, Trump announced on his Truth Social account that all airspace “above and surrounding Venezuela” should be considered “closed in its entirety.”

Earlier that week, on November 24, Rubio [designated](#) Maduro and his officials a foreign terrorist organization, a move that expands justification for military intervention.

Over the last couple of months, the United States has built a massive military presence in the Caribbean. By November 11, the U.S. Navy’s largest aircraft carrier, the USS *Gerald R. Ford*, arrived in the region. This added to the thousands of servicemen, amphibious-ready groups, and gunships that moved into the region over previous weeks.

The official reason for the administration’s aggression against Maduro’s regime is because it’s a criminal organization. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters on Monday that the president and defense secretary are legally allowed to kill designated narcoterrorist groups. “This administration has designated these narco-terrorists as foreign terrorists or organizations. The president has a right to take them out if they are threatening the United States of America,” Leavitt said. But, as the *Wall Street Journal* editorial board [pointed out](#), it’s obvious there is more to what is really happening. “The political cover for this intimidation campaign is that Mr. Trump is fighting drug cartels, but you don’t send 25% of the Navy’s deployed warships, F-35 fighters, and thousands of Marines merely to blow up drug boats,” the *Journal’s* editors said.

Maduro has been in U.S. crosshairs for years, albeit not with this level of aggressiveness. In 2020, the Justice Department indicted him and more than a dozen of his cronies. The DOJ considers the regime a “narco-terrorist enterprise,” and the U.S. government has put a \$50 million bounty on Maduro’s head, the biggest reward ever put up for a sitting head of state.

Why Now?

The big question, of course, is: Why? Why is the United States being so aggressive with *this* corrupt regime? It’s certainly not uniquely despotic and criminal.

Venezuela is not even the largest drug trafficker into America. More than 90 percent of the fentanyl that poisons Americans comes out of Mexico.

Venezuela is also not the only country led by criminals and election-rigging communist tyrants. It’s not even the only country in Latin America that recently had a rigged election. Brazil is in the same boat, and Trump gets along with the communist leader of that country just fine.



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Is it oil? Venezuela does indeed have rich oil deposits. As of 2025, Venezuela holds [the largest proven oil reserves](#) in the world, with about 300 billion barrels, more than Saudi Arabia and Iran. It wouldn't be beyond the U.S. government to effect regime change for a crack at a nation's natural resources. But this administration has also made major moves to make drilling in America easier. It's also fortifying business ties with several oil-rich Middle Eastern nations, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Or, as we asked in a [previous report](#), is this related to a personal beef Trump has with Maduro's suspected role in U.S. electioneering, and particularly the 2020 election? "Retired" CIA agent Gary Berntsen is among those who [claim](#) that evidence shows Venezuela has been rigging elections with USAID taxpayer money, including the stolen 2020 election. This, in part, is the main idea behind Ralph Pezzullo's book *Stolen Elections: The Takedown of Democracies Worldwide*. Pezzullo claims that the "citizens of the United States haven't had a national election that hasn't been tampered with since 2008," and that Venezuela, China, Iran, and Russia have been integral to the tampering.

What Happened to No New Wars?

Whatever is going on behind the scenes, the Trump administration is sticking to the narco story. But if the administration follows through and topples another tin pot dictator, chances are many of Trump's core voters will feel betrayed. One of the most appealing components of a Trump presidency, to many, was "no more new wars." This was a Trump promise. Invading a country that poses no imminent threat to the United States is a betrayal of that. For many, this may be the last straw.

Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) recently predicted that invading Venezuela would "dissolve" Trump's MAGA movement. Paul also believes that the reason this version of Trump is behaving in a more interventionist manner is because warmongering neocons have gotten very close to him. "Lindsey Graham has not changed his positions, but he's clever, and he's become very close to the president. [He] influences the president. Same with Marco Rubio. So, the pending regime change war in Venezuela is hatched by those people," Paul recently [said](#).



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