

# The US-Venezuela Crisis

(Translated)

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The interest of successive US administrations in Venezuela dates back to the early 20th century, following the discovery of vast oil reserves there. For decades, US energy companies controlled the oil industry, but the Venezuelan government nationalized it in 1976.

Venezuela suffered significant economic decline and political instability until Hugo Chávez came to power in 1998. Under Chávez, Venezuela forged closer ties with Russia, China, and Iran, pursuing left-wing socialist policies until his death in 2013. He was succeeded by Nicolás Maduro, who continued Chávez's socialist approach. However, the economy deteriorated further, and Venezuela became increasingly isolated. The US imposed numerous sanctions and refused to recognize the legitimacy of its presidential elections. In 2020, the US Department of Justice indicted President Maduro on charges of drug trafficking, and smuggling narcotics into the United States.

Venezuela is one of the world's richest countries in terms of natural resources, holding the world's largest proven oil reserves, estimated at over 300 billion barrels, and the fourth-largest natural gas reserves globally, exceeding 195 trillion cubic feet.

In recent months, the United States has escalated its actions against Venezuela under the pretext of combating drug trafficking. On August 9, it deployed three destroyers off the Venezuelan coast, and on September 2, it launched its first airstrike against what it claimed was a drug-carrying vessel originating from Venezuela. On October 3, the US Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, stated that he had ordered a strike on a drug-trafficking boat off the same coast, while President Trump announced that he had authorized the CIA to conduct what he termed "covert operations" inside Venezuela. In total, US authorities have claimed responsibility for 15 attacks in recent weeks, reportedly resulting in 62 deaths.

The New York Times reported that some officials privately told it that the goal behind all of this is to overthrow Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. Officially, the US maintains that its operations target Latin American drug cartels that may be heading towards the US border.

It appears that the Trump administration is seeking to control Venezuela's vast natural resources, particularly oil, natural gas, gold, and rare earth minerals. Adding to the tension are Venezuela's trade relations with China and Russia. Trade between China and Venezuela reached \$6.5 billion in 2024 and continues to grow, increasing US pressure and hostility towards this rapprochement. The US considers Venezuela, and other Latin American countries, its backyard, believing it has the right to their resources. Any encroachment on these countries is a red line that could lead to war, as demonstrated by the 1989 invasion of Panama, the arrest of its president Noriega on drug trafficking charges, and regime change in the country to align with US interests.

The conflicting statements we are hearing from American politicians today regarding a military operation in Venezuela suggest that there is a plan to change the regime in Venezuela through one of three scenarios:

The first scenario is a domestic uprising led by the military, or by civilians, or a combination of both, with Washington providing logistical, intelligence, or even direct military support through its existing forces in the Caribbean. This scenario is unlikely due to the fragmentation and weakness of the opposition, coupled with the strength of the Venezuelan government's security and intelligence apparatus.

The second scenario is a direct, overwhelming military strike, including intensive attacks on Venezuelan military installations, potentially involving special forces units to capture and try President Maduro. Simultaneously, this would create an environment conducive to American-backed opposition figures, whose strength has recently increased following Venezuelan opposition leader Machado's Nobel Peace Prize win. The international community has called for solidarity with Machado, a view favored by Western and particularly American media. Those advocating this approach believe that such an attack could create divisions within the regime or cause discontent among some military personnel, leading them to distance themselves from the crumbling system.

The third scenario is political pressure, whereby Trump declares victory after a series of naval strikes, then returns to diplomatic channels to subdue Venezuela in the areas of energy, immigration, regional security, and the signing of economic cooperation agreements, thereby gaining control over the country's resources. This would then lead to an election process through which the US would ensure the opposition's rise to power. This appears to be the most likely scenario, given Trump's background as a trade negotiator who tries to portray himself as a man of peace and seeks the Nobel Peace Prize.

Further evidence of this trend comes from Trump himself on 30 October, 2025, when he stated that he was not considering launching strikes against Venezuela. When a journalist on Air Force One asked him about reports that he intended to strike Venezuela, he replied, "No." Moreover, Maduro himself offered to hand over oil resources in exchange for de-escalation, but Trump rejected the offer. This indicates that Venezuela fears direct American intervention and prefers to resolve the crisis through negotiation.

What is striking about this crisis, and other crises subsequently instigated by the United States, such as the annexation of Canada, the purchase of Greenland, or its occupation of Gaza, is that this country is acting with unprecedented arrogance and bullying. This is not a sign of strength, but rather a symptom of its weakness and defeat. The French thinker Emmanuel Todd says in his book, *After the Empire: The Breakdown of the American Order* (2001), "it is certain that America is going to have to fight politically and militarily in order to sustain the hegemony that has become indispensable for maintaining its standard of living." Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِي الْقُرَىٰ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ﴾

**"And We would not destroy the towns unless their people were wrongdoers"**  
[TMQ Surah Al-Qasas: 59].