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The American Blitzkrieg on Venezuela: No one is safe

The military incursion and kidnapping of Nicolas Maduro shows how normalized the outrageous has become



By **Tarik Cyril Amar**, a historian from Germany working at Koç University, Istanbul, on Russia, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe, the history of World War II, the cultural Cold War, and the politics of memory

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FILE PHOTO. © Getty Images/guvendimir

After five months – really two-and-a-half decades – of ever-escalating preparations by increasing diplomatic, economic, and clandestine warfare, the US has finally executed a full regime-change invasion in Venezuela. The final attack, focused on kidnapping the Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores from the capital Caracas, was short. But the campaign has certainly not been bloodless. While we know little

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about what exactly happened on the ground, Washington's perfectly criminal strikes on alleged smuggling boats at sea which served as the core of the attack's preparatory propaganda barrage, [have already killed over 100 victims](#), not to speak of the overlooked victims of sanctions.

Then, what American officials have called a *"large-scale strike"* against Venezuela in the early hours of January 3 targeted not only Caracas but several locations throughout the country. For whatever reason, resistance to this *"dark and deadly"* (in President Donald Trump's words) operation, seems to have been minimal. In view of the long and very visible military buildup, as well as psychological warfare campaign that preceded these night raids, it is hard to believe that they came as a surprise. Betrayal, subversion, and secret, nasty deals may well have played a role.

While such things will probably remain murky for a while – or forever – other, more important aspects of the US invasion of Venezuela are unambiguously clear: It is absolutely, irredeemably illegal, a massive and open breach of the UN Charter's prohibition of wars of aggression. Even some of America's most loyal 'Atlanticist' vassals in Europe have to admit that much, for instance, [a recent op-ed in Germany's ultra-mainstream Die Zeit newspaper](#).

Washington's pretexts are, as so often, flimsy insults to everyone with half a brain. Venezuela and Maduro are *not* contributing anything significant – if anything at all – to America's very own and never-ending drug problems, neither with regard to cocaine nor fentanyl. And Maduro's election in 2024 may have been fair or not. The decisive, conclusive point is that such issues must be dealt with inside a sovereign country and can never justify military intervention from outside. Or who is going to be next? Germany for the extremely dubious way (polite expression) its mainstream parties have locked the New-Left BSW out of parliament in what may well amount to a cold coup?

Bizarre ramblings, also heard recently, about Iran and Venezuela, are pretexts as well. But indirectly they do point to some actual truths. [Maduro has been punished for daring to openly stand up for the Palestinian victims of the genocide](#) that Israel and the US are currently committing together. And Israeli politicians, always the absolute bullies, [have already taken the opportunity of Trump's attack on Venezuela to threaten Iran with similar violence](#). Trump, meanwhile, has made a point of putting his assault in the context of the assassination of [Iranian General Qassem Soleimani and the equally criminal assault on Iran during "Operation Midnight Hammer."](#)

It's not hard to understand the real reasons for the



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American onslaught on Venezuela, partly because American officials, including Trump himself, have spoken openly about them. Venezuela has the single greatest national oil reserves in the world and, in addition, significant deposits of gold, rare earths, and other raw materials.



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Trump has claimed [that many of these riches somehow really belong to the US](#) and its companies (same thing for him anyhow) and promised to reconquer them, which he is doing now. Greed, plain and simple, is a main driver of this dirty Blitzkrieg against a militarily de facto helpless victim. As Trump himself has admitted, this is about *“a tremendous amount of wealth.”*

But greed isn't all. There also are geopolitics. Like Washington's recent electoral interference in [Argentina](#) and [Honduras](#), the ongoing pressure on Brazil ([currently receding](#) a little, but who knows for how long), Colombia ([which Trump threatens with a fate similar to Venezuela](#)), Nicaragua, and Cuba. Add in the shameless [pardoning of a real drug-kingpin-politician from Honduras](#), the assault on Venezuela is also an application of what has been termed the *“Donroe Doctrine.”* The meaning of the latter is, in essence, simple: it's the bad old Monroe Doctrine – going back over 200 years now – but even worse.









Marco Rubio, former Trump disparager and now obsequious consigliere and enforcer (as both Secretary of State and National Security Advisor, a combination not seen since the evil days of Henry Kissinger, war-criminal-extraordinaire) [made a point of underlining the threat against Cuba](#) in particular. Apart from Trump, US foreign policy is in the hands of an absolutely ruthless man with a personal axe to grind in the Caribbean, and Latin America in general, and ambitions to be Trump's successor as president.

As just spelled out in the new US National Security Strategy, Washington will focus special attention on its long-suffering southern neighbors and victims. A *“Trump Corollary,”* deliberately echoing President Theodore Roosevelt's old imperialist *“corollary,”* aims to cement US domination by all means and secure the American empire's 'backyard' ever more tightly by installing and propping up puppets and suppressing resistance.

Last but not least, the US will also escalate the old policy of depriving Latin American countries of their own foreign policy – yet another essential element of sovereignty – by punishing

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them for building relationships with 'outsiders,' most of all now China, but also Russia. That was one of Venezuela's many 'sins,' and no one in the region will have missed the vicious lesson that Washington has just meted out.

Trump cannot imagine failure. He has declared that *"American dominance in the western hemisphere will never be questioned again. Won't happen."* But, of course, in reality, failure is a real possibility for him no less than for other hubristic mortals. In the long or not-so-long run, his violent hyper-imperialist strategy may well fail. It may even provoke a devastating backlash. Yet, as so often with the US, its fiascos leave its victims in ruins too.



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Meanwhile, even the reliable US imperialism booster Hal Brands has warned that Trump's methods may backfire in setting a precedent, *for instance, in how China may one day decide to deal with Taiwan.*

The comparison is deeply, demagogically flawed, since Beijing has a plausible claim to Taiwan, while Washington has none to Venezuela or to snatching Maduro and his wife, as Brands embarrassingly tries to pretend.

And to be honest, even if Brands has failed to notice from his Henry Kissinger Chair perch, the US has long delivered one precedent after the other for breaking all laws, all rules, and all basic moral norms, such as in co-perpetrating the Gaza Genocide with Israel. But the onslaught on Venezuela does add yet another facet to American lawlessness.

Ironically, some wanna-be-friends of Washington will never grasp the absolute selfishness and immorality of American policy. Two such comically maladjusted figures are Vladimir Zelensky of Ukraine and Maria Corina Machado from Venezuela.

Zelensky used to post about *"spotting"* Russian operatives in Venezuela, trying to ingratiate himself by making a personal contribution to the US siege of the country. By now, as an obstreperous and increasingly useless 'client,' he may well be a target of American regime change himself. Machado, who has *bent over backwards indecently* to impress on the Americans just how ready she is to obey them and sell out her country and its resources, has just been discarded like a used doormat by Trump. In his triumphalist press conference, the American president mentioned her in passing – *as someone who does not have what it takes to lead Venezuela.* So much for the wages of

treason and sucking-up. Stop pitching, Maria, you've just been fired. Jolani made the underling cut, you didn't.

Ironically, Machado's scandalous receiving of the Nobel Peace Prize may have served her badly in the end. Trump is a jealous man, and it is certain that he felt the prize should have gone to him instead. And, in a way, he even has a point. While he doesn't deserve it at all, one really cannot argue that Machado deserved it more. The Nobel Peace Prize has long been a sick joke. But its use as part of an invasion-preparation campaign still stands out as particularly heinous. Time to do away with this disgraceful farce.

In general, the American president's press conference was a genuine Trump performance, with his usual grandiloquence on full display. Taking personal credit for the ["spectacular assault"](#) on Venezuela, he praised it as *"one of the most stunning, effective, and powerful displays of American military might and competence"* and a feat the equal of which has not been seen since World War Two.



Trump was too busy boasting to notice that his own revelations about the operation implied a less heroic scenario: *"overwhelming"* US force was used, and not a single American soldier or even *"piece of equipment"* was lost. Whatever this was, it was not a great – or fair – fight.

Read more: 'She has no support or respect': Trump trashes Venezuelan Nobel winner's claim to power

The US president mostly confirmed what we know already – The US wants basically all of Venezuela's stuff, but oil is at the top of the wish list. Washington feels that it should *"run" the country until a "leadership transition" can be engineered*, that is the installation of a puppet regime, obviously. In other words, a frank application of might-is-right, with only minimal rhetorical fluff about how ordinary Venezuelans will benefit and *"also be taken care of."* If that sounds unintentionally ominous, that's because it is. And all of it under the shadow of the same US armada that has just assaulted the country and is on stand-by to do so again, whenever Washington feels like it. Gangster politics 101.

In its own way, the president's presser did represent something important about this war. Namely, how strangely normal the absolutely anomalous has become. What Washington has just done is a horror of criminality, greed, and arrogance. But it is also what was to be expected. The same is true for the ludicrously hypocritical reactions from its NATO-EU vassals who feel the best they can do is *"observe."* Good luck with that!

In a more normal – if far from perfect – world, everyone would finally understand that the single most dangerous rogue state in the world, by far, is the US. That is true whether measured in capability or as sheer moral insanity, corruption, and brutality. In a more normal world, even the worst antagonists would find a way to cooperate to contain and deter this geopolitical Godzilla-on-speed. But, as of now, such a world is not yet emerging. Multipolarity alone will not be enough.

The statements, views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of RT.



OPINION

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John J 1/4/2026 at 5:19 PM

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Since the US is not having luck stealing Russian Natural Resources using Ukraine, the CIA is now going after Venezuela's oil. The law of unintended consequences always prevails though.

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Patrick Walsh 1/4/2026 at 5:23 PM ↕

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Usa has plenty of oil and gas. It is energy self-sufficient.

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Hexe Pick8 1/4/2026 at 5:31 PM ↕

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They also consume about 20% of worldwide available oil, especially their wasteful military as the biggest consumer. So about $\frac{1}{3}$ of their oil is bought and imported, meaning they aren't very self-sufficient and because they are too stingy they prefer to rob oil, before paying the fair price. Also US oil apparently isn't all zu cheap, because if you produce domestically and can't exploit other nations cheap labor it adds to the costs.

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Enan Thaye 1/4/2026 at 5:29 PM

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I don't think the author understands what a «Blitzkrieg» is.... This was definitely not a Blitzkrieg, what this was, was what Putin wishes Russia had the capability to do, namely perform a «special military operation»..... In and out in under 6 hours..... Russians, Putin....take notes, this is what a first class military can do. Russia had the world fooled, everyone thought they were first class when in reality a 3rd world nation of farmers like Ukraine have been able to absolutely wreck havoc on Russia 😂

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jeeky jeek 1/4/2026 at 5:28 PM

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US & NATO stealing oils from Venuzuela just like same playbook with Iraq Saddam...

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