

Raubzug Venezuela 6 – Aufmarsch der Russen

Russian air force planes land in Venezuela carrying troops: report

By Reuters

March 24, 2019 "[Information Clearing House](#)" – CARACAS (Reuters) – Two Russian air force planes landed in Venezuela's main airport on Saturday carrying a Russian defense official and nearly 100 troops, according to a local journalist, amid strengthening ties between Caracas and Moscow.

A flight-tracking website showed that two planes left from a Russian military airport bound for Caracas on Friday, and another flight-tracking site showed that one plane left Caracas on Sunday.

The report comes three months after the two nations held military exercises on Venezuelan soil that President Nicolas Maduro called a sign of strengthening relations, but which Washington criticized as Russian encroachment in the region.

Reporter Javier Mayorca wrote on Twitter on Saturday that the first plane carried Vasily Tonkoshkurov, chief of staff of the ground forces, adding that the second was a cargo plane carrying 35 tonnes of material.

An Ilyushin IL-62 passenger jet and an Antonov AN-124 military cargo plane left for Caracas on Friday from Russian military airport Chkalovsky, stopping along the way in Syria, according to flight-tracking website Flightradar24.

The cargo plane left Caracas on Sunday afternoon, according to Adsbexchange, another flight-tracking site.

A Reuters witness saw what appeared to be the passenger jet at the Maiquetia airport on Sunday.

It was not immediately evident why the planes had come to Venezuela.

Venezuela's Information Ministry did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

Russia's Defense Ministry and Foreign Ministry did not reply to messages seeking a comment. The Kremlin spokesman also did not reply to a request for comment.

The Trump administration has levied crippling sanctions on the OPEC nation's oil industry in efforts to push Maduro from power and has called on Venezuelan military leaders to abandon him. Maduro has denounced the sanctions as U.S. interventionism and has won diplomatic backing from Russia and China.

In December, two Russian strategic bomber aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons landed Venezuela in a show of support for Maduro's socialist government that infuriated Washington.

Maduro on Wednesday said Russia would send medicine "next week" to Venezuela, without describing how it would arrive, adding that Moscow in February had sent some 300 tonnes of humanitarian aid.

This article was originally published by "[Reuters](#)"

Russia Sends "Peacekeeping" Troops to Venezuela. Joint Military Exercises.

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, March 25, 2019



According to [Reuters](#) on Sunday, Russia sent around 100 troops to Caracas, saying the following:

“A flight-tracking website showed that two planes left from a Russian military airport bound for Caracas on Friday, and another flight-tracking site showed that one plane left Caracas on Sunday.”

“That comes three months after the two nations held military exercises on Venezuelan soil that President Nicolas Maduro called a sign of strengthening relations, but which Washington criticized as Russian encroachment in the region.”

Reportedly **Colonel General Vasily Tonkoshkurov**, Main Command of Russian Land Forces chief, is leading whatever purpose lies behind its Defense Ministry’s mission.

Tonkoshkurov is a senior military figure. From October 2013 to May 2018, he was General Staff of Russia’s Armed Forces subcommander – currently head of Russian ground forces.

Reportedly he was onboard one of two military aircraft sent to Caracas with other Russian forces. The second aircraft carried equipment for their mission.

Reuters: “An Ilyushin IL-62 passenger jet and an Antonov AN-124 military cargo plane left for Caracas on Friday from Russian military airport Chkalovsky, stopping along the way in Syria, according to flight-tracking website Flightradar24.”

“The cargo plane left Caracas on Sunday afternoon, according to Adbexchange, another flight-tracking site.”

An unnamed Russian embassy source said officials arrived for “exchange consultations” with the Bolivarian Republic, likely with its senior military staff, according to Sputnik News, the source adding:

“Russia has various contracts that are in the process of being fulfilled, contracts of a technical military character.”

[Have the Russian Military Aircrafts in Venezuela Breached the Door to “America’s Backyard”?](#)

So far, neither Russian nor Venezuelan officials commented on the above report. Moscow has been supplying the Bolivarian Republic with hundreds of tons of medicines.

In January, both countries held joint military exercises in Venezuela. Two Russian Tu-160 strategic bombers flew to the country.

At the time, Sputnik News said “(d)uring their visit to Venezuela, two Russian strategic bombers (capable of carrying nuclear and conventional weapons) carried out a planned flight over the Caribbean Sea and held military drills in the equatorial area, including joint flights with the Venezuelan Air Force jets.”

Venezuelan **Minister of Defense Vladimir Padrino Lopez** said both countries will continue to create a “productive and energetic team of brotherhood and effective cooperation...We are getting prepared to defend Venezuela when it is needed.”

Around 100 Russia troops are far short of a Kremlin peacekeeping mission to the Bolivarian Republic I’ve been urging – something similar to combatting US-supported terrorists in Syria, short of conducting military operations unless needed.

Trump regime hardliners aren’t likely to risk harming them by direct or proxy military intervention – why I believe it’s the most effective way to defeat their coup plot.

Is a token Russian force in Venezuela prelude to sending greater numbers ?

Maduro exposed a US paramilitary plot against him and his government, arrests made, indicating more to come.

In a Saturday address, he said “American imperialists want to kill me. We just exposed the plan that the devil’s puppet (Guaido) personally directed to kill me,” adding he has “evidence,” revealing the plot against him and his government.

Detained Guaido henchman Roberto Marrero’s cell phone reportedly has information about plans for eight to 10 paramilitary hit squads, each with at least eight anti-government mercenaries – trained in Colombia to carry out assassinations, sabotage, and other terrorist actions against Maduro and the Bolivarian Republic.

According to **Communications Minister Jorge Rodriguez,**

“(a)ssassins and paramilitaries have been recruited, using large amounts of money so that they can be sent to Colombia to receive training.”

“Marrero was involved in contracting people from Guatemala and Colombia to comply with the recruitment and training plan for assassins.”

“At least 30 paramilitaries hired from El Salvador, Honduras or Guatemala, trained in Colombia, entered Venezuela. We are looking for them. We have already identified some.”

Has Russia drawn a red line to preserve and protect the Bolivarian Republic it won’t permit Trump regime hardliners to cross ?

A small contingent of troops to the country headed by a senior commander is an encouraging sign.

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Russia Gives US Red Line on Venezuela

By Finian Cunningham

March 24, 2019 "[Information Clearing House](#)" – At a high-level meeting in Rome this week, it seems that Russia reiterated a grave warning to the US – Moscow will not tolerate American military intervention to topple the Venezuelan government with whom it is allied.

Meanwhile, back in Washington DC, President Donald Trump was again [bragging](#) that the military option was still on the table, in his press conference with Brazilian counterpart Jair Bolsonaro. Trump is bluffing or not yet up to speed with being apprised of Russia's red line.

The [meeting](#) in the Italian capital between US "special envoy" on Venezuelan affairs Elliot Abrams and Russia's deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov had an air of urgency in its arrangement. The US State Department [announced](#) the tête-à-tête only three days beforehand. The two officials also reportedly held their two-hour discussions in a Rome hotel, a venue indicating ad hoc arrangement.

Abrams is no ordinary diplomat. He is a regime-change specialist with a criminal record for sponsoring terrorist operations, specifically the infamous Iran-Contra affair to destabilize Nicaragua during the 1980s. **His appointment by President Trump to the "Venezuela file" only underscores the serious intent in Washington for regime change in Caracas.** Whether it gets away with that intent is another matter.

Moscow's interlocutor, Sergei Ryabkov, is known to not mince his words, having earlier castigated Washington for seeking global military domination. He calls a spade a spade, and presumably a criminal a criminal.

The encounter in Rome this week was described as "frank" and "serious" – which is diplomatic code for a blazing exchange. The timing comes at a high-stakes moment, after Venezuela having been thrown into chaos last week from civilian power blackouts that many observers, including the Kremlin, blame on American cyber sabotage. The power grid outage followed a failed attempt by

Washington to stage a provocation with the Venezuelan military over humanitarian aid deliveries last month from neighboring Colombia.

The fact that Washington's efforts to overthrow the elected President Nicolas Maduro have so far floundered, might suggest that the Americans are intensifying their campaign to destabilize the country, with the objective of installing US-backed opposition figure Juan Guaido. He declared himself "acting president" in January with Washington's imprimatur.

Given that the nationwide power blackouts seem to have failed in fomenting a revolt by the civilian population or the military against Maduro, the next option tempting Washington could be the military one.

It seems significant that Washington has recently evacuated its last remaining diplomats from the South American country. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo commented on the evacuation by saying that having US personnel on the ground "was limiting" Washington's scope for action. Also, American Airlines [reportedly](#) cancelled all its services to Venezuela in the past week. Again, suggesting that the US was considering a military intervention, either directly with its troops or covertly by weaponizing local proxies. The latter certainly falls under Abrams' purview.

After the Rome meeting, Ryabkov said bluntly: "We assume that Washington treats our priorities seriously, our approach and warnings."

One of those warnings delivered by Ryabkov is understood to have been that no American military intervention in Venezuela will be tolerated by Moscow.

For his part, Abrams sounded as if he had emerged from the meeting after having been given a severe reprimand. "No, we did not come to a meeting of minds, but I think the talks were positive in the sense that both sides emerged with a better understanding of the other's views," he told reporters.

"A better understanding of the other's views," means that the American side was given a red line to back off.

The arrogance of the Americans is staggering. Abrams seems, according to US [reporting](#), to have flown to Rome with the expectation of working out with Ryabkov a "transition" or "compromise" on who gets the "title of president" of Venezuela.

That's what he no doubt meant when he said after the meeting "there was not a meeting of minds", but rather he got "a better understanding" of Russia's position.

Washington's gambit is a replay of Syria. During the eight-year war in that country, the US continually proffered the demand of a "political transition" which at the end would see President Bashar al Assad standing down. By contrast, Russia's unflinching position on Syria has always been that it's not up to any external power to decide Syria's politics. It is a sovereign matter for the Syrian people to determine independently.

Nearly three years after Russia intervened militarily in Syria to salvage the Arab country from a US-backed covert war for regime change, the American side has manifestly given up on its erstwhile imperious demands for "political transition". The principle of Syrian sovereignty has prevailed, in large part because of Russia's trenchant defense of its Arab ally.

Likewise, Washington, in its incorrigible arrogance, is getting another lesson from Russia – this time in its own presumed "back yard" of Latin America.

It's not a question of Russia being inveigled by Washington's regime-change schemers about who should be president of Venezuela and "how we can manage a transition". Moscow has reiterated countless times that the legitimate president of Venezuela is Nicolas Maduro whom the people voted for last year by an overwhelming majority in a free and fair election – albeit boycotted by the US-orchestrated opposition.

The framework Washington is attempting to set up of choosing between their desired "interim president" and incumbent Maduro is an entirely spurious one. It is not even worthy to be discussed because it is a gross violation of Venezuela's sovereignty. Who is Washington to even dare try to impose its false choice ?

On Venezuela, Russia is having to remind the criminal American rulers – again – about international law and respect for national sovereignty, as Moscow earlier did with regard to Syria.

And in case Washington gets into a huff and tries the military option, Moscow this week told regime-change henchman Abrams that that's a red line. If Washington has any sense of rationale left, it will know from its Syria fiasco that Russia has Venezuela's back covered.

Political force is out. Military force is out. Respect international law and Venezuela's sovereignty. That's Russia's eminently reasonable ultimatum to Washington.

Now, the desperate Americans could still try more sabotage, cyber or financial. But their options are limited, contrary to what Trump thinks.

How the days of American imperialist swagger are numbered. There was a time when it could rampage all over Latin America. Not any more, evidently. Thanks in part to Russia's global standing and military power.

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Russia must get out of Venezuela, all options open – Trump

RT, 27 Mar, 2019

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An airplane with the Russian flag is seen at Simon Bolivar International Airport in Caracas

US President Donald Trump has warned that Russia must get out of Venezuela. Two planeloads of Russian troops are currently in the Latin American country under the terms of a 2001 cooperation treaty.

Speaking at the White House, Trump also warned that "*all options are open*" when it comes to getting Russia out of Venezuela.

Around 100 Russian troops touched down in Caracas on Saturday, a show of support for President Nicolas Maduro's government. The move caused conster-

nation in Washington, however, with Vice President Mike Pence calling the deployment an “*unnecessary provocation.*”

Pence also called on Russia to withdraw its support of Maduro and “*stand with Juan Guaido,*” the Washington-sponsored opposition leader who declared himself interim president in January.

[Also on rt.com Russia on military planes in Venezuela: Our specialists are there based on cooperation treaty](#)

Trump met with Guaido’s wife, Fabiana Rosales, on Wednesday, and pledged his support to her husband. After the momentum behind his play for the presidency fizzled out, Guaido has continued to criticize Maduro’s government, on Tuesday accusing the Venezuelan leader of violating the country’s constitution by welcoming the Russian troops.

The Russian Foreign Ministry, meanwhile, insisted that the deployment was carried out “*in strict accordance with the constitution of that country and with full respect for its legal norms.*”

US officials have repeatedly warned Russia against intervening in the Guaido/Maduro power struggle. National Security Adviser John Bolton tweeted on Monday that the “*United States will not tolerate hostile foreign military powers meddling with the Western Hemisphere’s shared goals of democracy, security, and the rule of law.*”

Bolton’s words echoed those of Senate Armed Services Committee chair Jim Inhofe (R-Iowa), who threatened “*whatever action necessary*” should Russia encroach on “*our hemisphere*” last month.

Countdown to “Full Spectrum Dominance”

By T.J. Coles

March 24, 2019 "[Information Clearing House](#)" – The US is formally committed to dominating the world by the year 2020. With President Trump’s new Space Directive-4, the production of laser-armed fighter jets as possible precursors to space weapons, and the possibility of nuclear warheads being put into orbit, the clock is ticking...

Back in 1997, the [now-re-established](#) US Space Command announced its commitment to “full spectrum dominance.” The *Vision for 2020* [explains](#) that “full spectrum dominance” means military control over land, sea, air, and space (the so-called fourth dimension of warfare) “to protect US interests and investment.”

“Protect” means guarantee operational freedom. “US interest and investment” means corporate profits.

The glossy brochure explains that, in the past, the Army evolved to protect US settlers who stole land from Native Americans in the [genocidal](#) birth of the nation. Like the *Vision for 2020*, a [report](#) by the National Defense University acknowledges that by the 19th century, the Navy had evolved to protect the US’s newly-formulated “grand strategy.” In addition to supposedly protecting citizens and the constitution, “The overriding principle was, and remains, the protection of American territory ... and our economic well-being.” By the 20th century, the Air Force had been established, in the [words](#) of the *Air Force Study Strategy Guide*, to protect “vital interests,” including: “commerce; secure energy supplies; [and] freedom of action.” In the 21st century, these pillars of power are bolstered by the Cyber Command and the coming Space Force.

The use of the Army, Navy, and Air Force—the three dimensions of power—means that the US is already close to achieving “full spectrum dominance.” Brown University’s Cost of War project [documents](#) current US military involvement in 80 countries—or 40% of the world’s nations. This includes 65 so-called counterterrorism training operations and 40 military bases (though others think the number of bases [is much higher](#)). By this measure, “full spectrum dominance” is nearly half way complete. But the map leaves out US and NATO bases, training programs, and operations in Estonia, Latvia, Poland, and Ukraine.

As the US expands its space operations—the fourth dimension of warfare—the race towards “full spectrum dominance” quickens. Space has long been militarized in the sense that the US uses satellites to guide missiles and aircraft. But the new doctrine seeks to weaponize space by, for instance, blurring the boundaries between high-altitude military aircraft and space itself. Today’s space power will be harnessed by the US to ensure dominance over the satellite infrastructure that allows for the modern world of internet, e-commerce, GPS, telecommunications, surveillance, and war-fighting.

Since the 1950s, the United Nations has introduced [various treaties](#) to prohibit the militarization and weaponization of space—the most famous being the Outer Space Treaty (1967). These treaties aim to preserve space as a commons for all humanity. The creation of the US Space Force is a blatant violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of those treaties. In more recent decades, successive US governments have unilaterally rejected treaties to reinforce and expand the existing space-for-peace agreements. In 2002, the US [withdrew](#) from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (1972), allowing it to expand its long-range missile systems. In 2008, China and Russia submitted to the UN Conference on Disarmament the [proposed Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space](#),

the Threat or Use of Force Against Outer Space Objects. This would have preserved the space-as-a-commons principle and answered US claims that “enemies” would use space as a battleground against US satellites.

But peace is not the goal. The goal is “full spectrum dominance,” so the US rejected the offer. China and Russia [introduced](#) the proposed treaty again in 2014—and again the US rejected it. Earlier this year, the US [withdrew](#) from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty. Last month, President Trump sent an unclassified memo on the new Space Directive-4 to the Vice President, Joint Chiefs of Staff, NASA, and the Secretaries of Defense and State.

The [document](#) makes for chilling and vital reading. It recommends legislating for the training of US forces “to ensure unfettered access to, and freedom to operate in, space, and to provide vital capabilities to joint and coalition forces.” Crucially, this doctrine includes “peacetime and across the spectrum of conflict.” As well as integrating space forces with the intelligence community, the memo recommends establishing a Chief of Staff of the Space Force, who will join the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The memo also says that US space operations will abide by “international law.” But given that the US has rejected anti-space weapons treaties, it is barely constrained by international law.

In late-2017, Space.com [reported](#) on a \$26.3m Department of Defense contract with Lockheed Martin to build lasers for fighter jets under the Laser Advancements for Next-generation Compact Environments program. The report says that the lasers will be ready by 2021. The article links to Doug Graham, the Vice President of Missile Systems and Advanced Programs at Lockheed Martin Space Systems. In the original link Graham [reveals](#) that the Air Force laser “is an example of how Lockheed Martin is using a variety of innovative technologies to transform laser devices into integrated weapon systems.”

As if all this wasn’t bad enough, the British Ministry of Defence (MoD) [states](#) in a projection out to the year 2050: “Economies are becoming increasingly dependent upon space-based systems ... By 2050, space-based weapon systems may also be deployed, which could include nuclear weapons.” But this is extremely reckless. Discussing technologies, including the artificial intelligence on which weapons systems are increasingly based, another MoD [projection](#) warns of “the potential for disastrous outcomes, planned and unplanned ... Various doomsday scenarios arising in relation to these and other areas of development present the possibility of catastrophic impacts, ultimately including the end of the world, or at least of humanity.”

“Full spectrum dominance” is not only a danger to the world, it is a danger to US citizens who would also suffer the consequences, if and when something goes wrong with their leaders’ complicated space weapons.

Dr. T. J. Coles is director of the Plymouth Institute for Peace Research and the author of several books, including [Voices for Peace](#) (with Noam Chomsky and others) and the forthcoming [Fire and Fury: How the US Isolates North Korea, Encircles China and Risks Nuclear War in Asia](#) (both Clairview Books).

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