NEWS

(Efe)

Venezuela Decries \$50M 'Narcoterrorism' Bounty on Maduro as 'Ridiculous Smokescreen'

regime-change narratives.

Caracas has condemned the drug trafficking accusations as baseless efforts to further

Ricardo Vaz August 9, 2025



Caracas, August 9, 2025 (venezuelanalysis.com) – The Venezuelan government has fiercely

Washington has offered no evidence to sustain the grave accusations against high-ranking Venezuelan officials.

condemned the US government's decision to raise the reward for information leading to the arrest of President Nicolás Maduro from US \$25 million to \$50 million.

"The pathetic 'reward' announced by [Attorney General] Pamela Bondi is the most ridiculous

smokescreen we have ever seen," Foreign Minister Yván Gil wrote on social media. "We

repudiate this clumsy political propaganda operation."

"addiction to aggressive unilateralism."

Gil called the announcement a "desperate distraction" from domestic US issues and an effort to please Venezuelan far-right sectors. The move also drew condemnation from Cuba, Nicaragua and Iran. The latter's foreign ministry declared that Washington's latest actions showcased its

On Thursday, Bondi stated in a press conference that US authorities were doubling the bounty against Maduro, whom she accused of collaborating with criminal organizations such as Tren de Aragua and Cartel de los Soles to "flood" the United States with cocaine.

"Under President Trump's leadership, Maduro will not escape justice, and he will be held

accountable for his despicable crimes," the US official claimed. A New York Times exposé published Thursday, citing inside sources, reported that the Trump administration directed the Pentagon to start using military force against Latin American drug cartels in a significant escalation of US extra-territorial reach.

The lofty reward was originally introduced by the US Justice Department during the first Trump

other high-ranking officials.

Former President Joe Biden raised the amount from \$15 to \$25 million shortly before leaving

office in January, while also introducing \$25 million and \$15 million similar rewards for Interior

administration in March 2020 following "narcoterrorism" indictments against Maduro and

Minister Diosdado Cabello and Defence Minister Vladimir Padrino López, respectively.

On July 25, the US State Department designated the so-called "Cartel de los Soles," a purported criminal outfit run by Venezuelan military officers, as a terrorist organization.

However, neither the US Justice Department nor the US State Department have presented any evidence of criminal activity or ties to high-ranking Venezuelan officials. Likewise, no court-tested evidence has linked the so-called "Cartel de los Soles" to specific drug seizures or any identifiable trafficking infrastructure.

cartel as a long-standing White House "invention" designed to justify aggression against Venezuela, calling it a "big lie and manipulation."

Cabello asserted that the "biggest cartel" in the world is operated by the Drug Enforcement

On Thursday, Venezuelan Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello described the so-called drug

Administration (DEA), which he claimed has "no competition."

Reports from the DEA and the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) state that less than 10 percent of US-bound cocaine flowed through Venezuela and the Eastern Caribbean corridor,

contradicting the administration's assessment of Venezuela as a major actor in the narcotics

trade. The same documents conclude that the bulk of drug shipments reach US territory via Washington-allied countries in Central America.

Caracas has consistently repudiated the drug-trafficking accusations, labeling them as propaganda to fuel regime-change narratives and pointing to the DEA's involvement in criminal activities and past scandals such as Iran-Contra.

Leaked documents published by The Intercept disclosed espionage activities and information sharing between the DEA and the National Security Agency (NSA).

In early 2024, a leaked memo seen by the Associated Press revealed that the DEA ran an illegal

Venezuela ceased cooperation with the DEA in 2005 under former President Hugo Chávez.

in drug trafficking activities.

Since breaking relations with the DEA, Venezuelan counter-narcotics efforts have reportedly improved year by year. In early July, Venezuelan Attorney General Tarek William Saab

operation with undercover agents in Venezuela in an effort to incriminate high-ranking officials

convictions have also been made.

Foreign policy analysts, including those from the Venezuelan opposition, have pointed out the Trump administration's competing approaches in its Venezuela foreign policy. While hardline factions, led by figures such as Secretary of State Marco Rubio, have favored attacks against the

announced the seizure of 356 tons of drugs from 2017 to 2025, along with 208 aircraft, 782

properties, 6,946 vehicles, 2,454 weapons, and 218 vessels. More than 19,000 drug-related

In July, Caracas and Washington negotiated the return of 252 migrants who had been deported to El Salvador's notorious CECOT prison, in exchange for 10 US nationals and residents detained in Venezuela. Days later, the US Treasury issued a license allowing Chevron to resume oil operations in the Caribbean nation.

#Nicolas Maduro #US-Venezuela Relations

Edited by Cira Pascual Marquina in Caracas.

DONATE

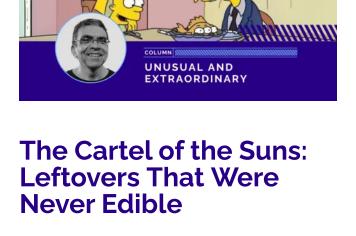
Venezuelanalysis is 100% sustained by readers. Support

Maduro government, other officials have lobbied for engagement.

RELATED



Mobilizes People's Militia



our independent, on-the-ground work!



LATEST

Keeping Up With the

US Threatens Venezuela

Caribbean Sea Troop

Deployment; Maduro

With Southern

Venezuelan Economy

Mobilizes People's Militia

The Cartel of the Suns:

Leftovers That Were

Never Edible

DONATE

BACKGROUND



CONTACT US



Email address*

