

Venezuela from Imperialist Threats to Naked Aggression

Kunal Chattopadhyay, January 2026

After the US imperialist attack in Venezuela, many people ask, why? From Obama to Trump, U.S. presidents, Democrats and Republicans have said there is a dangerous drug cartel in Venezuela whose illicit drug exports are devastating American citizens.

In reality, Venezuela is in a two-way crisis. When Hugo Chavez was elected president in 1998, Venezuelan politics and society took a new turn. Venezuela is an oil-rich country. Venezuela was liberated from the Spanish Empire in 1821, but the country was then faced with widespread poverty and problems. With the discovery of petroleum in 1914, imperialist penetration of the Venezuelan economy increased. At that time, the president helped foreign, mainly American, oil companies. Until 1958, virtually one military-backed government after another remained in power. In 1958, a popular uprising overthrew the government of Marcos Pérez Jiménez and established liberal democracy. This was the period of the collaboration between the two main bourgeois parties, the Democratic Action and the Committee of Independent Electoral Political Organizations. In 1976, during the global petroleum crisis, President Carlos Andrés Pérez nationalized oil, and a state-owned enterprise, PDVSA, was created. But it was in the hands of foreign companies and domestic elites. Another decade of corruption and crisis created an atmosphere of rebellion.

1989-1998-2002

In 1989, Pérez was elected to a second term as president, and quickly embarked on a "structural adjustment" prescribed by the International Monetary Fund, that is, spending cuts,

privatization, and currency devaluation. The cost of food, fuel and transportation skyrocketted.

A huge crowd protested in the capital, Caracas, on February 27. Supermarkets were looted, buses were burned, and government offices were attacked. The government maintained its power by fighting many battles. More than 3,000 people were killed or went missing. Thousands more were arrested and tortured.

One of those affected by this incident was Army Major Hugo Chávez Frías. Inspired by the ideals of Simón Bolívar, Chávez wanted at least a partial redistribution of wealth towards ordinary countrymen. Chavez and his fellow officers formed a secret organization called MBR 200. In February 1992, Chávez, already a colonel, attempted a coup against Pérez. The coup failed, and Chávez claimed full responsibility, saying that "as of now" "their goals had not been met. He was sentenced to prison, but was released within two years under the pressure of the mass movement. He then travelled around the country promoting his political views and founded an organization called the Fifth Republic Movement in 1997. He preached a doctrine combining Simon Bolívar (the main hero of the liberation of South America from Spanish rule) socialism, revolution and Jesus.

Chavez declared himself a presidential candidate. Many 'Bolivarian circles' were formed in his support from the bottom. He proposed that a new constitution be drafted, and that Venezuela's oil resources be used to finance social projects for the poor. The main bourgeois parties formed a coalition to oppose him. But on 6 December 1998, he was elected with 56% of the vote. In April 1999, 87.75% of voters voted in favour of a new constitution. The Constituent Assembly sat and after long discussion and consultation with public opinion, the constitution it adopted remained within the bourgeois framework, but was much more democratic and progressive than before. The state controlled natural

resources, especially oil, and constitutionally prohibited the privatization of PDVSA. Equal rights for women were guaranteed, and elements of direct democracy, including referendums, were introduced. The right to health and education at no cost is recognized. It guaranteed the protection of the land, language and cultural rights of indigenous peoples and Afro-Venezuelans. The draft constitution was approved by 71.78% of the voters in the referendum. In July 2000, elections were held for the presidency and other elected positions under the new constitution. Chavez was elected with 59.76% of the vote. In November 2001, the National Assembly gave him the power to legislate for one year by decree in certain cases. Exercising this right, he enacted 49 decrees, including the Land Distribution Law, and the Hydrocarbons Law, which increased the state's income from oil.

The imperialists and the native elites were now enraged. They started calling Chavez a "communist" "and" "dictator," even though he was neither. The alliance of the richest companies and families created artificial shortages by hoarding essentials, including cooking oil and rice. They started closing factories, removing capital from the country, refusing to invest. The CIA was behind them. A coup took place in April 2002. The highest levels of the army mutinied, and surrounded the presidential palace with troops. When Chávez refused to resign, he was imprisoned on an island outside the country with the help of the Americans. So the overthrow of Maduro is not unprecedented in Venezuela's recent history. But in 2002, people's enthusiasm was much higher. On April 12, Pedro Carmona, the chosen representative of the reactionaries, was sworn in as president, and was immediately recognized by the administration of George Bush. Carmona tried to overturn all democratic institutions and methods in the name of restoring democracy. Chavez's ministers were forced to go into hiding. But the common people came out on the streets. On April 13, crowds of people poured into the centre of Caracas from all

directions. The pro-Chavez forces within the army also turned against the plotters. Some of the plotters were arrested, others fled. Chavez was brought back on the 14th.

For the first time in Latin American history, a U.S.-backed coup lost to the revolutionary struggle of the people. The old state apparatus had collapsed. Workers and other poor people occupied the streets. The lower echelons of the army were pro-revolution. If Chavez called for it, the revolution could move towards socialism. He could call for the seizure of factories and large estates, for the confiscation of imperialist property, for the cancellation of foreign debts. He could have called for the formation of an armed mass militia. He didn't do any of that. He urged everyone to maintain peace and return to their homes. No one has been prosecuted in connection with the case.

Petro-socialism and its inevitable limits

The forces of reaction lost a battle, but their power did not go away. Chavez tried to negotiate with them. The owners wanted to put the government on the path of a major economic crisis by locking out the oil industry in December 2002. Computers operating remotely from Houston were shut down. Billions of dollars were lost in damage.

The working class was fighting. A large part of the PDVSA removed the bureaucracy and came under the control of the workers. In the following years, workers occupied many factories in response to lockouts or closures. Leaving the old corrupt unions, a large, democratic trade union was formed – the UNT or National Labour Union.

Chavez's path to reform was remarkable. Subsidies in grocery shops, promotion of public education, free education were introduced. Basic health care was introduced in poor neighbourhoods and remote villages, and doctors were sent from Cuba in exchange for oil. Land was distributed among the poor

farmers, a scheme of cheap housing was started. This program was a fundamental transformation for millions of people. The Venezuelan state-owned company Citgo even supplied oil to Native Americans in the United States at nominal prices.

Naturally, imperialism did not sit on its hands. It organised attacks, carried out by right-wing mercenaries from Colombia. Bombs were hurled at government offices and vehicles of senior government officials. The bourgeois parties boycotted the elections in an attempt to subvert the democratic process. In 2004, they called for a referendum, using the unique democratic feature of the Venezuelan constitution that allowed a referendum on the president, but Chávez won the referendum with 59% of the vote. From these experiences, Chávez decided that there was no alternative to socialism. Speaking at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, he said socialism is needed to build a kingdom of heaven on earth.

In the 2006 presidential election, 78% of voters cast ballots, and Chávez received 62% of the total votes cast. Many international observers, including former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, were forced to say the vote was free. But the imperialist media said Chavez was an authoritarian dictator.

In 2007, he launched a new party, the United Socialist Party of Venezuela. Within a few weeks, 5 million members had joined. There was a proposal to nationalize about 1200 institutions. But in reality only a small number of institutions were nationalized, and they relied on bureaucratic management, not on workers' control. Their obstacles were magnified by their dependence on the bureaucracy of the old bourgeois state. "As a result, Venezuelan" "socialism" gradually became a mere "petro-socialism". The standard of living was being improved not by bringing the principal means of production under the control of the working class, but by subsidizing important needs by using the state's profits from rising oil prices on the world market. When prices fell after 2014, there was no room to rely

on any productive force. That is, they not only failed to abolish capitalism and establish workers' democracy, but also did not look for alternatives in the economy. All industrial products were being imported, but due to the fall in oil prices, it could not be done so much after 2014.

Hugo Chávez died on March 5, 2013 after a long battle with cancer. He was no doubt an honest revolutionary, a man of the people, but even though he spoke of socialism, he did not understand the importance of breaking the bourgeois state apparatus, of breaking the economic power of the bourgeoisie. Nicolás Maduro's government did not directly follow in the footsteps of Chávez's government. This government has its own characteristics. On the one hand, there were the Stalin-Mao type of rhetorics that helped them gain international solidarity, and on the other hand, there were attacks on those who differed among the Venezuelan left. Trade unions come under attack when they demand an increase in wages and a better life. A number of new initiatives have been taken. American companies began to sell oil at a lower price. Many of the industries that were nationalized were privatized. In the run-up to the 2024 elections, a section of the country's left was opposed to Maduro.

The imperialist pressure

The pressure and overt actions of US imperialism against Venezuela are not today's events. We can see that history in two parts – before the 21st century, and in the 21st century.

Eduardo Galeano wrote in his 1971 book *The Open Veins of Latin America* that half of all the profits plundered from Latin America by U.S. capitalists come from Venezuela. Quoting Venezuelan politician Domingo Alberto Rangel, he said that no country has sent so much to world capital in such a short time – the outflow from Venezuela is greater than what the Spanish took from Potosí, or the English took from India.

This aggressive U.S. policy did not begin with Trump, or

Obama, or even Theodore Roosevelt (President 1901-1908). It began in 1823, when James Monroe was president. Monroe announced a new U.S. policy, considering Russia's claim to land on the North Pacific coast, and the possibility that powerful European powers might again attack newly independent Latin American countries. European powers could not interfere in the Western Hemisphere, and no new colonies could be established in the Americas. At first there was a little democratic content in this. But the more the Industrial Revolution strengthened American capitalism in the United States, the more the "Monroe Doctrine" meant that the United States would be the only empire in the two Americas. The most obvious example was the 1845-1848 war in which the United States captured the present-day states of Texas, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico, and parts of Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma from Mexico.

In 1902, Venezuelan President Cipriano Castro declared that the foreign debt was unjustified. In response, Britain, France and Italy sent a combined fleet. President Theodore Roosevelt then elaborated on Monroe's policy that there could be intervention in Latin America, but only the United States would do so. Since then, there have been repeated US military interventions in various countries, support for military coups, the overthrow of democratic and leftist governments, etc.

In 1908, the Americans overthrew Castro in a military coup and installed his vice president and former supporter, Juan Vicente Gomes, as president (sounds like the present?). Gomes begged the Americans to keep the country quiet, and in return he carried out 25 years of dictatorship. The American periodical *Time* compared the tyranny of that dictatorship to the era of Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin.

Even after this, greedy US looks at Venezuela did not disappear. But we'll just look at the Chavez and Maduro phases.

The US role during the April 2002 coup has already been mentioned. In the 2010s, the United States government gave large sums of money to various civil society groups to actively fight the opposition. After the 2014 riots, the U.S. government imposed various “sanctions,” i.e. economic bans, when the government arrested protesters. In 2015, Obama declared Venezuela to be a unique threat to U.S. national security and foreign policy. In 2017, at a dinner hosted by the United Nations General Assembly, President Trump openly discussed the possibility of a US invasion of Venezuela with several Latin American leaders. From 2017 to 2020, massive US sanctions on Venezuela’s state-owned oil companies reduced oil production by 75%, and the country’s real gross domestic product per capita by 62%. On January 23, 2019, the United States unilaterally recognized Juan Guaidó as “provisional president.” On June 28, they seized \$7 billion of Venezuelan assets and gave Guaido the right to some of its spending.

Chávez, though not a Marxist, insisted on a continuous democratic process. But Maduro was narrowly elected after Chavez’s death, and in 2015 the right-wing opposition won a legislative election majority. From 2017 to 2023, the opposition made several attempts to seize power, including the proclamation of Guaidó as provisional president, which was accepted by ten Latin American countries, and most of the European Union.

The bigger problem is that the participation of voters in the elections is decreasing as the opposition is not participating. The military increasingly shared power, and private interests in oil and mining continued to grow. Maduro signed the Barbados Agreement in 2023 to avoid economic sanctions. The presidential election was scheduled for 2024. The far-right initially nominated Maria Corina Machado. Left-wing parties such as the Communist Party of Venezuela and Fatherland for All were in Chávez’s coalition, but supported Enrique Márquez in 2024. Machado’s candidacy was rejected, and

the right-wing candidate was Edmundo Gonzales. The election was held on July 28. The government claims Maduro won with 51% of the vote. But the right-wing opposition posted on the Internet what it said were tallies from each booth, in accordance with Venezuela's electoral law. Apparently, they're the winners. The presidents of Venezuela's long-time allies Brazil, Colombia and Chile also refused to accept the results of the vote until the government provides evidence to the contrary. And, after the election, working people and angry leftists, not rightists, took to the streets to protest. Hundreds of trade union leaders, local observers in elections, and neighborhood-based social activists have been detained without trial, or forced into exile. Thousands of protesters have been arrested on terrorism charges. Enrique Marquez was also arrested.

But the main reason for the decline in popular support is the US economic aggression and the misguided actions of Chavez and Maduro. Chavez's mistake was to rely solely on oil profits, and not to consult even progressive Keynesian economists. Since the first Trump administration began imposing sanctions in 2017, it has become increasingly impossible to revive the economy with the help of the international financial system. In one year (i.e. in 2018), inflation rose to one million percent. Seven million Venezuelans have fled the country. In the last few years, the Maduro government has managed to overcome the crisis, but following the path of right-wing reforms, returning to privatization, reducing the state sector, i.e., axing its own public base.

In the last few years of the Bolivarian Revolution, the combined effect of the economic crisis and the decline of democracy may have reduced the mass movement to such an extent that imperialism could take hold of the country. If imperialism succeeds, it will be not because the Venezuelan people want it, it is because of the failure of leadership, the inability to get out of the clutches of fossil capital,

and the inability to retain the democracy of the early revolution. Tariq Ali noted in a recent article, When the first results came in for the 2004 referendum, I asked Chávez, 'Compañero, what are we going to do if we lose?' He said, 'What do you do if you lose? You leave office and fight again from outside, explaining why they were wrong'. He had a very strong sense of this. Which is why it's a travesty to accuse the *Chavistas* of being anti-democratic from the start. During the Chávez period, the opposition newspapers and television stations blasted propaganda non-stop, attacking the regime – something you could never have seen in Britain or the United States.

But the battle isn't over. What is the plan of American imperialism? Why has Maduro's government not been able to break with the Americans despite the setbacks of the past few years?

A War for Oil?

If we call the invasion of Venezuela only an invasion for oil, then the whole thing will not be said. Imperialism takes different paths for oil. Why this invasion occurred needs to be discussed in detail. In the last few months of the Biden administration, sanctions were re-imposed on Venezuela, as a blow by the US to the disputed elections of 2024. The Trump administration initially backed away from the attack. Richard Grenell visited Venezuela as the President's representative. Chevron was allowed to produce Venezuelan oil directly and export it to the United States. Relations between the United States and Venezuela appear to be improving. But suddenly things changed. Let's first look at the details of the events.

In mid-August 2025, the United States deployed a large naval force to the Caribbean Sea. Their main target was the coast of Venezuela. After 1902-1903, such a large navy did not appear around Venezuela. The Iwo Jima Ready Group [amphibian], the 22nd Marines, some destroyers, a cruiser, a nuclear submarine,

P-8 Poseidon aircraft, and military helicopters were assembled. On August 15, they departed from Norfolk, Virginia. On August 27, it was reported that they were patrolling off the coast of Venezuela in the southern Caribbean Sea. The Venezuelan government responded with a media offensive. First, they say that the Secretary of the Interior, Marco Rubio, is deceiving Trump, that is, they were making a laughable attempt to avoid a direct confrontation with Trump. At the same time, they activated the militias formed since 2009, calling for national unity, but refusing to release the royal prisoners. They did not deviate from their neo-liberal path.

On September 2, the United States announced Operation Southern Spear. Its purpose is the so-called narco-terrorism from Venezuela. On that day, 11 people were killed when a motorboat sank in a US attack. Attacks have continued and the death toll is rising. Maduro's government said Venezuela was ready, and Maduro declared that he would call for an armed republic if necessary. On September 10, U.S. Defense Secretary Peter Hegseth announced the creation of the Joint Narcotics Task Force. Ten other boats and boats were damaged. In October, the Venezuelan government began military exercises. But there is a crisis in the country. Not that most people in the country were supporting the US attack. But the spontaneous gathering of the Chavez era was not seen. In November, the United States sent more warships, including an aircraft carrier. By the end of November, the death toll had risen to 83. None of them had been arrested, put on trial, none have been proven to be smuggling drugs. On 21 November, the United States said, without evidence, that there was a drug trafficking organization called Cartel de los Soles, and that Maduro himself was involved. Rumours of a direct invasion of Venezuela began in late November.

From the point of view of the Venezuelan government, the attack was sudden and unwarranted. Brief descriptions and references are given of how far right the Maduro government

has become in the past year. They have greatly reduced the share of workers in the national income since the Chavez era. (<https://ilostat.ilo.org/data/country-profiles/ven/>) The government has introduced a very strict cost-cutting policy, (<https://www.ilostat.ilo.org/data/country-profiles/ven/>). imf.org/external/datamapper/rev@FPP/VEN) They have transformed their police into a formidable anti-worker force (<https://muflven.org/> / Org.../2024/04/MFL-Regional-Report-2024.pdf), banned left-wing parties and abolish the democratic rights of the Chavez era (<https://links.org.au/what-happened-venezuelas-...>) ; attacked environmentalists and tribal social activists as imperialist brokers because they worked hand in hand with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation of the De Linke party in Germany (<https://links.org.au/venezuelas-authoritarian-turn-and-...>) ; and strongly attacked transgenders (<https://x.com/i/status/1785120397102362915>).

But it's clear that Trump isn't interested. His goal is to establish direct control over Venezuela. Since 1991, US imperialism and other imperialists have tried to dismantle the international system that was established after World War II. The emergence of Russia from the collapse of the degenerated bureaucratic Soviet Union and the imperialist rise of Russian capitalism in the Putin era, the emergence of a strong capitalist economy in China to rival the US, the efforts to build an alternative economic alliance of China, India, Brazil, South Africa, and Europe's decline geopolitically and militarily have brought major changes in world politics and economics.

One of these factors is the decline of the US economy. When Europe was devastated by World War II, American capital helped capitalist Europe to stand up – not out of kindness, but for the sake of American capital. The dollar was the world's main currency. This situation has changed in recent decades. In 1974, during the international oil crisis, the petrodollar was

created on the basis of the US agreement with Saudi Arabia. The world market for oil will run in dollars, and in return, the United States will give Saudi Arabia a huge military aid. In the 21st century, the US has taken strong action against those who have challenged the monopoly of the petrodollar. Saddam Hussein wanted to trade oil with Europe in Euros. There was no need to say anything directly to Europe. In 2003, the US invaded Iraq under false pretences. In 2009, Libya's Gaddafi proposed an alternative currency. We know from Hillary Clinton's leaked emails that this was one of the reasons for the invasion of Libya in 2010. For several years, China has sought to create an alternative to the dollar, the dollar-denominated global currency system (SWIFT). The relationship between China and Venezuela is important.

Marco Rubio made it clear after the invasion of Venezuela. "We will not allow the US opponents to control Venezuela's oil industry," he told NBC News. In this context, he mentioned China, Russia and Iran. "The Western Hemisphere is ours," he said without hesitation. This demand was hindered by the fact that Venezuela was an important trade partner of Beijing. Since 2000, China has loaned \$6 billion to Venezuela. Preventing the penetration of the Chinese economy into the Western Hemisphere, and thereby China's overall influence, is a major reason for the US attack, not just oil.

Everyone knows that Venezuela has a lot of oil. But Venezuela's crude oil refining is expensive. 75% of the 300 billion barrel reserve is Orinoco crude, which has high sulfur content, and to refine it, the Venezuelan oil industry will have to invest 85 billion in the next 6 years. For this, they need full confidence from international capital. It is difficult to say whether even American institutions will have such confidence. A big win for Trump is to deprive China of that oil. China buys 6,00,000 barrels of oil per day from Venezuela. If that stops, they will have to buy oil from someone else at a higher price, maybe with dollars.

We also need to situate the assault on the sovereignty of Venezuela in a wider context. In the recent past, Latin America had been the continent most prone to leftwing mass struggles as well as the election of left-wing governments. This aggressive reassertion of the Monroe doctrine is a warning to all of them, that if they hurt US interests sufficiently, if they are aligned with what the US sees as hostile powers, their sovereignty will have to take a back seat, and the US is ready to step in with gun boats, helicopters, commando units, and carry out mafia tactics on an international stage. In particular, this is also a part of the never given up US war on Cuba. The Cubans had been considerably relying on Venezuelan oil. For them, cutting it off would not be an irritant as it will be for China, but a much more serious attack. Moreover, if Trump getsaway with regime control in Venezuela, the US will be emboldened to go in for forcible occupation and regime change in Cuba. Let us never forget that the US which gags the Palestinian diaspora as anti-Semitic, has the Cuban diaspora, a rabid right-wing gang that includes Rubio, in positions of power and money.

Maduro's removal and resistance

Maduro was arrested and taken to the United States, where he was charged with drug trafficking. Maduro responded by saying he was a prisoner of war and could not be tried in an enemy court.

Trump and his team have already realized that the right-wing opposition cannot be brought to power, at least for now. The Supreme Court of Venezuela declared the vice president to be president pro tempore for 90 days. Trump is trying to pressure Maduro's former allies to work for the United States. But there is resistance.

The first prerequisite for a broad national unity against US colonialism is whether such a coalition will fight for the release of the Maduro couple? They were so easily captured that it is natural to question whether the army and the

administration of the country were betrayed. It is the responsibility of the new government to bring out who are the traitors and take action against them. Strengthening the mentality of the soldiers associated with him, because while many of them have died, not a single attacker has died. Trump has repeatedly said Rodriguez's government is cooperating with him. If they don't speak up against it, no resistance will be built around them. There is a resistance-oriented mindset in the country, but there is no clear leadership. The left-wing opposition, which has so far fought for democracy against Maduro, will also have to decide whether to abandon the demand for democracy and choose the "principal contradiction," or whether the condition of the alliance will be the expansion of democracy.

International Reactions and India:

The UN secretary general António Guterres was the first to raise concerns about the US action possibly disregarding international law, calling on countries to adhere to the UN charter. But government reactions have ranged from outright condemnations to quiet approvals, with some states questioning the means while welcoming the outcome. The split reaction lays bare a deeper problem – years of selective compliance have gradually eroded the authority of international law itself, to whatever extent it was accepted between roughly 1945 and 1991.

Under the UN Charter, the use of force against another state is prohibited except in cases of self-defence or with authorisation from the Security Council. Neither condition applies in this case. Yet, beyond declaratory condemnations, the international system appears largely powerless to respond. The Security Council held an emergency meeting on 6 January at Colombia's request. China, Russia, Venezuela, Brazil and Colombia itself, whose president has also faced US threats of suffering Maduro's fate, issued some of the strongest condemnations, framing the US intervention as a violation of the UN Charter. Most Europeans raised concerns but stopped

short of labelling it illegal. No resolution emerged, unsurprisingly given the likelihood of a US veto. Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz welcomed Maduro's fall in his early reactions, UK prime minister Keir Starmer has so far declined to condemn the operation while French president Emmanuel Macron has also left direct confrontation to his top ministers.

Unlike Malaysia and South Africa, which publicly criticised the US intervention and expressed solidarity with Venezuela, New Delhi's statement avoided taking sides. So, why did India, which positions itself as a leader of the Global South, not respond as forcefully? Michael Kugelman, an analyst on South Asian politics, wrote on X that this was based on pragmatism.

The day after the US action, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) issued a statement expressing "deep concern" over recent events in Venezuela and emphasising close monitoring of the situation.

"The recent developments in Venezuela are a matter of deep concern. We are closely monitoring the evolving situation there," the MEA said in a statement.

On Tuesday, in Luxembourg, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar reiterated the same. He urged all parties involved to prioritise the welfare and safety of the Venezuelan people. "We are concerned about the recent developments, and we appeal to all sides to arrive at a situation that serves the well-being and security of the people of Venezuela," he said.

In other words, India is following a transactional approach. During Operation Sindoos India received little US support. Possibly the Modi calculation is, by refusing to condemn the US in Venezuela India is buying US support for its next round of conflict with Pakistan or some other neighbour. This cringing attitude is likely to get little concrete benefit, because Trump does not see India as in any sense an equal or

near-equal partner in diplomacy.

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Trump's criminal attack on Venezuela – Statement by the Stop Trump Coalition

Donald Trump's regime has bombed Venezuela's capital and major urban areas in a further escalation of the USA's illegal and unlawful attacks on the country.

More than 100 people have been killed since the US began its strikes on Venezuelan boats in September 2025. It is unknown how many people have been killed in Trump's latest attacks on Venezuela today.

Trump also said that the US has abducted the country's leader Nicolás Maduro and removed him from the country. This is a blatant breach of international and democratic norms and, legally, an act of war. **It is for the Venezuelan people and only the Venezuelan people to remove their country's leader.**

Today's attacks follow the US bombing of Iran last year – and Trump's long-term backing, including arms, intelligence and diplomatic support, for Israel's genocide in Gaza. It is also part of a long, colonialist history of US military attacks on Latin America.

Trump has openly stated that his aims in Venezuela are regime change and the extraction of resources, including oil. The US's pretext that this is about drug-smuggling is pure fantasy and a cover to justify its criminal attacks.

This may be the beginning of a series of attacks, with a major US military buildup visible near Venezuela, including an aircraft carrier, warships and jets.

While Trump tries to paint himself as a 'peacemaker', he is constantly threatening a wide range of countries, including recently appointing an envoy with the explicit aim to annex Greenland.

Trump's bombing of Venezuela is a textbook example of what happens when Britain and other countries appease US-sanctioned terrorism.

Stop Trump Coalition condemns the bombing of Venezuela and calls for the British government to finally condemn the US for its warmongering.

Stop Trump calls on the UK government to seek an immediate UN Security Council meeting to demand an immediate end to the attacks on Venezuela and for Trump to be held to account.

[Stop Trump Coalition](#), 3 January 2026

Fatal Flaws in UK-Mauritius

“Joint Statement” on planned Treaty on Chagos

The “Joint Statement” that Pravind Jugnauth and Keir Starmer have concocted is obviously riddled with fatal flaws for Mauritius’ future. It is dangerous on all the main issues: decolonization, closing the USA’s military base, the elementary right to free movement over all the land and sea for all Mauritians including Chagossians, and thus the right to return for Chagossians. It is even a blow to Mauritian sovereignty, itself. So, the Treaty must be opposed. LALIT now puts the following issue on the agenda for the general elections: Full sovereignty to be exercised democratically over Chagos, and a date for base closure and clean-up! No to militarism! No to prolonged occupation or colonization!

In fact, taken as a whole, the 3 October Joint Statement is one big booby-trap for Mauritius. It prolongs colonization of the Republic of Mauritius, it denies the right to free movement by all Mauritians, it denies the free right of return, it prolongs military occupation and even puts base closure and thus peace outside of Mauritius’ democratic control in our own land, it puts sovereignty up for bilateral negotiation outside the established norms of international law. So, it must be opposed. The victory of the historic ICJ judgment of 2019 would be shattered by such a Treaty. It is a blatant move by the UK-USA imperialists to steal a good part of Mauritius.

Perfidious Albion is at it again. Doing America’s dirty work. And another fawning Mauritian leader is at it again, too, this time as leader of an independent State, while being egged on, it seems, by the Modi Government. And we deplore the inability of the Mauritian opposition to oppose the military occupation head-on as the prolonged colonization it is.

The Exact Wording

The Agreement purports to be the result of bilateral negotiation, yet the two signatories make a point of stating in the document, that they also have “the full support and assistance of our close partners, the United States of America and the Republic of India.” Now we know the real reason India’s Foreign Minister Jaishankar was here in July for a lightning visit that seemed, at the time, to be for reasons vague and ephemeral. The real reason was obviously to get Mauritius to agree to this Joint Statement. India is presumably getting its share in terms of American arms sales, use of Diego Garcia base for its navy, and cover for its secret Agalega base.

It is pitiful when big empires begin to collapse. Their moral core rots publicly. Every decision they take is the wrong one. Let us explain. The USA and UK are supposedly the closest geopolitical allies in the world. Yet circumstances pit them against each other over Diego. The UK-USA were so isolated at the UN General assembly that they only got three countries to vote with them, once Maldives withdrew its vote: Israel, Hungary and Australia’s previous right-wing government.

At the same time, Britain and the USA sound either half-witted or mad when they stand up and shriek in support of Ukraine’s right not to be occupied by Russia. The exposure of the USA’s genocide alongside Israel against the militarily occupied Palestine is also a source of mutual blaming – especially when at the ICJ the very same issues are cross-referenced in the Mauritius’ case against the UK for its colonization and military occupation and the Palestinian case (put in by Nicaragua) against Israel for the very same thing. So, the UK is in a corner, and the USA can’t get it out of the corner. And they have difficulty coming to any consensus.

And, even on what seem small things, they fall out. Yes, the

USA recently went ahead and denied a British judge access to Diego Garcia when she had to be there to judge a British Indian Ocean Territories (BIOT) Supreme Court case about 64 refugees being held illegally there. So, the UK state was cornered on this human rights issue that exposed its continued colonization and military occupation of Mauritius. Now, "Great" Britain's judiciary does not take kindly to this kind of thing. It is not up to Royal standards of a United "Kingdom", so to speak. So, the "special relationship" starts to fall apart. The UK Brexit vote was thoroughly tampered with by the USA's right-wing politicians like Trump's advisor Steve Bannon, and so US interference and Brexit have bankrupted the UK. As it is, the UK, like the rest of Europe, is suffering from a refugee crisis provoked by the USA. It is American wars that cause people to flee from bombed out societies and ruined infrastructure in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and also from Libya where nearly 2 million non-Libyan Africans worked. And this has led to a political crisis, in the UK. This crisis caused the Conservative Government to set up a far-fetched and illegal scheme in Rwanda to "out-source" the UK's refugee problem to another country.

The UK and USA rightly anticipated there would be a huge immigration crisis around the BIOT and the military base on Diego – just as there is on Lampedusa in Sicily and on Spain's Canary Islands, and in particular when the USA is busy sparking war against China via Taiwan. The 64 Sri Lankans were merely the early-warning signal of a "flood", to use the right-wing language, of refugees. So, in reality the American base is threatened not by China or Russia, as the UK and USA pretend it is, but by 64 poor Sri Lankans, some of them children, shipwrecked there. It shows how every bit of protest against the imperialists, when their empires start to topple, counts. And it also shows what the UK-USA empire has come to. The Rwanda scheme – already billed to cost British VAT-payers some 4 billion pounds – was shut down by the new Labour Government for being against international law. But, the UK

judiciary still had to deal with the 64 Sri Lankans without transferring them to Britain. This became the last straw.

So, dire circumstances lead to dire actions, like the UK trying to both “give” (to quote the international press) and “keep” its sovereignty over the place the USA, in fact, controls! It is this confusion that has produced this flawed “Joint Statement”.

Here are the flaws of the Joint Statement, concentrating on paragraph 3:

While the Joint Statement says at paragraph 3 that “Mauritius is sovereign over Chagos, including Diego Garcia,” we must remember that its first paragraph described the document as being about not “sovereignty” itself but about “the exercise of sovereignty”. The wording implies there are two different things: Who “is sovereign”? The document says Mauritius is. But who has “the exercise of sovereignty”? Are they one and the same? The two expressions seem, at first view, to mean the same thing. But in the Joint Statement they definitely do not. In any case, this kind of formulation is so bizarre, especially coming from the perfidious Albion, that it ought to set off alarm bells in our heads.

Here is the first problem: the meat of the third paragraph reads, “the United Kingdom will be authorised to exercise with respect to Diego Garcia the sovereign rights ... of Mauritius required to ensure the continued operation of the [US military] base”. Let us deal with this in grammatical terms. In black and white, it says “the UK will be authorised to exercise ... the sovereign rights ... of Mauritius”. So, Mauritius is sovereign, as the document has already said, but the UK is authorised to exercise this Mauritian sovereignty! What is this?

So, here we see the perfidy of the words “exercise of sovereignty” that we mentioned from the first paragraph, which

declares what the Joint Statement is about: it is about the exercise of sovereignty, not about sovereignty. Yes, believe it or not, Mauritius is not “sovereign over Chagos, including Diego Garcia” as promised earlier in paragraph three, because the UK will be authorised to exercise the sovereign rights of Mauritius, and this is what the Joint Statement is about. No less.

And, to mask all this perfidy, the formulation is intentionally clumsy in another way. Not only is this authorization for the UK to exercise Mauritius’ sovereign rights supposed to be only “with respect to Diego Garcia” (pretending to spare the other outer Chagos islands, and leave them to Mauritius’ sovereignty) but also, added on afterwards to include we suppose literally “anything anywhere” concerning those sovereign rights “required to ensure the continued operation of the base”. This means it may be “with respect to Diego Garcia” or it may also include anything “required to ensure the continued operation of the base”.

We know that the USA has always objected to Mauritius controlling not only Diego Garcia, but any of the other islands. But now, in respect to Diego Garcia, any form of sovereignty that is “required to ensure the continued operation of the base” will be exercised by the UK. Of course, what exactly this means will be decided later by ... none other than the USA. Just like the USA decided to kick the British judge out of BIOT. So Mauritius has what is left of sovereignty when Britain has exercised any sovereignty “required to ensure the continued operation of the base”, and the USA will decide on the meaning of the bland “with respect to Diego Garcia” en temps et lieu.

Other oddities in this paragraph must now also be looked at. Where it says, “the UK will be authorised to exercise ... sovereign rights ...”, after the word “rights”, there are the two words “and authorities”. This, we can only guess, is to ensure all the “rights” Mauritius has, as well as all the

“authorities” it has, meaning all the powers it has, “powers” flowing from sovereignty, will be authorised to be exercised by the UK.

The next oddity is the frank, “For an initial period of 99 years.” Let’s deal with the word “initial”, it means that what Britain means is that its exercise of sovereignty will last for “ONE CENTURY”, but that is only to begin with. This formulation is a synonym for “forever” – unless we are talking geological time, and the first lap lasts, as it is, “... well into the next century”.

The third oddity is ensuring that Mauritius, the weak partner, will agree with the strong partner, the UK to submit to the exigencies of the really big masked partner, the USA. Read this paragraph hidden in the middle of paragraph 3: “At the same time, both our countries are committed to the need, and will agree in the treaty, to ensure the long-term, secure and effective operation of the existing base on Diego Garcia which plays a vital role in regional and global security.” Decisions about what will ensure the “secure and effective operation of the existing base” will be made presumably by the USA.

The blood money in exchange for the war machine on our land

There are two paragraphs mainly about money. They are vague and humiliating for Mauritius. “The treaty will address wrongs of the past”, the Joint Statement says. How? An apology for stealing the land? An apology for hounding out the Mauritians living there on that Mauritian land? Or are they talking about money? Who knows?

And it goes on “and demonstrate the commitment of both parties to support the welfare of Chagossians. Mauritius will now be free to implement a programme of resettlement on the islands of the Chagos Archipelago, other than Diego Garcia, and the UK

will capitalise a new trust fund, as well as separately provide other support, for the benefit of Chagossians.” No mention of free movement for anyone. No mention of all the ordinary aspects of sovereignty. Can Mauritius build ports or an airstrip? Or will this affect the “secure and effective operation of the existing base”? The wording is absurd.

“It will also herald a new era of economic, security and environmental partnership between our two nations. To enable this partnership the UK will provide a package of financial support to Mauritius. This will include an indexed annual payment for the duration of the agreement and the establishment of a transformational infrastructure partnership, underpinned by UK grant funding, to deliver strategic projects generating meaningful change for ordinary Mauritians and boosting economic development across the country.” This is the bribe. This is the blood money. This is what aims to draw the Mauritian people into moral degradation by agreement to it!

Then the Joint Statement goes on, “More broadly, the UK and Mauritius will cooperate on environmental protection, maritime security, combating illegal fishing, irregular migration and drug and people trafficking within the Chagos Archipelago, with the shared objective of securing and protecting one of the world’s most important marine environments. This will include the establishment of a Mauritian Marine Protected Area.” This is Mauritius will “cooperate” with the UK to do all this, including a “Mauritian” MPA, as opposed to Mauritius doing all this independently and in a sovereign way.

Conclusion

Let us end with a simple quote from the Mauritian Constitution. Section 1 reads “Mauritius shall be a sovereign democratic state”

and Section 111 reads,

“Mauritius includes:

“(a) The islands of Mauritius, Rodrigues, Agalega, Cargados Carajos, Tromelin, and the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia and any other island comprised in the State of Mauritius;

“(b) the territorial sea and the air space above the territorial sea and the islands mentioned in section (a);

“(c) the continental shelf; ...”

LATIT, Wednesday 9 October 2024

<https://www.lalitmauritius.org/>

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