

# *Russia rejects U.S. reaction to military cooperation with Venezuela*

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Moscow, December 12 (RHC)-- Russia has rejected U.S. reaction to military cooperation with Venezuela. Moscow sent military planes to the South American country to show its willingness to defend Caracas against a foreign military intervention. But the deployment did not go unnoticed by the White House as Mike Pompeo, U.S. secretary of state, took a jab at both nations labeling them “corrupt” and accused them of allegedly making their people “suffer.”

The Kremlin responded to what it calls "inappropriate" and "non-diplomatic" comments by Pompeo. The U.S. secretary of state's comments were issued in the framework of a Russia-Venezuela joint cooperation which does not accommodate U.S. interests, and puts its hegemony over the region in question.

“Two TU-160 bombers, an An-124 heavy military transport plane and an Il-62 long-haul plane of the Russian aerospace forces that took off from aerodromes in Russia have landed at the Maiquet at ‘Simon Bolivar’ International Airport of the Venezuelan capital city,” according to Russia’s defense ministry.

The Russian servicemen were met by the honor guard of Venezuela’s air force. They discussed “combined operational flights.”

“We are getting prepared to defend Venezuela if it is needed,” and “we will do it with our friends who advocate respect-based relations between states,” stated Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino Lopez, after the landing.

The operational flights to be held between both nations are considered to be a “demonstration of strength,” by Venezuela’s defense ministry.

“Military-technical cooperation is one of many areas of our cooperation. Over the past years it has been developing very fruitful,” stated Vladimir Zaemsky, Russia’s ambassador to Venezuela, Tuesday.

The deployment of the Russian warplanes follows Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro’s visit to Russia last week. Another Russia-Venezuela meeting is being prepared to discuss new joint projects. “These projects will provide great assistance in developing mutually beneficial relations between Russia and Venezuela,” stated Zaemsky.

The TU-160 bomber is the largest supersonic (Mach 2+) combat aircraft in the world and it was designed by the Soviet Union. The vessel is capable of carrying nuclear as well as conventional missiles. The bomber is considered to be “long-range” as it can cover distances of more than 12,000 km without having to refuel.

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