

# *Military incursion into Venezuela described as provocation*

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Caracas, July 16 (RHC)-- Venezuelan Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino called the incursion of the U.S. ship USS Pinckney (DDG-91) a provocation to undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the South American country.

on his Twitter account, the defense minister also said that the Southern Command's statements about the illegal incursion into waters near Venezuela are "childish, funny and at the same time sadly shameful and insane."

"I claim the maturity and professionalism of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces (BNF) in the face of those irresponsible acts and I repeat as I said in Carabobo: if they cross the red line they will receive a strong response for our sovereignty," the minister said.

In the same line was pronounced earlier by the strategic operational commander, Remigio Ceballos, who assured that the FANB is prepared to guarantee Venezuela's sovereignty. He stated that the Venezuelan troops, together with the people and its Bolivarian Militia, will guarantee the defense of the country in the air, on land and at sea against all threats.

The statements made by the high officials follow the incursion of the U.S. warship only 16.1 nautical miles (30 kilometers) from the coast of the South American country, denounced this Thursday by the

Venezuelan government.

Regarding this action, the Venezuelan Executive underlined that the furtive entry of the ship in jurisdictional waters violates the International Maritime Law and can only be qualified as an act of provocation.

The text refers that such incidents are taking place as a result of the recent visit of President Donald Trump to the military command in the state of Florida, "in his desperate campaign to attract the Latin vote in that state in exchange for the permanent and illegal aggression against Venezuela."

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