

# *Venezuela denounces presence of U.S. warship off coast*

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**The U.S. ship reported is the USS William P. Lawrence (DDG-110) of the Navy's Arleigh Burke class. (Photo: Xinhua)**

Caracas, October 1 (RHC)-- The Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs has denounced the intimidating intentions of the U.S. Southern Command, which positioned a guided missile destroyer in the Venezuelan Contiguous Zone at a distance of 16.1 nautical miles from the coasts of the South American nation.

The U.S. ship reported is the USS William P. Lawrence (DDG-110) of the Navy's Arleigh Burke class.

Through a communiqué, the Foreign Ministry detailed that the U.S. warship recognized the authority of the Venezuelan State when it responded to the radio communications of the Bolivarian Navy, alleging that it was carrying out patrol operations against drug trafficking.

Likewise, the document of the governmental authority says that "the use of a warship with long range missile capacity to carry out supposed operations of this nature is deeply surprising." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasized that this is clearly a "deliberate act of provocation, which is erratic and

childish." It added that this action "highlights the lack of professional rigor of the U.S. Southern Command."

Likewise, the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasizes that the Bolivarian National Armed Forces carries out systematic and permanent patrols in its territorial and jurisdictional waters in its effective fight against the scourge of drug trafficking.

"Venezuela expresses that it will not fall into absurd provocations that intend to alter the peace and security of the Venezuelan people and the brother Caribbean peoples, while reiterating its unwavering commitment to guarantee and protect its sacred sovereignty and territorial integrity, always in compliance with international law," the declaration concludes.

A similar provocation occurred on July 16th this year, when the U.S. warship USS Pinckney entered waters just off the coast of Venezuela.

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