

Venezuelan right-wing sought Colombian paramilitaries' support to overthrow Hugo Chavez in 2002

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Colombian authorities take the fingerprints of Salvatore Mancuso (L), 2024. Photo: X/ @NoticiasBQ

Caracas, July 8 (RHC)-- On Monday, Venezuela News published the full interview that journalist Pedro Carvajalino conducted with the former commander of the paramilitary United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), Salvatore Mancuso.

In the interview, Mancuso revealed details about the Venezuelan far-right's plans to destabilize the administration of the late President Hugo Chavez in 2002. More specifically, Mancuso disclosed that the Venezuelan opposition sought to execute a coup d'état with the support of Colombian armed groups.

"There was significant interest from Venezuelan politicians and businessmen who came to Colombia seeking support from the paramilitaries to overthrow President Chavez... With the backing of some Venezuelan military members, they wanted to bomb Miraflores and kill Chavez at a bankers' meeting," Mancuso said.

Among the Venezuelan far-right politicians mentioned by Mancuso are Henrique Capriles, Oswaldo Alvarez Paz, Zingg Machado, and Alfredo Catalan. To carry out their plans, the Venezuelan far-right also sought advice on torture techniques from the Israeli mercenary Yair Klein, according to the interview published by Venezuela News

"They were taught to use different methods, which indeed involved torture, such as placing a bag over the head, water, and all these things," Mancuso recalled.

Let's remember that the opposition leader María Corina Machado has repeatedly requested the intervention of countries such as Israel or Colombia in Venezuela. All of this as part of her attempt to overthrow the democratically established Government.

Given the destabilizing plans that the extreme right seeks to execute, Mancuso called not to get involved in processes that generate violence and war. On the other hand, he said that there is a path of dialogue.

"No one wins the war. We all lose. It is not correct that political differences be settled through weapons."

Regarding the ongoing situation in Colombia, the former paramilitary said that the internal war has extended due to the actions of far-right figures such as former President Alvaro Uribe, who even betrayed his former partners.

"Of course, Uribe betrayed us. He didn't want us to sign the agreements we reached in Ralito. I tell Uribe that just as we were partners in war, he should help us be partners in peace," Mancuso stressed.

The former AUC leader returned to Colombia in February after having been in a U.S. prison serving an 18-year sentence for crimes related to drug trafficking. Once on Colombian territory, he was placed in the custody of the Penal and Prison Institute of Colombia (INPEC).

On Monday, however, the Attorney General's Office announced that Mancuso is not now being investigated for any crime and may be released. Currently, he fears for his life due to the revelations he made about Uribe's far-right political apparatus.

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