

U.S. Army to Train Paraguay Soldiers Amid Militarization Concerns



Asuncion, May 13 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Special United States army forces will arrive in Paraguay this month to train local soldiers as part of a bilateral agreement between the two countries, in what some analysts call a step towards U.S. militarization of the region.

The U.S. trainers from the North Carolina National Guard were given the green light by Paraguay's Chamber of Senators this week to bring in equipment, weapons and ammunition to be used in joint exercises.

The announcement comes as some analysts raise concerns about the presence of the U.S. forces in Paraguay – where recently a new Emergency Operations Center has also been established in the north of the country under the control of the U.S. military. The area known as the Gran Chaco region, which is rich in hydrocarbons, particularly oil, has also been a point of contention between neighbors, particularly

between Paraguay and Bolivia during the Chaco War (1928-1935).

According to Pablo Ruiz, a member of the Observers of the School of the Americas, Washington is “militarizing” the region in a strategic way to take over the area's natural resources. “Their geopolitical interests that have to do with access to resources,” such as “oil, freshwater, biodiversity or minerals,” said Ruiz, reported *Resumen Latino Americano*. This is essential “to continue to maintain U.S. rule” of the region, says the academic.

The Latin American countries such as Colombia, Chile, Peru, Panama and Paraguay have long felt U.S. pressures for “continued militarization,” says the academic. The U.S. training forces are scheduled to arrive in Paraguay on May 31 and June 1, and will remain in the country for the entire month of June.

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