

Donald Trump pushed for U.S. invasion of Venezuela in 2017



Washington, July 5 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump reportedly floated the idea of invading Venezuela to both senior administration officials and world leaders multiple times in the past year. According to the Associated Press, Trump first proposed taking over the country to top aides at an August 10th meeting held in the Oval Office to discuss U.S. sanctions on the country.

The previously undisclosed meeting, on which the White House has declined to comment, was anonymously revealed by a senior administration official speaking with the Associated Press. Trump's suggestion reportedly stunned people at the meeting, including Rex Tillerson and H.R. McMaster, then the secretary of state and the national security adviser.

The AP said those in the room, including McMaster, then spent five minutes taking turns warning Trump how military action could backfire and lose him support among other Latin American governments. They raised arguments against such an action, but Trump nonetheless persisted. He reportedly pointed to the invasions of Panama and Grenada during the 1980s, claiming they were examples of successful military interventions in the region. And the next day, Trump announced that a "military option" was possible in Venezuela.

Despite his aides' warnings, Trump reportedly continued to talk of a "military option" to remove Nicolas Maduro as Venezuela's president. At a private dinner held around a UN General Assembly meeting in

New York one month later, the AP said, Trump proceeded to ask the leaders of four Latin American countries whether they would accept military action. The only one of the leaders named by the AP was Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos.

Trump reportedly prefaced the conversation with the leaders with the phrase: "My staff told me not to say this." He then went around the table to ask the leaders whether they were certain they didn't want the U.S. to invade Venezuela, to which each leader said clearly that they were opposed to an invasion.

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