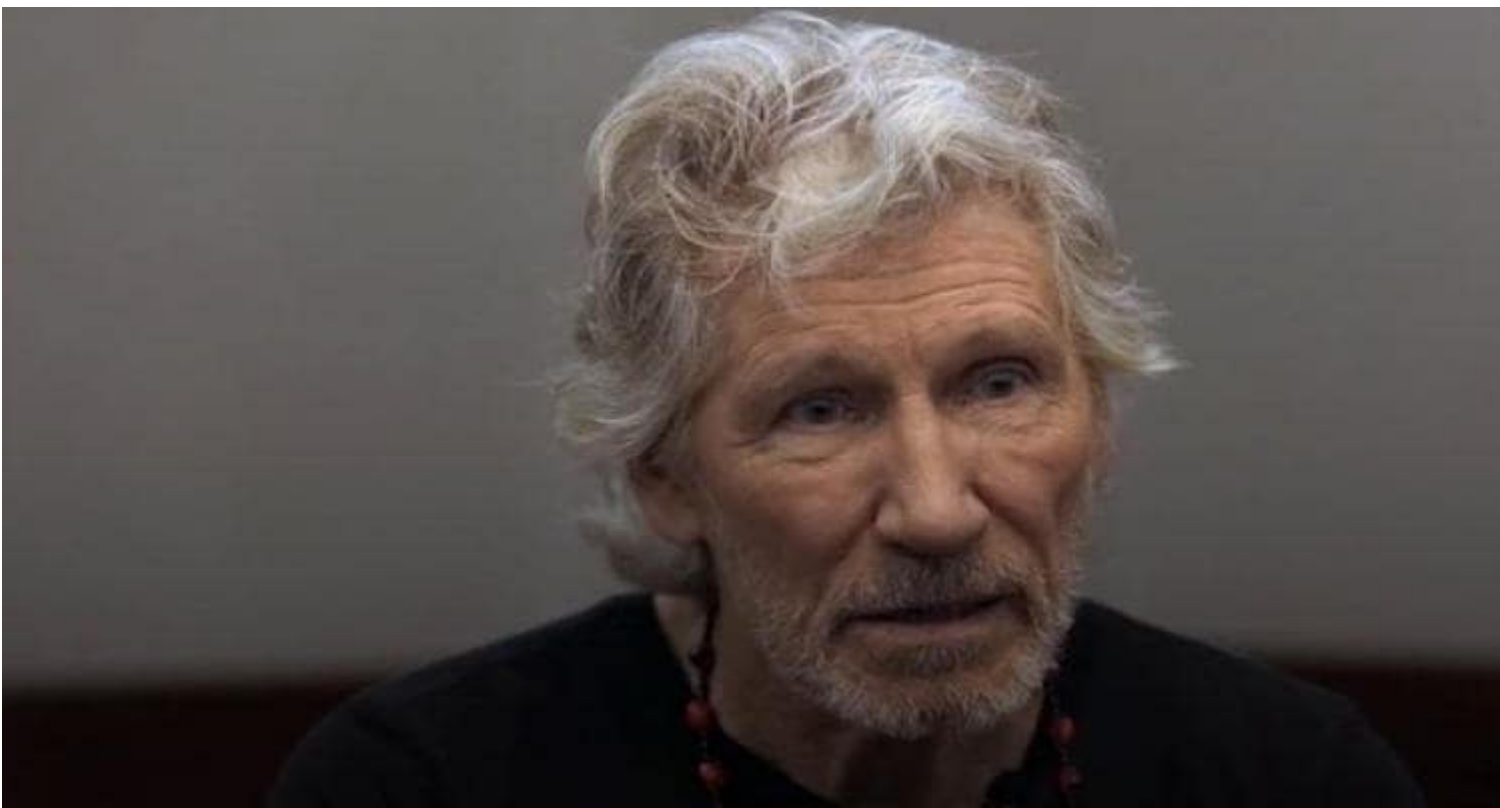


British musician Roger Waters slams interventionist concert on Colombian border with Venezuela



Caracas, February 21 (RHC)-- British rock group Pink Floyd co-founder Roger Waters has slammed an upcoming "Live Aid"-style concert to raise funds for so-called humanitarian aid for Venezuela, calling the event a U.S.-backed effort to tarnish the Maduro administration.

In a video circulating on the Internet, the 75-year-old rock star said: "It has nothing to do with humanitarian aid at all. It has to do with Richard Branson... having bought the U.S. saying: 'We have decided to take over Venezuela, for whatever our reasons may be.'"

Billionaire Richard Branson is backing the Friday show in the Colombian border city of Cucuta with a fundraising target of \$100 million to provide food and medicine for Venezuelans who they say are "suffering" widespread shortages. Latin singers Alejandro Sanz, Nacho, Luis Fonsi and Maluma have so far confirmed they will perform in the concert, which has evoked comparisons to Irish rock star Bob Geldof's 1985 global "Live Aid" concert to raise money for famine relief in Ethiopia.

Observers say "Venezuela Aid Live" is part of a broader Western interventionist effort disguised as "humanitarian aid" organized by Venezuela's right-wing opposition, which is supported by the far-right governments of the United States and Brazil along with other conservative governments in the region.

The opposition plans to bring aid into Venezuela on Saturday from collection points in neighboring countries including Cucuta via sea and land, despite the fact that the government of President Maduro not giving authorization for such action.

Roger Waters, the British rock group's principal songwriter who penned many of the hit songs on the hugely popular albums "The Dark Side of the Moon" and "The Wall," said the relief effort was part of Washington's attempts to paint a false picture of Venezuela to justify regime change. To date, there is "no mayhem, no murder, no apparent dictatorship" in Venezuela, he said.

"Do we really want Venezuela to turn in to another Iraq or Syria or Libya? I don't and neither do the Venezuelan people," Waters wrote.

This is not the first time Waters has weighed into South American politics. During a concert in Brazil ahead of presidential elections there last year, Waters spoke out against then far-right candidate Jair Bolsonaro, who is now president. He has also come out in support of the Palestinian cause and others relating to those fighting against oppression and capitalist and neo-liberal governments and corporations.

Maduro's government this week announced two concerts on Friday and Saturday just across the border from Cucuta to rival Branson's "Aid Live" show.

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