

Top U.S. navy commander reveals U.S. is preparing for post-Maduro Venezuela



Rio de Janeiro, August 21 (RHC)-- The chief of U.S. military's Southern Command has unveiled that Washington's military establishment is focusing on preparations for what he referred to as "the day after" the downfall of Venezuela's "isolated" President Nicolas Maduro amid Trump administration's persisting regime-change policy towards the Central American nation.

Insisting on the importance of maintaining "continuous pressure" on what he described as the "illegitimate regime" in Caracas, Navy Admiral Craig Faller further warned against Venezuela's "formidable weapon system" while also slamming Russia, Cuba and China for backing Maduro's government in face of surging US-led measures to force its overthrow.

According to a report by Associated Press, Faller made the remarks in the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro where the U.S. military is leading the annual UNITAS naval war games with allied Latin American forces. The military leader also expressed concerns about what he called the growing influence of China in Brazil amid reports that Beijing has emerged as the largest foreign investor in South America's biggest country.

Faller had earlier addressed reporters about Washington's persisting efforts against Maduro's administration, saying: "The U.S. government focus continues to be to place focused and targeted pressure on an illegitimate regime to ensure there's a transition to a legitimate, democratic government."

The United States Navy is "ready" to act in favor of Washington's interests in Venezuela, says a top American commander. He further suggested that the UNITAS war games also serve to "send a message to the world of what democracies that work together can do across a range of complex threats."

U.S. President Donald Trump had previously asserted that his administration is considering a "blockade or quarantine" against the Latin American nation. The development came just days after defense chiefs of Russia and Venezuela signed an agreement in Moscow overseeing visits by warships of both nations to each other's ports amid continuing U.S. efforts to undermine the government in Caracas.

President Maduro had vowed during a rally in Caracas a week earlier that his nation was ready to resist and "defeat" Washington's "imperialist blockade" against Venezuela.

Washington has repeatedly demanded that Moscow withdraw its support for Maduro. Russia has rejected the request, insisting that the U.S. is attempting to instigate a coup against the Venezuelan president in defiance of international law.

The U.S. threatened Russia with new sanctions last month over its support for Maduro. The White House's point man for Venezuela, Elliott Abrams, said the new sanctions against Moscow would be announced on July 25.

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