

# *Venezuela denounces links between criminal groups and Colombian authorities*

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**Jorge Rodriguez said that in the coming days more information on these events will be provided. | Photo: AN?**

Caracas, February 18 (RHC)-- The president of the National Assembly of Venezuela, Jorge Rodríguez, denounced on Thursday the links between criminal groups that operated in Venezuela and are neutralized, the Colombian authorities and the former opposition deputy Juan Guaidó.

He revealed that these groups received high-caliber weapons, equipped with telescopic sights, grenade launchers and other features. He affirmed that they all come from Colombia, and that if their origin is traced, it will be confirmed that they originally come from the United States.

Rodríguez said that Venezuelan authorities have reliable evidence that leaders of these criminal groups linked to Colombian drug trafficking and paramilitarism traveled systematically to that country, trained there and re-entered Venezuela.

He said that the plan of these groups included murdering civilians, smuggling drugs, kidnapping people and extorting, and with those funds buying more weapons in Colombia. Rodríguez assured that all these formations will be neutralized and that gangs have already been dismantled in Guárico, Petare, Sucre, Caracas and Aragua.

He revealed that these groups had precise instructions to create a distraction for the development of the invasion of Venezuela called Operation Gideon, in May 2021. He added that sufficient evidence is available on these facts, confirmed even from the confession of a captured sniper, Stalin José Páez Mujica, who explained that the criminal leaders known as aliases El Coqui and El Conejo traveled every month to Colombia to receive training.

During the appearance, Rodríguez denounced that they used an NGO named Pies Descalzos, registered in Colombia and supposedly serving vulnerable people, but in reality they used its headquarters to stockpile weapons and recruit young people, including children, for dirty war functions against Venezuela.

Jorge Rodríguez made it clear that the US and other western countries sabotaged the dialogue between the Bolivarian Revolution and sectors of the right wing, and that now, with absolute hypocrisy and cynicism, they try to present themselves as interested in that dialogue. He also pointed out that Colombian President Iván Duque no longer has time to invade Venezuela, but he never had the guts to do so.

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