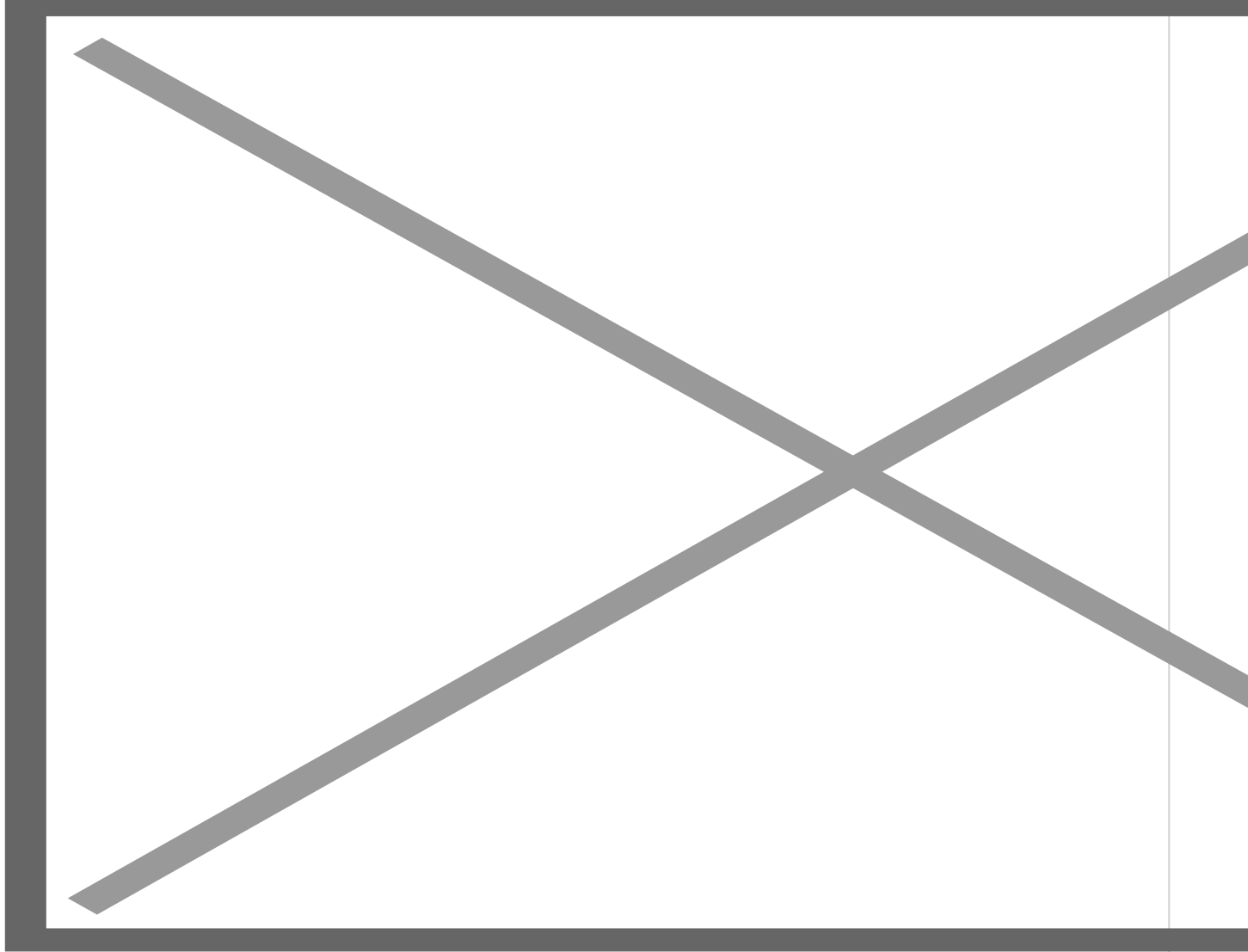


Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino affirms Venezuela will not tolerate imperial intimidation

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Venezuelan Defense Minister General Vladimir Padrino. X/ @EI_Cooperante

Caracas, September 13 (RHC)-- The Bolivarian National Armed Forces (FANB) on Friday strongly rejected the U.S. sanctions against 16 high-ranking officials, including four Venezuelan military officers.

Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino described these actions as an attempt by U.S. imperialism to “twist the arm of sovereign nations,” asserting that the offensive extends beyond the FANB and affects other institutions such as the National Electoral Council (CNE) and the Supreme Court of Justice (TSJ).

“We cannot be blackmailed nor will we be intimidated by the imperial scum,” he said, expressing solidarity with the Venezuelan public officials and military personnel who are victims of the arbitrary sanctions imposed by the U.S. Treasury Department.

“These sanctions are not random. Military leaders have been carefully selected. They are those who, with their physical and moral strength, have stepped forward to give the country the necessary force to move forward,” Padrino emphasized, highlighting that the U.S. measures are promoted by the Venezuelan far right, which is characterized by “its extremism and inclination toward disrespect for sovereignty.”

“They believe we have a price. They believe these measures will succeed in bringing the FANB to its knees and breaking its patriotic spirit and loyalty to the homeland. The U.S. measures are not intended to punish but to change the Venezuelan government, which was legitimately elected by the will of the people,” the Defense Minister said.

Padrino also rejected the “gross interference that the empire tries to perpetuate, assuming the role of global police,” and assured that Venezuela will not tolerate sanctions that are clearly contrary to international law and the self-determination of peoples.

“Those who attempt to offend or tarnish our integrity will encounter our unity and determination to defend ourselves,” the Bolivarian general emphasized, explaining that U.S. threats are part of a psychological campaign that combines terrorism and misinformation.

Finally, Defense Minister Padrino urged maintaining the civil-military unity to preserve Venezuela’s sovereignty under the leadership of President Nicolas Maduro.

On Thursday, the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) established sanctions against high-ranking Venezuelan officials, accusing them of obstructing presidential elections. Among the victims of imperialist arrogance are Domingo Hernandez, operational commander of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces; Elio Estrada, general commander of the Bolivarian National Guard; Johan Hernandez, commander of REDI Capital; and Asdrubal Brito, commander of the FANB Command Action Group.

[SOURCE: teleSUR]

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