

# *Venezuelan President declares state of exception in border area*

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Caracas, Aug 22, (RHC), – On Friday, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro declared a 60-day State of Exception for the Venezuelan municipalities of Bolivar, Ureña, Junin, Libertad and Independencia in Tachira state.

These municipalities are all along the border with Colombia. Maduro further announced that the border with Colombia will remain closed beyond the 72 hours that were initially declared by Venezuela after two of its soldiers were attacked near the border Wednesday night.

The Governor of Tachira, José Gregorio Vielma Mora, has been charged with overseeing the state of exception. Maduro's declarations come amid growing fears in Venezuela about the role of paramilitaries in seeding violence across the country, where at least 30 paramilitary groups are operating. The government has increased its military presence in the border, mainly around Tachira state, in the south west of the country. The state of exception aims to combat crime, paramilitarism, and smuggling of Venezuelan goods across the border.

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