



U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Division

January 5, 2026

VIA ECF

Lyle W. Cayce, Clerk of Court
United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
Office of the Clerk
F. Edward Herbert Building
600 S. Maestri Place, Suite 115
New Orleans, LA 70130

RE: *W.M.M., et al., v. Trump, et al., 25-10534 (en banc)*

Dear Mr. Cayce:

Appellees respectfully submit this letter pursuant to Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 28(j) to advise the Court of an indictment against co-conspirators Nicholas Maduro, the leader of Tren De Aragua (“TdA”) Hector Rusthenford Guerrero Flores, and several of Maduro’s family members and high-ranking officials. Ex. A. Among other charges, Maduro and his high-ranking officials are alleged to have “worked directly with” several “narco-terrorist organizations” to funnel deadly drugs into the United States, including “TdA, which controls a criminal network able to assist with the transportation of cocaine within Venezuela and on the Venezuelan coast.” *Id.* ¶¶ 20, 24.

The indictment reinforces the Proclamation’s findings that the Maduro Regime and TdA have formed a “hybrid criminal state” directed by the Regime. This significant development further refutes Petitioners’ argument that the Government no longer treats TdA as entwined with the Maduro Regime. Indeed, in announcing the apprehension and indictment of Maduro, the President made clear that Maduro has “waged a ceaseless campaign of violence, terror, and subversion against the United States of America, threatening not only our people, but the stability of the entire region.” Ex. B at 8:07-8:27. In particular, “Maduro sent savage and murderous gangs, including the bloodthirsty prison gang, Tren de Aragua, to terrorize American communities nationwide” through murder and taking “over apartment complexes.” *Id.* at 8:27-9:24. The President emphasized that “Tren de Aragua... [was] sent by Maduro to terrorize our people,” providing examples of Americans victimized by their

terror campaign. *Id.* at 11:41-12:51. These new developments underscore the Maduro Regime's control over TdA and TdA's violent invasion or predatory incursion on American soil. As a result, it is even clearer that the President's invocation of the Alien Enemies Act was part of a high-level national security mission that exists outside the realm of judicial interference.

Respectfully submitted,

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EXHIBIT A

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS,
DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN,
RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN,
CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO,
NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA,
a/k/a “Nicolásito,”
a/k/a “The Prince,” and
HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES,
a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,”

Defendants.

**SEALED SUPERSEDING
INDICTMENT**

S4 11 Cr. 205 (AKH)

The Grand Jury charges:

INTRODUCTION

1. For over 25 years, leaders of Venezuela have abused their positions of public trust and corrupted once-legitimate institutions to import tons of cocaine into the United States.

2. NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, the defendant, is at the forefront of that corruption and has partnered with his co-conspirators to use his illegally obtained authority and the institutions he corroded to transport thousands of tons of cocaine to the United States. Since his early days in Venezuelan government, MADURO MOROS has tarnished every public office he has held. As a member of Venezuela’s National Assembly, MADURO MOROS moved loads of cocaine under the protection of Venezuelan law enforcement. As Venezuela’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, MADURO MOROS provided Venezuelan diplomatic passports to drug traffickers and facilitated diplomatic cover for planes used by money launderers to repatriate drug proceeds from Mexico to Venezuela. As Venezuela’s President and now-*de facto* ruler, MADURO MOROS

allows cocaine-fueled corruption to flourish for his own benefit, for the benefit of members of his ruling regime, and for the benefit of his family members.

3. NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, the defendant, now sits atop a corrupt, illegitimate government that, for decades, has leveraged government power to protect and promote illegal activity, including drug trafficking. That drug trafficking has enriched and entrenched Venezuela's political and military elite, including Minister of the Interior, Justice and Peace DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, the defendant, and former Minister of the Interior and Justice RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the defendant. That massive-scale drug trafficking has also concentrated power and wealth in the hands of MADURO MOROS's family, including his wife, the purported First Lady of Venezuela CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, the defendant, and MADURO MOROS's son, member of Venezuela's National Assembly NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a "Nicolasito," a/k/a "The Prince," the defendant. This cycle of narcotics-based corruption lines the pockets of Venezuelan officials and their families while also benefiting violent narco-terrorists who operate with impunity on Venezuelan soil and who help produce, protect, and transport tons of cocaine to the United States.

4. At various times since in or about 1999, Venezuelan officials, including NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, and RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the defendants, have partnered with narco-terrorists from the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* ("FARC"), *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* ("ELN"), the Sinaloa Cartel, the Zetas, and *Tren de Aragua* ("TdA"), including TdA's leader, HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a "Niño Guerrero," the defendant. In sum, MADURO MOROS and his co-conspirators have, for decades, partnered with some of the most violent and prolific drug traffickers and narco-terrorists in the world, and relied on corrupt officials

throughout the region, to distribute tons of cocaine to the United States.

THE DEFENDANTS

5. NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, the defendant, a Venezuelan citizen, was previously the President of Venezuela, and is now, having remained in power despite losses in recent elections, the *de facto* but illegitimate ruler of the country. MADURO MOROS also previously held a seat in Venezuela's National Assembly between in or about 2000 and in or about 2006, acted as the Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs between in or about 2006 and in or about 2013, and acted as the Vice President of Venezuela in or about 2013. MADURO MOROS succeeded to the Venezuelan presidency after former President Hugo Chávez died in or about 2013 and, during MADURO MOROS's own presidency, continued to participate in cocaine trafficking with drug dealers and narco-terrorist groups. In or about 2018, MADURO MOROS declared victory in a disputed and internationally condemned presidential election in Venezuela. In or about 2019, Venezuela's National Assembly invoked the Venezuelan constitution and declared that MADURO MOROS had usurped power and was not the legitimate President of Venezuela. Nonetheless, MADURO MOROS continued to exercise the powers of the Venezuelan presidency, causing more than 50 countries, including the United States, to refuse to recognize MADURO MOROS as Venezuela's head of state. In or about 2024, Venezuela held another presidential election that was again widely criticized by the international community, in which MADURO MOROS declared himself the winner despite widespread condemnation.

6. DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, the defendant, a Venezuelan citizen, is the Minister of the Interior, Justice and Peace, a member of the Venezuelan armed forces, and the Vice President of the ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela. CABELLO RONDÓN is widely recognized as one of the most powerful officials in Venezuela. CABELLO RONDÓN previously acted as Chief of Staff to Chávez in or about 2001, Vice President of Venezuela in or about 2002,

Governor of Venezuela's Miranda State between in or about 2004 and in or about 2008, and President of Venezuela's National Assembly between in or about 2012 and in or about 2016. Between in or about 2017 and in or about 2020, CABELLO RONDÓN acted as a member and then President of Venezuela's National Constituent Assembly, following the illegitimate creation of the National Constituent Assembly, which siphoned the constitutional powers of Venezuela's National Assembly and further entrenched MADURO MOROS's regime. Following the dissolution of the National Constituent Assembly in or about 2020, CABELLO RONDÓN became a member of Venezuela's National Assembly between in or about 2021 and in or about 2024.

7. RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the defendant, is a Venezuelan politician and former member of the armed forces, who served as the Minister of the Interior and Justice between in or about 2002 and 2008. Between in or about 2012 and in or about 2017, RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN was the Governor of Venezuela's Guarico State.

8. CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, the defendant, is the *de facto* First Lady of Venezuela, having married NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, the defendant, in or about 2013. FLORES DE MADURO has had a longstanding political career. FLORES DE MADURO has acted as the President of the National Assembly (starting when MADURO MOROS left that role to become Minister of Foreign Affairs) between in or about 2006 and in or about 2011, as the Attorney General of Venezuela between in or about 2012 and in or about 2013, and as a member of the National Constituent Assembly starting in or about 2017.

9. NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a "Nicolasito," a/k/a "The Prince," the defendant, is the son of NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, the defendant, and a corrupt Venezuelan politician. MADURO GUERRA entered politics after his father, MADURO MOROS, became the President of Venezuela in or about 2013. At that time, MADURO MOROS appointed

MADURO GUERRA the “Head of the Corps of Special Inspectors of the Presidency,” a position which was created for MADURO GUERRA. In or about 2017, MADURO GUERRA entered Venezuela’s National Constituent Assembly, and in or about January 2021, MADURO GUERRA entered Venezuela’s National Assembly, where he continues to hold office.

10. HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendant, has, for over a decade, served as either the leader or co-leader of TdA, during which time TdA members and associates have engaged in a wide range of crimes, including extortions, kidnappings, murders, drug trafficking, gun trafficking, prostitution, sex trafficking, robberies, bank burglaries, and money laundering in Venezuela, the United States, and elsewhere.

**THE NARCO-TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS WORKING
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DEFENDANTS**

11. The FARC, since its founding in 1964, has become one of the largest producers of cocaine in the world. The FARC has generated significant revenue through its cocaine trafficking, which it used to fund its operations, including, for example, large-scale weapons purchases and terrorist attacks. The FARC has also directed violent acts against United States persons and property in foreign jurisdictions, including, but not limited to, Colombia. For example, from at least in or about 2003 to in or about 2008, FARC leadership ordered FARC members to kidnap and murder United States citizens and to attack United States interests in order to dissuade the United States from continuing its efforts to fumigate and disrupt the FARC’s manufacturing and distribution of cocaine and cocaine paste. Consistent with these activities, in or about 1997, the U.S. Department of State (“State Department”) designated the FARC as a foreign terrorist organization (“FTO”) pursuant to Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”). On November 30, 2021, the State Department removed the FARC from the FTO list and simultaneously designated two FARC successor organizations as FTOs pursuant to Section 219 of

the INA: the FARC-EP and Segunda Marquetalia, both of which remain so designated as of the filing of this Superseding Indictment.

12. The ELN has operated as a Colombian terrorist group since 1965, dedicated to the violent overthrow of the democratically elected government of Colombia. In furtherance of its anti-government agenda, the ELN has committed kidnappings, bombings, and other violent attacks targeting civilians and Colombian law enforcement. In addition, the ELN exports tons of cocaine annually to the United States and elsewhere in order to finance its terrorist activities, and has, at various times, partnered with other Colombian guerilla groups in pursuit of its cocaine trafficking and violent agenda. Consistent with these activities, in or about 1997, the State Department designated the ELN as an FTO pursuant to Section 219 of the INA. ELN remains so designated as of the filing of this Superseding Indictment.

13. The Sinaloa Cartel, based in the Mexican state of Sinaloa, has its roots in the late 1980s, when the so-called Mexican Federation functioned as a council with representatives from the respective drug trafficking organizations of its principal leaders. During the late 1980s and 1990s, the members of the Mexican Federation partnered with Colombian sources of supply to transport drugs through Mexico and into the United States. In the early 2000s, Joaquin Archivaldo Guzman Loera, a/k/a “El Chapo,” and Ismael Zambada Garcia, a/k/a “El Mayo,” formed a partnership that led to transformation of the Mexican Federation into the Sinaloa Cartel, which became the largest drug trafficking organization in the world. At present, the Sinaloa Cartel is highly organized and active in more than half of all states in Mexico. Through a sophisticated and heavily armed security apparatus, the Sinaloa Cartel wields power through fear, threats, and violence, including by killing police, civilians, and members of other criminal groups who encroach on their territory without authorization. Members of the Sinaloa Cartel may also be killed

for perceived disloyalty, disobedience, or to send a message. To further and protect its drug interests, the Sinaloa Cartel engages in other criminal conduct, including bribery, extortion, and weapons trafficking. As an additional means of revenue and profit, the Sinaloa Cartel engages in migrant smuggling and human trafficking. Consistent with these activities, in or about February 2025, the State Department designated the Sinaloa Cartel as an FTO pursuant to Section 219 of the INA. The Sinaloa Cartel remains so designated as of the filing of this Superseding Indictment.

14. The Zetas, later known as the *Cártel del Noreste* (“CDN”), is a violent and prolific transnational drug organization based in northeastern Mexico involved in drug trafficking, kidnapping, extortion, human smuggling, and other illicit activities. The Zetas use violence to exert criminal control, including attacks against government officials in Mexico. Between in or about 2000 and in or about 2010, the Zetas formed an alliance with the Gulf Cartel, a group of drug traffickers primarily based in northern Mexico, whereby the Zetas served as the armed militaristic wing of the Gulf Cartel to maintain control of drug trafficking routes throughout Mexico. The Zetas recruited members of the Mexican special forces, along with drug traffickers who never served in the military or with a police force, to join the organization. In or about the summer of 2010, the Zetas and Gulf Cartel’s alliance fractured, after a period of intense violence between the organizations. At that time, the Zetas operated as an independent drug trafficking organization that imported ton-quantities of cocaine to the United States. Consistent with these activities, in or about February 2025, the State Department designated CDN, formerly known as the Zetas, as an FTO pursuant to Section 219 of the INA. CDN (referred to as the “Zetas” in this Superseding Indictment) remains so designated as of the filing of this Superseding Indictment.

15. TdA is a violent transnational criminal organization that originated as a prison gang in Venezuela. TdA has expanded its criminal network throughout the Western Hemisphere and

established a presence in the United States, including New York. TdA's criminal activities include human smuggling and other illicit acts. TdA has developed additional revenue sources through a range of other criminal activities, including drug trafficking, firearms trafficking, commercial sex trafficking, kidnapping, robbery, theft, fraud, and extortion. TdA members also commit murder, assault, and other acts of violence to enforce and further the organization's criminal activities. TdA has formed ties with other criminal groups operating in the Western Hemisphere and, at times, is willing to collaborate with other criminal groups and organizations on a local and ad hoc basis. Consistent with these activities, in or about February 2025, the State Department designated TdA as an FTO pursuant to Section 219 of the INA. TdA remains so designated as of the filing of this Superseding Indictment.

**THE DEFENDANTS' CORRUPT DRUG TRAFFICKING
AND CONNECTIONS TO NARCO-TERRORIST GROUPS**

16. NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, the defendant—like former President Chávez before him—participates in, perpetuates, and protects a culture of corruption in which powerful Venezuelan elites enrich themselves through drug trafficking and the protection of their partner drug traffickers. The profits of that illegal activity flow to corrupt rank-and-file civilian, military, and intelligence officials, who operate in a patronage system run by those at the top—referred to as the *Cártel de Los Soles* or Cartel of the Suns, a reference to the sun insignia affixed to the uniforms of high-ranking Venezuelan military officials.

17. Venezuela sits in a geographically valuable location for drug traffickers, with northern access to the Caribbean Sea via several large ports and western access to the mountainous regions of Colombia, where coca is grown and turned into the vast majority of the world's cocaine supply in jungle laboratories. Starting in or about 1999, Venezuela became a safe haven for drug traffickers willing to pay for protection and support corrupt Venezuelan civilian and military

officials, who operated outside the reach of Colombian law enforcement and armed forces bolstered by United States anti-narcotics assistance.

18. In that environment, cocaine trafficking flourished. Venezuelan officials and their family members—including NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, and NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolasito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” the defendants—partnered with narcotics traffickers and narco-terrorist groups, who dispatched processed cocaine from Venezuela to the United States via transshipment points in the Caribbean and Central America, such as Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico. By in or about 2020, the State Department estimated that between 200 and 250 tons of cocaine were trafficked through Venezuela annually. The maritime shipments were shipped north from Venezuela’s coastline using go-fast vessels, fishing boats, and container ships. Air shipments were often dispatched from clandestine airstrips, typically made of dirt or grass, and also from commercial airports under the control of corrupt government and military officials.

19. Through this drug trafficking, NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, the defendant, and corrupt members of his regime enabled corruption fueled by drug trafficking throughout the region. The transshipment points in Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico similarly relied on a culture of corruption, in which cocaine traffickers operating in those countries paid a portion of their own profits to politicians who protected and aided them. In turn, these politicians used the cocaine-fueled payments to maintain and augment their political power. So, too, were politicians along the “Caribbean route” corrupted by cocaine traffickers, who would pay them for protection from arrest and to allow favored traffickers to operate with impunity as they trafficked cocaine from Venezuela north towards the United States. Thus, at every step—relying on the producers in Colombia,

transporters and distributors in Venezuela, and recipients and re-distributors on transshipment points north—the traffickers enriched themselves and their corrupt benefactors who protected and aided them.

20. Similarly, NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the defendants, and other corrupt members of the regime facilitated the empowerment and growth of violent narco-terrorist groups fueling their organizations with cocaine profits. These narco-terrorist organizations not only worked directly with and sent profits to high-ranking Venezuelan officials, but also reaped the benefits of the increased value of that cocaine at each transshipment point along the way to the United States, where demand and thus the price of cocaine is highest. Those organizations include the FARC and ELN, which control cocaine production in the mountainous regions of Colombia; the Sinaloa Cartel and Zetas, which control routes in Central America and the methods for crossing cocaine from Mexico into the United States; and TdA, which controls a criminal network able to assist with the transportation of cocaine within Venezuela and on the Venezuelan coast.

**OVERT ACTS IN FURTHERANCE OF THE
DEFENDANTS' DRUG TRAFFICKING AND
NARCO-TERRORISM CONSPIRACIES**

21. The defendants, together and with others, engaged in a relentless campaign of cocaine trafficking throughout the time period charged in this Superseding Indictment, resulting in the distribution of thousands of tons of cocaine to the United States. Throughout, NICOLAS MADURO MOROS, the defendant, along with members of his family and other corrupt officials, provided law enforcement cover and logistical support for the transport of cocaine through Venezuela, with knowledge that their drug trafficking partners would move the cocaine north to the United States. While this conduct occurred regularly and repeatedly throughout the time period

charged, below are certain examples of acts engaged in by the defendants in furtherance of their drug trafficking, including in partnership with narco-terrorist groups:

a. Between approximately 2006 and 2008, while acting as Venezuela's Minister of Foreign Affairs, MADURO MOROS sold Venezuelan diplomatic passports to individuals that MADURO MOROS knew were drug traffickers in order to assist traffickers seeking to move drug proceeds from Mexico to Venezuela under diplomatic cover. When the drug traffickers needed to move drug proceeds from Mexico back to Venezuela, MADURO MOROS facilitated the movement of private planes under diplomatic cover to ensure the flights received no scrutiny from law enforcement or the military. On these occasions, MADURO MOROS called the Venezuelan embassy in Mexico to advise that a diplomatic mission would be arriving by private plane. Then, while the traffickers met with the Venezuelan Ambassador to Mexico under the auspices of a diplomatic mission from MADURO MOROS, their plane was loaded with the drug proceeds. The plane would then return to Venezuela under diplomatic cover.

b. In approximately 2007, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, the defendant, attended a meeting in which FLORES DE MADURO accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes to broker a meeting between a large-scale drug trafficker and the director of Venezuela's National Anti-Drug Office, Néstor Reverol Torres. The drug trafficker later arranged to pay a monthly bribe to Reverol Torres, in addition to approximately \$100,000 for each flight that was transporting cocaine to ensure the flight's safe passage, a portion of which was then paid to FLORES DE MADURO. In or about 2015, Reverol Torres was charged with narcotics offenses in the Eastern District of New York and is a fugitive.

c. Between in or about 2003 and in or about 2011, while DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, the defendant, occupied various official positions in Venezuela, the Zetas

worked with a group of Colombian drug traffickers to dispatch cargo containers on container ships carrying five to six tons of cocaine each, and sometimes as much as 20 tons each, from ports in Venezuela to ports in Mexico, and ultimately to the United States. The tens of thousands of kilograms of cocaine sent by this group were protected in Venezuela by Venezuelan military officials referred to as “the generals.”

d. Between in or about 2004 and in or about 2015, MADURO MOROS and FLORES DE MADURO worked together to traffic cocaine, much of which had been previously seized by Venezuelan law enforcement, with the assistance of armed military escorts. During this time, MADURO MOROS and FLORES DE MADURO maintained their own groups of state-sponsored gangs known as *colectivos* to facilitate and protect their drug trafficking operation. MADURO MOROS and FLORES DE MADURO also ordered kidnappings, beatings, and murders against those who owed them drug money or otherwise undermined their drug trafficking operation, including ordering the murder of a local drug boss in Caracas, Venezuela.

e. In or about 2006, Venezuelan officials dispatched more than 5.5 tons of cocaine from Venezuela to Mexico on a DC-9 jet. CABELLO RONDÓN; then-director of Venezuela’s military intelligence agency, Hugo Armando Carvajal Barrios, a/k/a “El Pollo,” who, in June 2025, pled guilty in this District to the narco-terrorism, narcotics, and weapons offenses in the First Superseding Indictment in this case, S1 11 Cr. 205 (AKH); and Venezuelan National Guard Captain Vassyly Kotosky Villarroel Ramirez worked with other members of the Venezuelan regime to coordinate the shipment. The more than 5.5 tons of cocaine were transported in approximately five vans to the hangar reserved for the Venezuelan president at Simón Bolívar International Airport in Maiquetía, Venezuela (the “Maiquetía Airport”). At the Maiquetía Airport, members of the Venezuelan National Guard loaded the cocaine onto the plane, which took off

using a flight plan that Villarroel Ramirez approved in exchange for bribes. Despite the payment of those bribes, when the plane landed at Ciudad del Carmen Airport in Campeche, Mexico, Mexican authorities seized more than 5.5 tons of cocaine. Shortly after the seizure, Villarroel Ramirez told the Venezuelan drug traffickers who worked with him that they needed to pay CABELLO RONDÓN a bribe to ensure that those who had assisted them at the Maiquetía Airport would not be arrested. Villarroel Ramirez then arranged a meeting with CABELLO RONDÓN, after which the traffickers paid approximately \$2,500,000 to CABELLO RONDÓN through his family member. In or about 2013, Villarroel Ramirez was charged with narcotics offenses in the Eastern District of New York and is a fugitive.

f. Between approximately 2006 and 2008, HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendant, worked with one of the largest drug traffickers in Venezuela, Walid Makled. Members of the Venezuelan regime helped protect Makled’s cocaine shipments that were transported from San Fernando de Apure, Venezuela, to Valencia, Venezuela, and were then sent by plane from the Valencia international airport to Mexico and other locations in Central America for eventual distribution to the United States. Between in or about 2008 and in or about 2009, GUERRERO FLORES also provided another major Venezuelan drug trafficker with protection for cocaine shipments moving through Venezuela, including by providing armed men who carried, among other automatic weapons, AK-47s, MP5s, and AR-15s, as well as grenades. At times, GUERRERO FLORES personally accompanied large cocaine loads as they were guarded by the teams of armed men, en route to airports or airstrips for transport north and eventual distribution to the United States. GUERRERO FLORES was paid a fee per kilogram of cocaine transported or received and he sometimes received an interest in portions of these massive cocaine shipments in lieu of payment. The

traffickers that GUERRERO FLORES worked with moved thousands of kilograms per shipment, multiple times per month, resulting in the distribution of hundreds of tons of cocaine to the United States. In or about 2009, Makled was charged with narcotics offenses in this District and is a fugitive.

g. In or about 2008, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the defendant, maintained a large estate in Barinas State, Venezuela, which contained a large FARC encampment and training school, with approximately 200 armed FARC members carrying automatic rifles at any given time. During this time, RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN accepted tens of thousands of dollars in bribes to use his corrupt influence to shield a large-scale drug trafficker from arrest and extradition. During subsequent meetings with the drug trafficker between in or about 2008 and in or about 2010, RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN discussed trafficking multi-ton quantities of cocaine with other Venezuelan officials, including Carvajal Barrios.

h. In or about 2011, the Sinaloa Cartel's then-leader, Joaquin Archivaldo Guzman Loera, a/k/a "El Chapo," financed cocaine laboratories in Colombia. Cocaine produced in those laboratories was then transported under the protection of the FARC into Venezuela, and received protection en route to an airstrip from Carvajal Barrios, a close ally of MADURO MOROS and CABELLO RONDÓN.

i. In or about September 2013, mere months after MADURO MOROS succeeded to the Venezuelan presidency, Venezuelan officials dispatched approximately 1.3 tons of cocaine on a commercial flight from the Maiquetía Airport to Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport. French authorities seized the cocaine. Following the seizure, MADURO MOROS convened a meeting with, among others, CABELLO RONDÓN and Carvajal Barrios. During the meeting, MADURO MOROS told CABELLO RONDÓN and Carvajal Barrios that they should not have

used the Maiquetía Airport for drug trafficking after the 2006 seizure in Mexico, and that they should instead use other well-established drug routes and locations to dispatch cocaine. Shortly thereafter, MADURO MOROS and others authorized the arrests of certain Venezuelan military officials in an effort to divert public and law enforcement scrutiny away from MADURO MOROS's, CABELLO RONDÓN's, and Carvajal Barrios's participation in the shipment and its coverup.

j. Between approximately 2014 and 2015, a captain in the Venezuelan National Guard on Margarita Island, Venezuela, coordinated hotels, transportation, women, and food for visits by Venezuelan officials, including NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolasito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” the defendant, who visited Margarita Island approximately twice monthly. MADURO GUERRA would arrive on a Falcon 900 plane owned by Venezuela's state oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. (“PDVSA”). Before leaving the island, MADURO GUERRA's PDVSA plane would be loaded, sometimes with the assistance of armed sergeants, with large packages wrapped in tape that the captain understood were drugs. MADURO GUERRA was present while the PDVSA plane was loaded and, on one occasion, stated that the plane could go wherever it wanted, including the United States.

k. Between in or about October 2015 and in or about November 2015, Efrain Campo Flores and Franqui Francisco Flores de Freitas—two relatives of MADURO MOROS and FLORES DE MADURO—agreed during recorded meetings with DEA confidential sources to dispatch multi-hundred-kilogram cocaine shipments from MADURO MOROS's “presidential hangar” at the Maiquetía Airport. During recorded meetings with the sources, Campo Flores and Flores de Freitas explained that they were at “war” with the United States, described the *Cártel de Los Soles*, discussed a connection to a “commander for the FARC” who was “supposedly high-

ranked,” and indicated that they were seeking to raise \$20 million in drug proceeds to support a campaign by FLORES DE MADURO in connection with a late-2015 election for the Venezuelan National Assembly. Campo Flores referred to MADURO MOROS as his “father,” and stated that “what we want is for him to take control again of the . . . National Assembly.” In or about November 2016, Campo Flores and Flores de Freitas were convicted at trial in this District of conspiring to import cocaine into the United States.

l. In or about 2017, MADURO GUERRA worked to ship hundreds of kilograms of cocaine from Venezuela to Miami, Florida. During this time, MADURO GUERRA spoke with his drug trafficking partners about, among other things, shipping low-quality cocaine to New York because it could not be sold in Miami, arranging a 500-kilogram shipment of cocaine to be unloaded from a cargo container near Miami, and using scrap metal containers to smuggle cocaine into the ports of New York.

m. In or about 2018 and 2019, RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN made multiple trips from Barinas State to Caracas with a key FARC leader for meetings with MADURO MOROS. These trips were part of a long history of RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN’s regular meetings with FARC and ELN members in both their jungle encampments and Barinas because RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN was assigned by MADURO MOROS to provide the FARC and ELN with protection and support. RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN also brought FARC leaders to meet MADURO MOROS at Miraflores, the presidential palace in Caracas, as well as at Forte Tiuna, the chief military complex in Caracas and headquarters of Venezuela’s Ministry of Defense.

n. In or about July 2019, shortly after certain FARC leaders had publicly returned to arms despite the signing of recent peace accords with the Colombian government,

MADURO MOROS and CABELLO RONDÓN attended a videotaped press conference at which MADURO MOROS announced that the FARC and its leaders were welcome in Venezuela.

o. In or about 2019, TdA's leader, GUERRERO FLORES, discussed drug trafficking with an individual he understood to be working with the Venezuelan regime. Over multiple calls, GUERRERO FLORES offered to provide escort services for drug loads, explaining that GUERRERO FLORES and TdA had control of the coastlines of Venezuela's Aragua State. GUERRERO FLORES, speaking from TdA's base of operations in Tocarón Prison, explained that TdA could handle the logistics of every aspect of the drug trade, including the use of storage compartments that GUERRERO FLORES called "cradles" located on a beach in Aragua State. In doing so, GUERRERO FLORES confirmed TdA's ability to protect over one ton of cocaine.

p. In or about 2020, MADURO GUERRA attended a meeting in Medellín, Colombia, with two representatives of the FARC. During the meeting, MADURO GUERRA discussed arrangements to move large quantities of cocaine and weapons through Colombia and into the United States over the course of the next six years, until in or about 2026. MADURO GUERRA also discussed paying the FARC with weapons in connection with the cocaine loads.

q. In or about 2007, at the direction of Carvajal Barrios, Venezuelan General Cliver Alcalá Cordones delivered to FARC leadership four crates of weapons from the Venezuelan Government, which included 20 grenades and two grenade launchers. In or or about June 2023, Alcalá Cordones pled guilty in this District to conspiring to provide material support to the FARC, an FTO, pursuant to the Third Superseding Information in this case, S3 11 Cr. 205 (AKH).

r. Between in or about 2022 and in or about 2024, CABELLO RONDÓN regularly traveled to clandestine airstrips controlled by the ELN near the Colombia-Venezuela border to ensure the cocaine's continued safe passage in Venezuelan territory. From these airstrips,

cocaine was dispatched out of Venezuela both on flights approved by Venezuelan military officials and on clandestine flights designed to avoid detection by law enforcement or militaries in South and Central America.

s. In or about the end of 2024, CABELLO RONDÓN received narcotics proceeds from cocaine trafficking, and in or about 2025, Colombian drug traffickers discussed with an associate of CABELLO RONDÓN plans for continued cocaine trafficking through Venezuela.

STATUTORY ALLEGATIONS

COUNT ONE

(Narco-Terrorism Conspiracy)

22. Paragraphs 1 through 21 of this Superseding Indictment are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

23. From at least in or about 1999, up to and including in or about 2025, in an offense begun and committed out of the jurisdiction of any particular State or district of the United States, NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, and RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the defendants, and others known and unknown, at least one of whom has been and will be first brought to and arrested in the Southern District of New York, intentionally and knowingly combined, conspired, confederated, and agreed together and with each other to violate Title 21, United States Code, Section 960a.

24. It was a part and an object of the conspiracy that NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, and RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the defendants, and others known and unknown, would and did engage in conduct that would be punishable under Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a), if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States, to wit, the distribution of, and possession with the intent to distribute, five kilograms and

more of mixtures and substances containing a detectable amount of cocaine, knowing and intending to provide, directly and indirectly, something of pecuniary value to a person and organization that has engaged and engages in terrorism and terrorist activity (as defined in Title 8, United States Code, Section 1182(a)(2)(B)), or terrorism (as defined in Title 22, United States Code, Section 2656f(d)(2)), to wit, the following organizations that have been designated by the United States Secretary of State as FTOs pursuant to Section 219 of the INA, during times relevant to this Superseding Indictment: FARC, FARC-EP, Segunda Marquetalia, ELN, TdA, the Sinaloa Cartel, CDN, also known as the Zetas, and each organization's members, operatives, and associates, having knowledge that such organizations and persons have engaged and engage in terrorist activity and terrorism, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 960a.

(Title 21, United States Code, Section 960a; and Title 18, United States Code, Section 3238.)

COUNT TWO
(Cocaine Importation Conspiracy)

The Grand Jury further charges:

25. Paragraphs 1 through 21 of this Superseding Indictment are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

26. From at least in or about 1999, up to and including in or about 2025, in an offense begun and committed out of the jurisdiction of any particular State or district of the United States, NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a "Nicolasito," a/k/a "The Prince," and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a "Niño Guerrero," the defendants, and others known and unknown, at least one of whom has been and will be first brought to and arrested in the Southern District of New York,

intentionally and knowingly combined, conspired, confederated, and agreed together and with each other to violate provisions of Title 21, United States Code, Chapter 13, Subchapter II.

27. It was a part and an object of the conspiracy that NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolasito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendants, and others known and unknown, would and did knowingly and intentionally import into the United States from a place outside thereof a controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 952(a) and 960(a)(1).

28. It was further a part and an object of the conspiracy that NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolasito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendants, and others known and unknown, would and did manufacture, distribute, and possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance, intending, knowing, and having reasonable cause to believe that such substance would be unlawfully imported into the United States and into waters within a distance of 12 miles of the coast of the United States, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 959(a) and 960(a)(3).

29. It was further a part and an object of the conspiracy that NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolasito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendants, and others known and unknown, would and did, on board an

aircraft registered in the United States, manufacture, distribute, and possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 959(c) and 960(a)(3).

30. The controlled substance that NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolasito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendants, conspired to (i) import into the United States and into the customs territory of the United States from a place outside thereof, (ii) manufacture and distribute, intending, knowing, and having reasonable cause to believe that such substance would be unlawfully imported into the United States and into waters within a distance of 12 miles of the coast of the United States from a place outside thereof, and (iii) manufacture, distribute, and possess on board an aircraft registered in the United States, was five kilograms and more of mixtures and substances containing a detectable amount of cocaine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 960(b)(1)(B).

(Title 21, United States Code, Section 963; and Title 18, United States Code, Section 3238.)

COUNT THREE
(Possession of Machineguns and Destructive Devices)

The Grand Jury further charges:

31. Paragraphs 1 through 21 of this Superseding Indictment are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

32. From at least in or about 1999, up to and including in or about 2025, in an offense begun and committed out of the jurisdiction of any particular State or district of the United States, and for which at least one of two or more joint offenders has been and will be first brought to and arrested in the Southern District of New York, NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE

MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolásito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendants, during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime for which they may be prosecuted in a court of the United States, to wit, for MADURO MOROS, CABELLO RONDÓN, and RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the controlled substance offenses charged in Counts One and Two of this Superseding Indictment, and for FLORES DE MADURO, MADURO GUERRA, and GUERRERO FLORES the controlled substance offense charged in Count Two of this Superseding Indictment, knowingly used and carried firearms, and, in furtherance of such crimes, knowingly possessed firearms, and aided and abetted the use, carrying, and possession of firearms, to wit, machineguns that were capable of automatically shooting more than one shot, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger, as well as destructive devices.

(Title 18, United States Code, Sections 924(c)(1)(A), 924(c)(1)(B)(ii), 3238, and 2.)

COUNT FOUR
(Conspiracy to Possess Machineguns and Destructive Devices)

The Grand Jury further charges:

33. Paragraphs 1 through 21 of this Superseding Indictment are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

34. From at least in or about 1999, up to and including in or about 2025, in an offense begun and committed out of the jurisdiction of any particular State or district of the United States, NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolásito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendants, and others known and unknown, at least one of whom has been and will be first brought to and arrested in the Southern District of New York,

intentionally and knowingly combined, conspired, confederated, and agreed together and with each other to violate Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c).

35. It was a part and an object of the conspiracy that NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolasio,” a/k/a “The Prince,” and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendants, and others known and unknown, during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime for which they may be prosecuted in a court of the United States, to wit, for MADURO MOROS, CABELLO RONDÓN, and RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the controlled substance offenses charged in Counts One and Two of this Superseding Indictment, and for FLORES DE MADURO, MADURO GUERRA, and GUERRERO FLORES, the controlled substance offense charged in Count Two of this Superseding Indictment, knowingly used and carried firearms, and, in furtherance of such crimes, knowingly possessed firearms, and aided and abetted the use, carrying, and possession of firearms, to wit, machineguns that were capable of automatically shooting more than one shot, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger, as well as destructive devices, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 924(c)(1)(A) and 924(c)(1)(B)(ii).

(Title 18, United States Code, Sections 924(o) and 3238.)

FORFEITURE ALLEGATIONS

36. As a result of committing the controlled substance offense charged in Count One of this Superseding Indictment, NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, the defendants, shall forfeit to the United States, pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Sections 853 and 970, any and all property constituting, or derived from, any proceeds the defendants obtained, directly or indirectly, as a result of the offenses, and any and all property used, or intended to be used, in any manner or part, to commit,

and to facilitate the commission of the offense charged in Count One of this Superseding Indictment.

37. As a result of committing the controlled substance offense charged in Count Two of this Superseding Indictment, NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolasito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendants, shall forfeit to the United States, pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Sections 853 and 970, any and all property constituting, or derived from, any proceeds the defendants obtained, directly or indirectly, as a result of the offenses, and any and all property used, or intended to be used, in any manner or part, to commit, and to facilitate the commission of the offense charged in Count Two of this Superseding Indictment.

38. As a result of committing the firearms offenses charged in Counts Three and Four of this Superseding Indictment, NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO GUERRA, a/k/a “Nicolasito,” a/k/a “The Prince,” and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a “Niño Guerrero,” the defendants, shall forfeit to the United States, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(d), all firearms and ammunition involved in and used in the commission of the offenses charged in Counts Three and Four of this Superseding Indictment.

Substitute Assets Provision

39. If any of the above described forfeitable property, as a result of any act or omission of NICOLÁS MADURO MOROS, DIOSDADO CABELLO RONDÓN, RAMÓN RODRÍGUEZ CHACÍN, CILIA ADELA FLORES DE MADURO, NICOLÁS ERNESTO MADURO

GUERRA, a/k/a "Nicolasio," a/k/a "The Prince," and HECTOR RUSTHENFORD GUERRERO FLORES, a/k/a "Niño Guerrero," the defendants:

- a. cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;
- b. has been transferred or sold to, or deposited with, a third person;
- c. has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the Court;
- d. has been substantially diminished in value; or
- e. has been commingled with other property which cannot be subdivided without difficulty;

it is the intent of the United States, pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p) and Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), to seek forfeiture of any other property of the defendant up to the value of the above forfeitable property.

(Title 18, United States Code, Section 924;
Title 21, United States Code, Sections 853 and 970; and
Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461.)


FOREPERSON

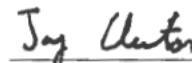

JAY CLAYTON
United States Attorney

EXHIBIT B



Factbase

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Donald J. Trump

- Transcripts
- White House Calendar
- White House Press Releases

Press Conference: Donald Trump Discusses the Capture of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela - January 3, 2026

- StressLens
- 7 Topics
- 10 Entities
- Moderation
- 5 Speakers



Full Transcript

▶

Donald Trump

00:00:00-00:00:53 (53 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

X

We appreciate you being here. Late last night and early today, at my direction, the United States Armed Forces conducted an extraordinary military operation in the capital of Venezuela. Overwhelming American military forces were able to launch a spectacular assault, and it was a -- an assault like people have not seen since Vietnam. We have taken a heavily-fortified military fortress in the heart of Caracas to bring outlaw dictator, Nicolás Maduro, into custody.

57:53

Donald Trump 00:00:53-00:01:37 (44 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

This was one of the most stunning, effective, and powerful displays of American military might and competence in American history. And if you think about it, we've done some other good ones, like the attack on Soleimani, the attack on al-Baghdadi, and the obliteration and decimation of the Iran nuclear sites just recently in an operation known as Midnight Hammer, all perfectly executed and done.

Donald Trump 00:01:37-00:02:02 (25 sec)

MEDIUM (1.575)

No nation in the world could achieve what America achieved yesterday, or frankly, in just a short period of time. All Venezuelan military capacities were rendered perilous as the men and women of our military, working with US law enforcement, successfully captured Maduro in the dead of night. It was dark.

Donald Trump 00:02:02-00:02:45 (43 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

The, uh, lights of Caracas were largely turned off due to a certain expertise that we have. It was dark, and it was deadly. But captured along with his wife, Cilia Flores, both of whom now face American justice, Maduro and Flores have been indicted in the Southern District of New York, with Jay Clayton, for their campaign of deadly narco-terrorism against the United States and its citizens.

Donald Trump 00:02:45-00:03:10 (25 sec)

MEDIUM (1.631)

I want to thank the men and women of our military who achieved such an extraordinary success overnight with breathtaking speed, power, precision, and competence. You rarely see anything like it. You've seen some raids in this country that didn't go so well. They were an embarrassment. If you look back to Afghanistan, or if you look back to the Jimmy Carter days, they were different days.

Donald Trump 00:03:10-00:03:25 (15 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

We're a respected country again like, maybe, like never before. These highly-trained warriors, operating in collaboration with US law enforcement, caught them in a very ready position. They were waiting for us. They knew we had many ships out in the sea. We were just sort of waiting. They knew we were coming, so they were in a ready, what's called a ready posit on.

Donald Trump 00:03:25-00:03:48 (23 sec)

MEDIUM (1.937)

But they were completely overwhelmed and very quickly incapacitated. And if you would have seen what I saw last night, you would have been very impressed. I'm not sure that you'll ever get to see it, but it was an incredible thing to see. Not a single American service member was killed, and not a single piece of American equipment was lost.

Donald Trump 00:03:48-00:04:13 (25 sec)

MEDIUM (1.896)

We had many helicopters, many planes, many, many people involved in that fight, but think of that: not one piece of military equipment was lost. Not one service member was, more importantly, killed. The United States military is the strongest and most fearsome military on the planet, by far, with capabilities and skills our enemies can scarcely begin to imagine.

Donald Trump 00:04:13-00:04:37 (24 sec)

MEDIUM (1.814)

We have the best equipment anywhere in the world. There's no equipment like what we have. And you see that, even if you just look at the boats. You know, we've knocked out 97% of the drugs coming in by sea. 90%. Each boat kills 25- -- on average, 25,000 people. We knocked out 97%. And those drugs mostly come from a place called Venezuela.

Donald Trump 00:04:37-00:05:03 (26 sec)

WEAK (1.448)

We're going to run the country until such time as we can do a safe, proper, and judicious transition. So we don't want to be involved with, uh, having somebody else get in and we have the same situation that we had for the last long period of years. So we are going to run the country until such time as we can do a safe, proper, and judicious transition.

▶ Donald Trump 00:05:03-00:05:30 (27 sec)

WEAK (1.474)

And it has to be judicious because that's what we're all about. We want peace, liberty, and justice for the great people of Venezuela, and that includes many from Venezuela that are now living in the United States and want to go back to their country. It's their homeland. We can't take a chance that somebody else takes over Venezuela that doesn't have the good of the Venezuelan people in mind.

▶ Donald Trump 00:05:30-00:05:50 (20 sec)

WEAK (1.487)

We've had decades of that. We're not going to let that happen. We're there now, and what people don't understand but they understand as I, as I say this. We're there now, but we're going to stay until such time as the pop- -- proper transition can take place. So we're gonna stay until such time as, we're gonna run it, essentially, until such time as a proper transition can take place.

▶ Donald Trump 00:05:50-00:06:17 (27 sec)

STRONG (2.017)

5 of 150 paragraphs scored.

As everyone knows, the oil business in Venezuela has been a bust, a total bust, for a long period of time. They were pumping almost nothing by comparison to what they could have been pumping and what could've taken place. We're going to have our very large United States oil companies, the biggest anywhere in the world, go in, spend billions of dollars, fix the badly broken infrastructure, the oil infrastructure, and start making money for the country.

▶ Donald Trump 00:06:17-00:06:43 (26 sec)

MEDIUM (1.784)

And we are ready to stage a second and much larger attack if we need to do so, so we were prepared to do a second wave if we needed to do so. We actually assumed that a second wave would be necessary, but now it's probably not. The first wave, if you'd like to call it that, the first attack was so successful we probably don't have to do a second, but we're prepared to do a second wave, a much bigger wave, actually.

▶ Donald Trump 00:06:43-00:06:59 (16 sec)

MEDIUM (1.696)

This was pinpoint, but we have a much bigger wave that we probably won't have to do. This partnership of Venezuela with the United States of America, a country that everybody wants to be involved with because of what we're able to do and accomplish, will make the people of Venezuela rich, independent, and safe.

▶ Donald Trump 00:06:59-00:07:20 (20 sec)

MEDIUM (1.6)

And it will also make the many, many people from Venezuela that are living in the United States extremely happy. They suffered. They suffered. So much was taken from them. They're not gonna suffer anymore. The illegitimate dictator Maduro was the kingpin of a vast criminal network responsible for trafficking colossal amounts of deadly and illicit drugs into the United States.

As alleged in the indictment, he personally oversaw the vicious cartel known as Cartel de los Soles, which flooded our nation with lethal poison responsible for the deaths of countless Americans, the many, many Americans, hundreds of thousands over the years, of Americans died because of him. Maduro and his wife will soon face the full might of American justice and stand trial on American soil.

Right now, they're on a ship. They'll be heading to, ultimately, New York, and then a decision will be made, I assume, between New York and Miami or Florida. But we have, uh, people where the overwhelming evidence of their crimes will be presented in a court of law, and, uh, I've seen it. I've seen what we have.

It's, uh, it's both horrible and breathtaking that something like this could've been allowed to take place. For many years after his term as president of Venezuela expired, Maduro remained in power and waged a ceaseless campaign of violence, terror, and subversion against the United States of America, threatening not only our people, but the stability of the entire region.

And you all saw it. In addition to trafficking gigantic amounts of illegal drugs that inflicted untold suffering and human destruction all over the country, all over, in particular, the United States, Maduro sent savage and murderous gangs, including the bloodthirsty prison gang, Tren de Aragua, to terrorize American communities nationwide.

And he did indeed. They were in Colorado. They took over apartment complexes. They cut the fingers off people if they called police. They were brutal. But they're not so brutal now, and I just have to, uh, congratulate our military, Pete and everybody in our National Guard, 'cause the job that they've done, whether it's in Washington, DC, where we have a totally safe city where it was one of the most unsafe cities anywhere in the world, frankly, and now we have no crime in Washington, DC. We haven't had a killing.

Donald Trump 00:09:24-00:09:43 (19 sec)

MEDIUM (1.545)

We had the terrorist attack a few weeks ago. Uh, a little bit of a different kind of a, a threat, but we haven't had a killing in a long period of time, six, seven months. We used to have two, on average, two a week in Washington, our capital, we don't have that anymore. The restaurants are opening. Everyone's happy.

Donald Trump 00:09:43-00:09:59 (16 sec)

NO STRESSENS

They're going and they're walking their daughters, they're walking their children, their wives. They walk to restaurants. Restaurants are opening all over Washington, DC. So I wanna thank the National Guard, I wanna thank our military, and I wanna thank law enforcement. Been amazing. And they should do it with more cities.

Donald Trump 00:09:59-00:10:23 (24 sec)

WEAK (1.479)

We're doing it as you know, and, uh, we're doing it in Memphis, Tennessee right now, and crime is down. We've just sort of started a few weeks ago, but crime is down now 77%. And, uh, the governor of Louisiana called, great person. And he wanted us to help him, as you know, in a certain very nice part of Louisiana.

Donald Trump 00:10:23-00:10:43 (20 sec)

MEDIUM (1.713)

And we have done that, and it's a rough, it was a rough, rough section and we have crime down. I, I understand it's down to almost nothing already after two and a half weeks. New Orleans, it's down to almost nothing. And we've only been there for two and a half weeks. Can't imagine why governors wouldn't want us to help.

Donald Trump 00:10:43-00:11:01 (19 sec)

MEDIUM (1.589)

We also helped, as you know, in Chicago, then crime went down a little bit there. We did a very small help because we had no, no, uh, we had no working ability with the governor. The governor was a disaster and the mayor was a disaster, but it knocked down crime. But we're pulling out of there when, when they need us. We'll know.

Donald Trump 00:11:01-00:11:21 (20 sec)

MEDIUM (1.938)

You'll know. You'll be writing about it. And likewise, Los Angeles, where we saved Los Angeles early on, where the head of the police department made a statement that if the federal government didn't come in, we would have lost Los Angeles. That's after, long after the fires. That's when they had the riots in Los Angele- -- we did a great job.

Donald Trump 00:11:21-00:11:41 (20 sec)

MEDIUM (1.955)

We got no credit for it whatsoever, but that's okay. It doesn't matter. We don't need the credit. But we'll be pulling out when they need us, they'll cal , or we'll go back if we have to. We'll go back. But we did a great job in various cities. But the thing, the place that we're very proud of is Washington DC because it's our nation's capital.

Donald Trump 00:11:41-00:12:04 (23 sec)

STRONG (2.029)

3 of 150 paragraphs scored.

We took it from being a crime-ridden mess to being, uh, one of the safest cities in the country. But the gangs that they sent raped, tortured, and murdered American women and children. They were in al of the cities I mentioned. Tren de Aragua. And they were sent by Maduro to terrorize our people, and now Maduro will never, again, be able to threaten an American citizen or anybody from Venezuela.

Donald Trump 00:12:04-00:12:24 (20 sec)

STRONG (2.198)

1 of 150 paragraphs scored.

There will no longer be threats. For years, I've highlighted the stories of those innocent American whose lives were so heartlessly robbed by this Venezuelan terrorist organization. Really one of the worst, one of the worst, they say the worst. Americans like 12-year-old, Jocelyn Nungaray from Houston, beautiful Jocelyn Nungaray, what happened to her.

Donald Trump 00:12:24-00:12:51 (27 sec)

MEDIUM (1.564)

They, uh, as you know, they kidnapped, assaulted and murdered by Tren de Aragua, animals, they murdered Jocelyn and left her dead under the bridge. There was a bridge. A bridge that will never be the same to so many people after seeing what happened. As I've said many times, the Maduro regime emptied out their prisons, sent their worst and most violent monsters into the United States to steal American lives.

Donald Trump 00:12:51-00:13:10 (20 sec)

MEDIUM (1.91)

And, uh, they came from mental institutions and insane asylums. They came from prisons and jails. The reason I say both, they sound similar. Actually, prisons, uh, a little bit more, a little bit more hostile, a little bit tougher. A mental institution isn't as tough as an insane asylum, but we got them both.

Donald Trump 00:13:10-00:13:31 (20 sec)

MEDIUM (1.897)

They sent from their mental institutions, they sent from their jails, prisons. They were drug dealers. They were drug kingpins. They sent everybody bad into the United States, but no longer. And we have now a border where nobody gets through. In addition, Venezuela unilaterally seized and sold American oil, American assets, and American platforms costing us billions and billions of dollars.

Donald Trump 00:13:31-00:14:00 (29 sec)

STRONG (2.024)

4 of 150 paragraphs scored.

They did this a while ago, but we never had a president that did anything about it. They took all of our property. It was our property. We built it. And, uh, we never had a president that decided to do anything about it. Instead, they fought wars that were 10,000 miles away. We built Venezuela oil industry with American talent, drive and skill, and the socialist regime stole it from us during those previous administrations, and they stole it through force.

Donald Trump 00:14:00-00:14:29 (29 sec)

STRONG (2.156)

2 of 150 paragraphs scored.

This constituted one of the largest thefts of American property in the history of our country. Considered the largest theft of property in the history of our country. Massive oil infrastructure was taken like we were babies, so we didn't do anything about it. I would have done something about it. America will never allow foreign powers to rob our people or drive us back into and out of our own hemisphere.

Donald Trump 00:14:29-00:14:47 (18 sec)

WEAK (1.377)

That's what they did. Furthermore, under the now deposed dictator Maduro, Venezuela was increasingly hosting foreign adversaries in our region and acquiring menacing offensive weapons that could threaten US interest in lives. And they used those weapons last night. They used those weapons last night, potentially in league with the cartels operating along our border.

Donald Trump 00:14:47-00:15:08 (22 sec)

MEDIUM (1.798)

All of these actions were in gross violation of the core principles of American foreign policy dating back more than two centuries, and, uh, not anymore. All the way back, it dated to the Monroe Doctrines, and the Mo- -- Monroe Doctrine is a, a big deal, but we've superseded it by a lot. By a real lot. They now call it the "Donroe" Document.

Donald Trump 00:15:08-00:15:36 (28 sec)

MEDIUM (1.672)

I don't know. It's, uh, Monroe Doctrine. We sort of forgot about it. It was very important, but we forgot about it. We don't forget about it anymore. Under our new national security strategy, American dominance in the Western hemisphere will never be questioned again. Won't happen. So, just in concluding, for decades, other administrations have neglected or even contributed to these growing security threats in the Western hemisphere.

Donald Trump 00:15:36-00:16:01 (24 sec)

MEDIUM (1.952)

Under the Trump administration, we are reasserting American power in a very powerful way in our home region. And our home region is very different than it was just a short while ago. The future will be, and we did this in my first term. We had great dominance in my first term, and we have, uh, far greater dominance right now.

Donald Trump 00:16:01-00:16:19 (18 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.74)

Everyone's coming back to us. The future will be determined by the ability to protect commerce and territory and resources that are core to national security. These are core to nati- -- our national security. Just like tariffs are, they made our country rich and they've made our national security strong, stronger than ever before.

Donald Trump 00:16:19-00:16:47 (28 sec)

MEDIUM (1.784)

But these are the iron laws that have always determined global power. And, uh, we're gonna keep it that way. We will secure our borders, we'll stop the terrorists, we will crash the cartels and we will defend our citizens against all threats, foreign and domestic. Other presidents may have lacked the courage or whatever to defend America, but I will never allow terrorists and criminals to operate with impunity against the United States.

Donald Trump 00:16:47-00:17:01 (15 sec)

WEAK (1.385)

This extremely successful operation should serve as warning to anyone who would threaten American sovereignty or endanger American lives. Very importantly, the embargo on all Venezuelan oil remains in full effect. The American armada remains poised in position, and the United States retains all military options until United States demands have been fully met and fully satisfied.

Donald Trump 00:17:01-00:17:24 (23 sec)

MEDIUM (1.877)

All political and military figures in Venezuela should understand what happened to Maduro can happen to them, and it will happen to them if they aren't just, fair, even to their people. The dictator and terrorist Maduro is finally gone in Venezuela. People are free, they're free again. It's been a long time for them, but they're free.

Donald Trump 00:17:24-00:17:43 (19 sec)

MEDIUM (1.581)

America's a safer nation this morning, it's a prouder nation this morning, because it didn't allow this horrible person and this country that was doing very bad things to us, it didn't allow it to happen. And the Western Hemisphere is right now a much safer place to be. So, I want to thank everybody for being here.

Donald Trump 00:17:43-00:18:05 (22 sec)

MEDIUM (1.706)

Uh, I want to thank General "Raizin" Caine. He's a fantastic man. I've worked with a lot of generals. I worked with some I didn't like, I wor ed with some I didn't respect, I worked w th some that just weren't good, but this guy is fantastic. I watched last night one of the most precise, uh, attacks on sovereignty.

Donald Trump 00:18:05-00:18:17 (12 sec)

MEDIUM (1.581)

I mean, it was, uh, an attack f- -- for justice. And I'm very proud of him, and I'm very proud of our Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, who I'm gonna ask to say a few words. Thank you very much. Okay.

Pete Hegseth 00:18:17-00:18:37 (20 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Thank you, Mr. President. Um, finally, a commander-in-ch ef of the world respects and the American people deserve. And as the president said, words can barely capture the bravery and the power and the precision of this historic operation. A massive joint military and law enforcement raid flawlessly executed by the greatest Americans our country has to offer.

Pete Hegseth 00:18:37-00:19:01 (24 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

American warriors are second to none, the best in the world and the best of our country. What I, what a l of us witnessed last night was sheer guts and grit, gallantry, and glory of the American warrior. I'm simply humbled by such man, such men. And I tip my hat to our chairman, Dan Raizin Caine and all those Americans who stood watch last night.

Pete Hegseth 00:19:01-00:19:22 (21 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Our warriors are the elite of America and, again, Pres dent Trump has your back. No other country on planet Earth, and it's not even close, could pull this kind of operation off. And no other president has ever shown this kind of leadership, courage, and resolve. The most powerful combination the world has even seen.

Pete Hegseth 00:19:22-00:19:41 (19 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

As the president said, our adversaries remain on notice. America can project our will anywhere, anytime. The coordination, the stealth, the lethality, the precision, the very long arm of American justice all on full display in the middle of the night. Nicolás Maduro had his chance, just like Iran had their chance, until they didn't and until he didn't. He effed around and he found out.

X

Pete Hegseth 00:19:41-00:20:05 (23 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

President Trump is deadly serious about stopping the flow of gangs and violence to our country, deadly serious about stopping the flow of drugs and poison to our people, deadly serious about getting back the oil that was stolen from us, and deadly serious about reestablishing American deterrent and dominance in the Western hemisphere.

Pete Hegseth 00:20:05-00:20:32 (28 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

This is about the safety, security freedom, and prosperity of the American people. This is America first This is peace through strength. And the United States War Department is proud to help deliver it. Welcome to 2026. And under President Trump, America is back. I'd like to welcome now our chairman, Chairman "Raizin" Caine to give a few more details about the operation.

Pete Hegseth 00:20:32-00:20:35 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Mr. Chair.

Dan Caine 00:20:35-00:21:13 (39 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Thank you, uh, thank you, Mr. Secretary. Thank you, uh, Mr. President and good morning. Last night on the order of the president of the United States and in support of a request from the Department of Justice, as the president said, the United States military conducted an apprehension mission in Caracas, Venezuela to bring to justice two indicted persons, Nicolás and Cecilia Maduro.

Dan Caine 00:21:13-00:21:50 (36 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

This operation known as Operation Absolute Resolve was discreet, precise, and conducted during the darkest hours of January 2nd and was in a culmination of months of planning and rehearsal, an operation that, frankly, only the United States military could undertake. What I'd like to do this morning is talk to you through some of the preparation and the details without compromising any of our tactics, techniques, and procedures.

Dan Caine 00:21:50-00:22:30 (40 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

There is always a chance that we'll be tasked to do this type of mission again. Our inter-agency work began months ago and built on decades of experience of integrating complex air, ground, space, and maritime operations. While the past two decades have honed the skills of our special operations forces, this particular miss on required every component of our joint force with soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and guardians working in unison with our intelligence agency partners and law enforcement teammates in an unprecedented operation.

Dan Caine 00:22:30-00:22:55 (25 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

We leveraged our unmatched intelligence capabilities and our years of experience in hunting terrorists, and we could not have done this mission without the incredible work by various intelligence agencies, including the CIA, NSA, and NSA. We watched, we waited, we prepared, we remained patient and professional.

X

Dan Caine 00:22:55-00:23:13 (18 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

This mission was meticulously planned, drawing lessons from decades of missions over the last many years, decades of, or many missions over these last many years. This was an audacious operation that only the United States could do. It required the utmost of precision and integration within our joint force, and the word integration does not explain the sheer complexity of such a mission.

Dan Caine 00:23:13-00:23:33 (20 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

An extraction so precise it involved more than 150 aircraft launching across the western hemisphere in close coordination, all coming together in time and place to layer effects for a single purpose, to get in an interdiction force into downtown Caracas while maintaining the element of tactical surprise.

Dan Caine 00:23:33-00:23:54 (21 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Failure of one component of this well-oiled machine would have endangered the entire mission, and failure is never an option for America's joint force. Those in the air over Caracas last night were willing to give their lives for those on the ground and in the helicopters. Let me talk a little bit about the preparation.

Dan Caine 00:23:54-00:24:04 (10 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

After months of work by our intelligence teammates to find Maduro and understand how he moved, where he lived, where he traveled, what he ate, what he wore, what were his pets. In early December, our force was set pending a series of aligned events.

Dan Caine 00:24:04-00:24:24 (21 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Key, was choosing the right day to minimize the potential for civilian harm and maximize the element of surprise and minimize the harm to the indicted personnel, so as the president said, "They could be brought to justice." And as the president said earlier today, "Weather in Venezuela is always a factor this time of the year." And over the weeks through Christmas and New Year's, the men and women of the United States military sat ready, patiently waiting for the right triggers to be met and the president to order us into action.

Dan Caine 00:24:24-00:24:43 (19 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Last night, the weather broke just enough, clearing a path that only the most skilled aviators in the world could maneuver through. Ocean, mountain, low cloud ceilings, but when tasked with a mission, this organization does not quit. At 10:46 PM Eastern c- -- time last night, the president ordered the United States military to move forward with this mission.

Dan Caine 00:24:43-00:25:11 (28 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

He said to us, and we appreciated it, Mr. President, "Good luck and God speed." And those words were transmitted to the entire joint force. Over the course of the night, aircraft began launching from 20 different bases on land and sea across the western

hemisphere. In total, more than 150 aircraft, bombers, fighters, intelligence, reconnaissance, surveillance, rotary wing were in the air last night.

▶ Dan Caine 00:25:11-00:25:31 (20 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Thousands and thousands of hours of experience were airborne. Our youngest crew member was 20 and our oldest crew member was 49, and there's simply no match for American military might. As the night began, the helicopters took off with the extraction force, which included law enforcement officers and began their flight into Venezuela at 100 feet above the water.

▶ Dan Caine 00:25:31-00:25:53 (22 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

As they approached Venezuelan shores, the United States began layering different effects provided by SPACECOM, CYBERCOM, and other members of the interagency to create a pathway. Overhead, those forces were protected from aircraft, were protected by aircraft from the United States Marines, the United States Navy, the United States Air Force, and the Air National Guard.

▶ Dan Caine 00:25:53-00:26:18 (25 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

The force included F-22s, F-35s, F-18s, EA-18s, E-2s, B-1 bombers, and other support aircraft, as well as numerous remotely piloted drones. As the force began to approach Caracas, the joint air component began d smantling and disabling the air defense systems in Venezuela, employing weapons to ensure the safe passage of the helicopters into the target area.

▶ Dan Caine 00:26:18-00:26:35 (17 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

The goal of our air component is, was, and always will be, to protect the helicopters and the ground force and get them to the target and get them home. As the force crossed the last point of high terrain, where'd they'd been hiding in the clutter, we assessed that we had maintained totally the element of surprise.

▶ Dan Caine 00:26:35-00:27:05 (29 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

As the helicopter force ingressed towards the objective at low level, we arrived at Maduro's compound at 1:01 AM Eastern Standard Time or 2:01 AM Caracas local time, and the apprehension force descended into Maduro's compound and moved with speed, precision, and discipline towards their objective and isolated the area to ensure the safety and security of the ground force while apprehending the indicted persons.

▶ Dan Caine 00:27:05-00:27:26 (21 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

On arrival into the target area, the helicopters came under fire and they replied with that fire with overwhelm ng force and self-defense. One of our aircraft was hit, but remained flyable, and as the president said earlier today, "All of our aircraft came home." And that aircraft remained flyable during the rest of the mission.

▶ Dan Caine 00:27:26-00:27:57 (31 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

As the operation unfolded at the compound, our air and ground intelligence teams provided real-time updates to the ground force, ensuring those forces could safely navigate the complex environment without unnecessary risk. The force remained protected by overhead tactical aviation. Maduro and his wife, both indicted, gave up, and were taken into custody by the Department of Justice, assisted by our incredible US military with professionalism and precision, wit- -- with no loss of US life.

Dan Caine 00:27:57-00:28:19 (22 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

After securing the indicted persons, the force began to prep for departure. Helicopters were called in to exfiltrate the extraction force, while fighter aircraft and remotely-piloted aircraft provided overhead coverage and suppressive fire. There were multiple self-defense engagements as the force began to withdraw out of Venezuela.

Dan Caine 00:28:19-00:28:39 (19 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

The force successfully exfiltrated and returned to their afloat launch bases, and the force was over the water at 3:29 AM Eastern Standard Time with indicted persons on board, and both Maduro and his wife were embarked aboard the USS Iwo Jima. In closing, what we've witnessed today is a powerful demonstration of America's joint force.

Dan Caine 00:28:39-00:28:58 (20 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

We think, we develop, we train, we rehearse, we debrief, we rehearse again and again, not to get it right, but to ensure that we cannot get it wrong. Our jobs are to integrate combat power so when the order comes, we can deliver overwhelming force at the time and the place of our choosing against any foe anywhere in the world.

Dan Caine 00:28:58-00:29:27 (28 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

I am immensely proud today of our joint force and filled with gratitude to represent them here today. There is simply no mission too difficult for these incredible professionals and the families that stand by them and support them. As we stand here this morning, our forces remain in the region at a high state of readiness, pr- -- prepared to project power, defend themselves, and our interests in the region.

Dan Caine 00:29:27-00:29:44 (17 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

This operation is a testament to the dedication and unwavering commitment to justice and our resolve to hold accountable those who threaten peace and stability. In closing, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the brave men and women who executed this mission. Their courage and tireless commitment to our nation are what makes us strong.

Dan Caine 00:29:44-00:29:48 (4 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Thank you, Mr. Secretary, and thank you, Mr. President.

Marco Rubio 00:29:48-00:30:08 (20 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Well, I don't have much to add to what you've heard now other than the following points. Uh, Nicholas Maduro was indicted in 2020 in the United States He is not the legitimate president of Venezuela. That's not just us saying it. The first Trump administration, the Biden administration, the second Trump administration, none of those three recognized him.

Marco Rubio 00:30:08-00:30:23 (15 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

He's not recognized by the European Union in multiple countries around the world. He is a fugitive of American justice with a \$50 million reward, uh, which I guess we save \$50 million. And, uh --

Donald Trump 00:30:23-00:30:25 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

I should make sure.

Marco Rubio 00:30:25-00:30:27 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Yeah, exactly, but, uh --

Donald Trump 00:30:27-00:30:29 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Don't, don't let anybody claim it.

Marco Rubio 00:30:29-00:30:29 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Laughs]

Donald Trump 00:30:29-00:30:31 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Nobody deserves it, but us.

Marco Rubio 00:30:31-00:30:49 (18 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

But I want to be clear about one thing. Nicholas Maduro had multiple opportunities to avoid this. He was provided multiple very, very, very generous offers and chose instead to act like a wild man, chose instead to play around. And the result is what we saw tonight. Uh, the other message here is the following.

Marco Rubio 00:30:49-00:31:11 (22 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

You have a guy, like many people around the world, they like to p ay games. You have a guy who decides he's gonna invite Iran into his country, is going to, you know, do the confiscation of American oil companies. He's gonna flood our country with gang members, is, is going to take Americans prisoner and try to hold him for hostage and trade him like he was able to do with a Biden administration

Marco Rubio 00:31:11-00:31:40 (29 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Basically, likes to play games all this time and thinks nothing's gonna happen. And I hope what people now understand is that we, we have a president. The 47th President of the United States is not a game player. When he tells you that he's going to do something, when he's go- -- tells you he's going to address a problem, he means it. He actions it. I, I can tell you, I've watched this process now for 14, 15 years, been around it. Everybody talks, "I'm going to do this.

Marco Rubio 00:31:40-00:32:22 (41 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

I'm going to do that. When I get there, we're going to do this. We're going to take --" This is a president of action. Like, I don't understand yet how they haven't figured this out. And now, if you don't know, now you know, because this is the way it's going

to play out. And I think people need to understand that this is not a president that just talks and does letters and press conferences and, you know, if he says he's serious about something, he means it. And, and this is something that was a direct threat to the national interest of the United States, and the president addressed it. There's a president of peace, by the way.

Marco Rubio 00:32:22-00:32:46 (24 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

I told you what I just said earlier. This guy had multiple opportunities to find his way somewhere else and figure out another. He could've been living somewhere else right now very happy, but instead, he wanted to play big boy. And so now, you know, he's got other sets of problems on his hands. And, uh, but I think that the message here should be for the world.

Marco Rubio 00:32:46-00:33:21 (35 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Look, the president doesn't go out looking for people to pick fights with. He's not, generally wants to get along with everybody. We'll talk and meet with anybody, but don't play games. Don't play games with this president's in office because it's not gonna turn out well. And so I, I hope that, uh, you know, um, you know, I guess, uh, that lesson was learned last night and, um, and we hope it'll be instructive moving forward.

Question 00:33:21-00:33:24 (4 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Is that a message for Cuba, Mr. President?

Question 00:33:24-00:33:27 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Mr. President, Mr. President --

Note 00:33:27-00:33:27 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

Donald Trump 00:33:27-00:33:28 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Please.

Question 00:33:28-00:33:30 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Inaudible] when you run Venezuela, so who's power right now?

Donald Trump 00:33:30-00:33:45 (15 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.695)

Well, we're gonna be running it with a group, and we're gonna make sure it's run properly We're gonna rebuild the oil infrastructure, which will cost billions of dollars. It'll be paid for by the oil companies directly. Uh, they will, uh, be reimbursed for what they're doing. But, uh, that's gonna be paid.

Donald Trump 00:33:45-00:34:02 (17 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.576)

And we're gonna get the oil flowing the way it should be. As you know, it was just a minor flow. It was actually a minor flow for what they have. Uh, but we're gonna run it properly, and we're gonna make sure the people of Venezuela are taken care of. We're gonna make sure the people that were forced out of Venezuela by this thug, uh, are also taken care of.

Note 00:34:02-00:34:02 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

Question 00:34:02-00:34:08 (6 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Mr. President, does the US running the country mean that US troops will be on the ground? How will that work?

Donald Trump 00:34:08-00:34:32 (24 sec)

WEAK (1.117)

Well, you know, they always say boots on the ground. Oh, so we're not afraid of boots on the ground if we have to have. We had boots on the ground last night at a very high level, actually. We're not afraid of it. We don't mind saying it, but, uh, we're gonna make sure that that country is run properly. We're not doing this in vain.

Donald Trump 00:34:32-00:34:59 (27 sec)

WEAK (1.121)

This is not, this is a very dangerous attack. This is an attack that could have gone very, very badly, could have gone very badly. We could have lost a lot of people last night. We could have lost a lot of, uh, dignity. We could have lost a lot of equipment. The equipment is less important, but, uh, we could have lost a lot, and we're going to make sure that this is proper.

Donald Trump 00:34:59-00:35:19 (20 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.942)

We're there now. We're ready to go again if we have to. We're going to run the com- -- country right. It's going to be run very, uh, judiciously, very fairly Uh, it's gonna make a lot of money. We're gonna give money to the people. We're gonna reimburse, uh, people that were taking advantage of. We're gonna take care of everybody.

Donald Trump 00:35:19-00:35:40 (21 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.921)

It's very important. We couldn't let them get away with it. You know, they stole our oil. We, we built that whole industry there. And they just took it over like we were nothing. And we had a president that decided not to do anything about it. So, uh, we did something about it. We're late, but we did something about it. Yeah, please.

Question 00:35:40-00:35:49 (9 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

What is the mechanism by which you're gonna run the country. Are you gonna designate US officials to coordinate?

Donald Trump 00:35:49-00:35:51 (3 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Yes.

Question 00:35:51-00:35:53 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Can you just unpack that?

Donald Trump 00:35:53-00:36:05 (12 sec)

WEAK (1.324)

It's all being, it's all being done right now. We're designating people. We're talking to people. We're designating, uh, various people, and we're gonna let you know who those people are.

Question 00:36:05-00:36:13 (7 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Mr. President, what's the group you mentioned that would run Venezuela?

Donald Trump 00:36:13-00:36:31 (18 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.882)

Well, it's largely going to be for a period of time, uh, the people that are standing right behind me. We're gonna be running it. We're gonna be bringing it back. It's a, it's a dead, you know, I talk about a dead country. A year and a half ago, we were a dead country. Now, we're the hottest country anywhere in the world.

Donald Trump 00:36:31-00:36:45 (14 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.804)

We're a country doing better than any country, anywhere in the world. And, uh, it required leadership. Venezuela has a lot of bad people in there, a lot of bad people that shouldn't be leading. We're not gonna take a chance that one of those people take over for Maduro. So, uh, you can look at, and, and others.

Donald Trump 00:36:45-00:37:01 (16 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.972)

We have fantastic people, including people in the military. So we're gonna have a group of people running it until such time as it can be put back on track, make a lot of money for the people, and give people a great way of life, and also reimbursement for people in our country that were forced out of Venezuela.

Note 00:37:01-00:37:01 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

Question 00:37:01-00:37:40 (39 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

You said earlier today that you weren't gonna back Machado to come back and be the opposition later in your Fox and Friends interview. And then you also mentioned the Vice President of Venezuela. Are you gonna work with Vice President of Venezuela? Or how do you foresee the relationship going?

▶

Donald Trump

00:37:40-00:38:04 (24 sec)

WEAK (1.021)

Well, I understand she was just sworn in, but she was, as you know, picked by Maduro. So Marco's working on that directly. He just had a conversation w th her, and she's essentially willing to do what we think is necessary to make Venezuela great again. Very simple.

▶

Question

00:38:04-00:38:32 (28 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Mr. President, uh, so, uh, Columbian President Gustavo Petro, uh, you know, a couple of weeks ago, you said he's gotta watch his ass. Um, and today he said he's not concerned about anything happening to him in the aftermath of this operation. So, uh, just what your message is about that?

▶

Donald Trump

00:38:32-00:38:50 (18 sec)

MEDIUM (1.595)

Well, he has cocaine mills. He has, uh, factories where he makes cocaine. And yeah, I think I stick by my first statement. He's making cocaine, they're sending it into the Un ted States, so he does have to watch his.

▶

Note

00:38:50-00:38:50 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

▶

Question

00:38:50-00:38:54 (4 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Did you notify any members of Congress in advance?

▶

Donald Trump

00:38:54-00:38:58 (5 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Marco, do you wanna talk about that because you were involved?

▶

Marco Rubio

00:38:58-00:39:34 (35 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Sure. We called members of Congress immediately after. This was not the kind of mission that you can do congressional notification on. It was a, a trigger based mission in which conditions had to be met night after night. We watched and monitored that for a number of days. So it's just s- -- simply not the kind of mission you can call people and say, "Hey, we may do this at some point in the next 15 days." But it's largely a law enforcement function.

▶

Marco Rubio

00:39:34-00:39:57 (23 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Remember, at the end of the day, at, at its core, this was an arrest of two indicted fugitives of American justice, and the Department of War supported the Department of Justice in that job. Now, there are broader policy implications here but it's just not the kind of mission that you can pre-notify because it endangers the mission.

▶

Note

00:39:57-00:39:57 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

Donald Trump 00:39:57-00:40:17 (20 sec)

WEAK (1.156)

Plus, if I could add one thing to that. Congress has a tendency to leak. This would not be good. If they leaked, General, I think it would have been maybe a very different result. But I, I have to say, they knew we were coming at some point, you know? A lot of ships out there, they sort of knew we were coming.

Donald Trump 00:40:17-00:40:22 (5 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

We went there. But, but Congress, Congress will leak, and we don't want leakers.

Note 00:40:22-00:40:22 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

Question 00:40:22-00:40:39 (17 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Mr. President, you were one of the only people to watch this all play out live. What was Maduro doing, uh, when the US forces entered what I assume would be his home? And also, was there any point where the US was considering if Maduro pushed back or resisted killing Maduro?

Donald Trump 00:40:39-00:41:00 (21 sec)

WEAK (1.406)

It could have happened. It could have happened. He was trying to get into a safe place. You know what a safe place is all steel, and he wasn't able to make it to the door because our guys were so fast, they went through the opposition so fast. And there was a lot of opposition. You know, people were wondering, did we get them by surprise?

Donald Trump 00:41:00-00:41:22 (22 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.797)

Sort of surprise, but they were waiting for something. There was a lot of opposition, there was a lot of gunfire. You saw some of it today. Uh, but he was trying to get to his safe place, which wasn't safe because we would have had the door blown up in about 47, I think 47 seconds, they say, on average, uh, regardless of how thick the steel was.

Donald Trump 00:41:22-00:41:30 (7 sec)

MEDIUM (1.517)

It was a very thick door, it was a very heavy door, but he was unable to get to that door. He made it to the door, he was unable to close it.

Note 00:41:30-00:41:30 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

X

▶

Donald Trump00:41:30-00:41:31 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Go ahead, finish.

▶

Question00:41:31-00:41:36 (5 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Do you know where is Maduro going to be? In the time being, right now, do you know his exact whereabouts?

▶

Donald Trump00:41:36-00:41:43 (7 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.874)

Well, eventually, ultimately, in the near future, he's going to be brought to New York.

▶

Question00:41:43-00:41:46 (3 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

And where is he going to be held? Where is he going to be held in New York, do you you know?

▶

Donald Trump00:41:46-00:41:49 (4 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Uh, that's going to be up to the officials that do these things.

▶

Note00:41:49-00:41:50 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

▶

Question00:41:50-00:41:59 (10 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

President, Mr. President, Mr. President, the US has something of a mixed track record of ousting dictators without necessarily a plan for what comes afterwards.

▶

Donald Trump00:41:59-00:42:00 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Not with me then.

▶

Question00:42:00-00:42:03 (3 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Did that weigh on your decision-making?

▶

Donald Trump00:42:03-00:42:22 (18 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.741)

Well, that's why we have different presidents, but with me, that's not true. Uh, with me, we've had a perfect track record of, uh, winning. We win a lot, and we win. If you look at Soleimani, you look at al-Baghdadi, you look at the Midnight Hammer, the Midnight Hammer was incredible. Right now, you, you wouldn't have peace in the Middle East.

▶

Donald Trump00:42:22-00:42:39 (18 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.014)



We have, essentially, peace in the Middle East because of that. If you didn't if we weren't successful with Midnight Hammer, you wouldn't have peace in the Middle East. So, uh, with me, you've had a lot of, a lot of victory. You've had only victories, you ve had no losses. Yeah.

Note 00:42:39-00:42:39 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

Question 00:42:39-00:42:52 (12 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Mr. President, how long do you expect the US to run Venezuela, and how soon do you want the Venezuelan people to hold elections?

Donald Trump 00:42:52-00:43:12 (20 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.992)

So, I'd like to do it quickly, but it takes a period of time. You know, we're rebuilding, we have to rebuild their whole infrastructure. Their infrastructure is rotted. It's actually very dangerous. It's, uh, you know, blow-up territory. Oil is very dangerous. It's a very dangerous thing to take out of the ground.

Donald Trump 00:43:12-00:43:37 (25 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.947)

Uh, it can kill a lot of people. It has killed a lot of people doing just that. Uh, the infrastructure is old, it's rotted. Much of it is stuff that we put there 25 years ago, and we're gonna re- -- be replacing it, and we're going to take a lot of money out so that we can take care of the country. Yeah.

Note 00:43:37-00:43:37 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

Question 00:43:37-00:43:39 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Are you saying that Secretary Rubio and --

Question 00:43:39-00:43:48 (9 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Mr. President, China, Russia, and Iran have interests in Venezuela. How does this operation affect your relationships with them when it comes to the oil --

Donald Trump 00:43:48-00:44:18 (30 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.783)

Well, in terms of China and Russia, yeah, uh, well, Russia, when we get things straightened out, but in terms of other countries that want oil, uh, we're in the oil business, we're gonna sell it to them. We're not gonna say we're not gonna give it to them. In other words, we'll be selling oil, uh, probably in much larger doses because they couldn't produce very much because their infrastructure was so bad.

Donald Trump 00:44:18-00:44:24 (7 sec)

WEAK (1.476)

So, we'll be selling large amounts of oil to other countries, many of whom are using it now, but I would say, many more wi l come.

-
-  **Note** 00:44:24-00:44:24 (sec) NO STRESSLENS
- [Crosstalk]
-
-  **Question** 00:44:24-00:44:30 (6 sec) NO STRESSLENS
- Mr. President, what is your message to the people of Venezuela?
-
-  **Question** 00:44:30-00:44:34 (4 sec) NO STRESSLENS
- Are you saying that, Mr. President, are you saying that, oh.
-
-  **Donald Trump** 00:44:34-00:44:35 (1 sec) NO STRESSLENS
- Go ahead, behind you, please.
-
-  **Question** 00:44:35-00:44:48 (13 sec) NO SIGNAL (0)
- Mr. President, thank you. What is your message to the people of Venezuela today? Of course, the, the civilian population specifically, they have a lot of questions. What is your message to the people of Venezuela?
-
-  **Donald Trump** 00:44:48-00:45:03 (15 sec) NO SIGNAL (0.387)
- That you're gonna have peace, justice, you're going to have, uh, some of the riches that you should have had for a long period of time that was stolen from you. But you're gonna have peace and you're gonna have safety, you're gonna have justice, you're gonna have a country, you're gonna have a real country.
-
-  **Donald Trump** 00:45:03-00:45:38 (35 sec) NO SIGNAL (0.467)
- You're gonna have, potentially, a great country. You know, if you go back 20 years, maybe even a little longer ago, that was a great country, and they destroyed it. Remember, I said that if we lose this election, the United States will be Venezuela on steroids. That's what would have happened. Had we lost the election, the 2024 election, we suffered so badly when you look at the border from 2020. What, what they did, what Joe Biden administration did to our country should never be forgotten.
-
-  **Donald Trump** 00:45:38-00:45:51 (13 sec) NO SIGNAL (0.522)
- But if we had to go through another year of that, we wouldn't have, we would be exactly where Venezuela was in terms, I, I used to say, if they win, we're gonna be Venezuela on steroids, and that's what would've happened.
-
-  **Note** 00:45:51-00:45:51 (sec) NO STRESSLENS
- [Crosstalk]
-
-  **Question** 00:45:51-00:46:00 (9 sec) NO SIGNAL (0)
- Mr. President, thank you. Are you saying that Secretary Hegseth and Rubio are going to be running Venezuela, and will you be sending in US military trips to provide --
-

- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:46:00-00:46:19 (19 sec) WEAK (1.243)
- There could be a team that's working with the people of Venezuela to make sure that we have Venezuela right, because for us to just leave, who's gonna take over? I mean, there is nobody to take over. You have a vice president who's been appointed by Maduro, and right now. She's the Vice President, and she's, I guess, the President.
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:46:19-00:46:44 (25 sec) NO SIGNAL (0.668)
- She was sworn as President just a little while ago. She had a long conversation with Marco, and she said, "We'll do whatever you need." Uh, she, I think she was quite gracious, but she really doesn't have a choice. We're gonna have this done right. We're not gonna just do this with Maduro, then leave, like everybody else leave and say, you know, "Let it go to hell." If we just left, it has zero chance of ever coming back.
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:46:44-00:47:06 (22 sec) NO SIGNAL (0.752)
- We'll run it properly, we'll run it professionally. We'll have the greatest oil companies in the world going and invest billions and billions of dollars, and take out money, use that money in Venezuela, and the biggest beneficiary are gonna be the people of Venezuela, and also, I can't stress this strongly enough, the people that got thrown out of Venezuela that are now in the United States.
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:47:06-00:47:12 (6 sec) NO STRESSLENS
- And frankly, some wanna stay and some probably wanna go back. Yeah.
- ▶ **Note** 00:47:12-00:47:12 (sec) NO STRESSLENS
- [Crosstalk]
- ▶ **Question** 00:47:12-00:47:19 (7 sec) NO SIGNAL (0)
- Mr. President, what's being done to protect Americans in the country, and were any of the detained Americans --
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:47:19-00:47:31 (12 sec) WEAK (1.38)
- Well, right now, they are very protected because nobody's gonna mess with us. They're very protected. The people have, and we let them know that, uh, you better not touch one of them.
- ▶ **Note** 00:47:31-00:47:31 (sec) NO STRESSLENS
- [Crosstalk]
- ▶ **Question** 00:47:31-00:47:37 (6 sec) NO STRESSLENS
- Are you concerned that bad elements of the Maduro regime will remain in place?
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:47:37-00:47:44 (7 sec) WEAK (1.337)

Well, we know who they are. We're on 'em, and, uh, they're acting much differently now than they would've acted two days ago.

- 

Question 00:47:44-00:47:44 (sec) NO STRESSLENS

[Inaudible]
- 

Donald Trump 00:47:44-00:47:48 (4 sec) NO STRESSLENS

O ay, wait. Behind you, please.
- 

Question 00:47:48-00:47:54 (6 sec) NO STRESSLENS

Mr. President, why is running a country in South America Ame- -- America first?
- 

Donald Trump 00:47:54-00:48:22 (27 sec) NO SIGNAL (0.414)

Well, I think it is because we wanna surround ourself with good neighbors. We wanna surround ourself with stability. Uh, we wanna surround ourself with energy. We have tremendous energy in that country. It's very important that we protect it. We need that for ourselves. We need that for the world, and we wanna make sure we can protect it.
- 

Question 00:48:22-00:48:23 (1 sec) NO STRESSLENS

Mr. President. [Inaudible]
- 

Donald Trump 00:48:23-00:48:24 (1 sec) NO STRESSLENS

Yes, sir. Please, go ahead.
- 

Question 00:48:24-00:48:26 (2 sec) NO STRESSLENS

Yeah. So [Inaudible] for Cuba [Inaudible] Canal?
- 

Donald Trump 00:48:26-00:48:46 (20 sec) WEAK (1.123)

Well, Cuba's an interesting case. Cuba is, you know, uh, not doing very well right now. It, uh, that system has not been a very good one for Cuba. The people there have suffered for many, many years, and I think Su- -- Cuba is gonna be something we'll end up talking about, 'cause Cuba is a failing nation right now, very badly failing nation.
- 

Donald Trump 00:48:46-00:49:07 (21 sec) NO SIGNAL (0.734)

And we wanna help the people of, uh, it's very similar in the sense that we wanna help the people in Cuba, but we wanna also help the people that were forced out of Cuba and living in this country. Do you wanna say something about that, Marco, please?

Marco Rubio 00:49:07-00:49:31 (24 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Well, I mean, I just gave you a statement a few minutes ago about, uh, you know, when the president speaks, you should [Laughs] take him seriously. So, uh, suffice it to say, you know, Cuba is a disaster. It's, it's run by incompetent, senile men, and, and, and in some cases, uh, not senile but incompetent nonetheless.

Marco Rubio 00:49:31-00:49:56 (25 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

It has no economy. It's in total collapse. And by the way, you know, they were crit- -- you know, all the guards that helped protect Maduro, this is well known, their whole spy agency, all that were full of Cubans. I mean, they basically, it's amazing. This poor coun- -- island took over Venezuela in some cases.

Marco Rubio 00:49:56-00:50:16 (20 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

One of the biggest problems that Venezuelans have is they have to declare independence from Cuba, that tried to basically colonize it from a security standpoint. So yeah, look, if I lived in Havana and I was in the government, I'd be concerned at least, a little bit.

Question 00:50:16-00:50:17 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Inaudible] turning off the oil to Cuba from Venezuela?

Marco Rubio 00:50:17-00:50:27 (10 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Well, you, uh, the president announced a week ago that anything that's sanctioned, that's sanctioned oil --

Question 00:50:27-00:50:28 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Mm-hmm.

Marco Rubio 00:50:28-00:50:31 (3 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

-- it, it's not gonna be allowed to get there, so that --

Donald Trump 00:50:31-00:50:31 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Yes.

Marco Rubio 00:50:31-00:50:33 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

-- that's, that's an, uh, preexisting --

Question 00:50:33-00:50:33 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Inaudible]

Donald Trump 00:50:33-00:50:34 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

The answer is, the answer is yes.

Question 00:50:34-00:50:36 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Mr. President?

Donald Trump 00:50:36-00:50:36 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Yes.

Question 00:50:36-00:50:39 (3 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Is the US aware of the location of Opposition Leader Machado, and have you been in contact with her?

Donald Trump 00:50:39-00:50:49 (9 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

No. We haven't really, no.

Question 00:50:49-00:50:49 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Inaudible]

Donald Trump 00:50:49-00:50:50 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

We haven't.

Question 00:50:50-00:50:50 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Crosstalk]

Donald Trump 00:50:50-00:51:00 (10 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.795)

Oh, I think it would be very tough for her to be the leader if she doesn't have the support within, or the respect within the country. She's a very nice woman, but she doesn't have the respect within the [Inaudible]

Question 00:51:00-00:51:05 (5 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Mr. President, is it possible the the US ends up administrating Venezuela for years, you know, in the situ --

Donald Trump 00:51:05-00:51:13 (7 sec)

WEAK (1.111)

Well, you know, it won't cost us anything, because the, uh, money coming outta of the ground is very substantial, so it's not gonna cost us anything.

-
- ▶ **Question** 00:51:13-00:51:13 (sec) NO STRESSLENS
- [Inaudible]
-
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:51:13-00:51:36 (23 sec) MEDIUM (1.505)
- We will, well, we want safety there. We wanna be surrounded by countries that aren't housing all of our enemies all over the world. That's what that was happening, and you don't wanna have that. Uh, but we're going to be, uh, rebuilding and, and we're, we're not spending money. Uh, the oil companies are gonna go in, they're gonna spend money, they're gonna, we're gonna take back the oil that, frankly, we shoulda taken back a long time ago.
-
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:51:36-00:51:58 (22 sec) WEAK (1.144)
- A lot of money is coming outta the ground. We're gonna get reimbursed for a l of that. We're gonna get reimbursed for everything that we spend. So it's gonna be, uh, it's going to be a very important, it's gonna be a very important, this is a very big evening that took place last night. We have to be surrounded by safe, secure countries, and we also have to have energy.
-
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:51:58-00:52:16 (18 sec) NO SIGNAL (0.297)
- Very important. We have to have energy that's real energy, not where they're getting 4% and 5% of the energy out of the ground. You take a look, it was such a disaster. So what's going to happen with Venezuela, I think, over the next period of a year is gonna be a great thing, and the people of Venezuela will be the biggest beneficiaries.
-
- ▶ **Question** 00:52:16-00:52:22 (5 sec) NO SIGNAL (0)
- Mr. President [Inaudible] last, what did you last, uh, Mr. President, thank you. What did you last speak to Maduro about when you spoke, and is the US at --
-
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:52:22-00:52:22 (1 sec) NO STRESSLENS
- Well, I don't wanna get --
-
- ▶ **Question** 00:52:22-00:52:23 (1 sec) NO STRESSLENS
- war with Venezuela?
-
- ▶ **Donald Trump** 00:52:23-00:52:30 (8 sec) NO SIGNAL (0.132)
- into the conversations, but I did have conversations with him, and I said, uh, "You gotta surrender." And I actually thought he was pretty close to doing so, but now he wished he did, yeah.
-
- ▶ **Question** 00:52:30-00:52:52 (21 sec) NO SIGNAL (0)
- Mr. President. [Inaudible] Can you explain, you said that, uh Maduro is responsible for drug trafficking. You recently pardoned the former president of Honduras, who was convicted on many drug trafficking, can you explain how these two situations are

different --

Donald Trump 00:52:52-00:52:52 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Well, the, the --

Question 00:52:52-00:52:52 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

-- and would you ever --

Donald Trump 00:52:52-00:52:53 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Yeah.

Question 00:52:53-00:52:53 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

-- pardon Maduro?

Donald Trump 00:52:53-00:53:15 (22 sec)

WEAK (1.099)

I endorsed, as you know, the winning president, the man who won in Honduras. I endorsed the man who won in, uh, Chile. I endorsed the one, man who won in Argentina, and we are doing very well with that whole group. What, the man that I pardoned was, if you could equate it to us, he was treated like the Biden administration treated a man named Trump.

Donald Trump 00:53:15-00:53:43 (28 sec)

WEAK (1.028)

That didn't work out too well for them. This was a man who was persecuted very unfairly. He was outta the country. He was persecuted very unfairly. And there are a number of them, and we felt that it was a very unfair situation that happened to him. Uh, he's also a party member of the man who won, so obviously, the people liked what I did, and one of the reasons that was done is because of the fact that the party in power s- -- felt very strongly that that man was treated very badly.

Donald Trump 00:53:43-00:53:54 (11 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.465)

I studied it very quickly, and then I studied it in great detail. I went to a lot of the people standing behind me, and they felt that that man was persecuted and treated very badly. That's why I gave him a pardon.

Question 00:53:54-00:54:05 (11 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0)

Mr. President. [Inaudible] You referenced boots on the ground earlier. Can you just sort of button this up? Do you envision the US military having a presence in Venezuela as the US runs that country?

Donald Trump 00:54:05-00:54:26 (21 sec)

WEAK (1.14)

Well, no. We're gonna have a presence in Venezuela as it pertains to oil, because we have to have, we s- -- we're sending our expertise, and, uh, so you may need something, not very much. But no we're gonna be taking out a tremendous amount of wealth out of the ground, and that wealth is going to the people of Venezuela and people from outside of Venezuela that used to be in Venezuela.

Donald Trump 00:54:26-00:54:37 (11 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.526)

And it goes also to the United States of America in the form of reimbursement for the damages caused us by that country. So, I wanna thank you all very much. Thank you. Do you have one? Yes, please.

Question 00:54:37-00:54:38 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Mr President --

Donald Trump 00:54:38-00:54:40 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

You were so nice before. I'm gonna give you the final question. Go ahead.

Question 00:54:40-00:54:41 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Thank you, Mr. President.

Donald Trump 00:54:41-00:54:42 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

Unless it's a bad question.

Question 00:54:42-00:54:42 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

[Laughs] It's about Putin.

Donald Trump 00:54:42-00:54:45 (2 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

In which case, I'll go, one word. It's about who?

Question 00:54:45-00:54:46 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

It's about Putin, if you want to know.

Donald Trump 00:54:46-00:54:46 (1 sec)

NO STRESSLENS

About Putin. Well --

Question 00:54:46-00:54:46 (sec)

NO STRESSLENS

O ay.

	Donald Trump 00:54:46-00:54:49 (3 sec)	NO STRESSLENS
	-- that's always nice, to talk about Putin.	
	Question 00:54:49-00:54:50 (1 sec)	NO STRESSLENS
	[Laughs] You had a phone call with him --	
	Donald Trump 00:54:50-00:54:51 (sec)	NO STRESSLENS
	Yeah.	
	Question 00:54:51-00:54:54 (3 sec)	NO STRESSLENS
	-- on Monday. Did he talk at all about Maduro? Did y'all talk about this?	
	Donald Trump 00:54:54-00:54:56 (2 sec)	NO STRESSLENS
	No, we didn't. We never spoke about Maduro.	
	Question 00:54:56-00:54:58 (2 sec)	NO STRESSLENS
	Are you mad at him right now? I mean, there's this intelligence --	
	Donald Trump 00:54:58-00:55:03 (5 sec)	WEAK (1.411)
	I'm not thrilled with Putin. I'm not thr lled with Putin. He's killing too many people.	
	Question 00:55:03-00:55:06 (3 sec)	NO STRESSLENS
	I think it was an entire --	
	Donald Trump 00:55:06-00:55:26 (21 sec)	NO SIGNAL (0.729)
	I thought that would be so, I settled eight and one quarter war. You know what the one quarter was? Thailand and Cambodia, I did it again. They were, they broke out, and I did it in about five hours and I settled it. I'm giving myself one quarter, so I'm up to now eight and one quarter. In other words, settled the war, but then, they broke out.	
	Donald Trump 00:55:26-00:55:49 (22 sec)	WEAK (1.404)
	They had a pretty bad breakout. Over the last four days, I got them to go back to peace. So, I only give one quarter. I thought the easiest one would be, one of the easier ones would be Russia Ukraine. It's not, and, uh, they both have done some pretty bad things. And look, that's Biden's war, that's not my war, but I wanna stop the lives.	
	Donald Trump 00:55:49-00:56:16 (27 sec)	NO SIGNAL (0.668)

Did you see where last month, 30,000, this last, it was 27. 27,000 the month before. 30,000 most y soldiers were killed this last month. 30,000. I wanna stop that. You know, I got NATO to pay 5% instead of the 2% that they weren't paying. They weren't paying two, now they pay five, and we send them a lot of munitions.

Donald Trump 00:56:16-00:56:34 (18 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.745)

We send them a lot of things, missiles and various other things, a lot, and they pay. The United States is not losing money. We're probably making money on that. It's the last thing I care about. I just wanna stop all those people. We're losing 25, 30,000 human beings. They come from two places that are very far away.

Donald Trump 00:56:34-00:56:57 (23 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.813)

But, if I can stop because it's something I've been pretty good at doing, deals, I guess, it's all a deal. Life is a big deal But if I can stop that war and stop 30,000 young people, in addition to the fact that people are being killed in Kiev, people are being killed in other cities throughout, you know, a much smaller number, but they're being killed, viciously killed.

Donald Trump 00:56:57-00:57:14 (18 sec)

WEAK (1.04)

So, I'm not happy about it. I thought that would be something that would get solved. We have Mr. Witkoff here. I think that we're making progress, but that's a war that should have never happened. If I were president, it would've never happened. Putin says it, everybody says it. If I were president, that would have never happened.

Donald Trump 00:57:14-00:57:42 (27 sec)

WEAK (1.04)

But I inherited that war. That was Joe Biden, Zelenskyy, and Putin. I came into the situation and it's a mess. And I will say this, I watched an operation last night that was so precise, that was so brilliant. I mean, it was incredible. Uh, if we had our people, like this general and our people involved, uh, that war, that war would not have gone on very long, that I can tell you.

Donald Trump 00:57:42-00:57:53 (11 sec)

NO SIGNAL (0.616)

That war, to use an old term, that war has become a bloodbath, and we want it to get stopped. Thank you very much everybody.

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