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By a guest author  
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## ***Mercenaries launch attack on Venezuelan coast, driven back***

*Workers World received this statement May 4 that originated from the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry about the May 3 attack on that country's shores, made even more ominous by the presence of U.S. Navy warships in the waters off Venezuela. Since that day the Venezuelans report that they stopped another similar attack, arresting eight mercenaries, including two former U.S. Special Forces members.*

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On the recent mercenary attack on Venezuela:

- In the early hours of May 3, 2020, the Venezuelan Armed Force and the National Bolivarian Police repelled the incursion of a group of armed mercenaries into the coastal state of La Guaira.
- The mercenaries travelled from Colombia in speedboats and were planning, together with local accomplices, to initiate terrorist operations aimed at government institutions and State officials, according to testimony given by those captured.

- Venezuelan intelligence gathered information from Colombia and was prepared to confront the incursion. Venezuelan forces engaged the armed mercenaries, and as a result eight of them died and two were captured.
- This is an ongoing operation, as there may be more mercenaries attempting to enter the country.
- According to preliminary investigations, the operation was linked to another group of mercenaries based in Colombia, who, under the orders of retired General Cliver Alcalá, had been training for months in Colombia and had acquired arms to carry out a series of attacks in Venezuela aimed at producing the violent overthrow of President Nicolás Maduro. Alcalá revealed his operations to Colombian media last March as Venezuelan authorities publicly denounced his actions. Alcalá then handed himself in to U.S. authorities and is still collaborating with them.
- Investigations also point to drug-trafficking as the source of financing. One of the captured suspects confessed to having been a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) asset and having participated in previous operations aimed against the Venezuelan government.
- During the operation, weapons were seized, both being brought in, as well as other equipment, including armored cars that were seized from accomplices in the mainland. High-caliber rifles, uniforms, satellite phones were among the items seized.
- One of the downed mercenaries was former Capt. Robert Levid Colina, also known as “Pantera,” who had been previously identified by Alcalá as one of his accomplices. He also had ties to last year’s April 30 coup attempt led by Juan Guaidó and Leopoldo López.



Other considerations:

- This is just another attempt at provoking violent attacks in Venezuela that have been planned in Colombia and received support from the United States, like the assassination attempt against President Maduro with drones on Aug. 4, 2018, and the more recent incursion attempts frustrated at the Colombian border in March.
- Just a few days ago, AP published a report mentioning the group of mercenaries working with Alcalá and placing responsibility on a former Green Beret by the name of Jordan Goudreau, and although it mentions Goudreau had met with members of Trump's security team and with Guaidó's staff, the article plays these ties down and portrays him as acting on his own.
- Last March a cruise ship violently stormed a Venezuelan Coast Guard vessel and sank it when it was asked to leave the proximity of Venezuelan coasts. The ship, flying a Portuguese flag, refused to hand over information on the passengers it was carrying at the moment.

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