

## Trump's Oil Coup: "We're Going to Run Venezuela" and Get Paid "Out of the Ground"

### News:

On 3 January 2026 at Mar-a-Lago, President Donald Trump said that U.S. forces had captured Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro. He added that the United States was "going to run the country" during a "transition," and claimed the operation "won't cost us a penny" because the U.S. would be repaid from "money coming out of the ground" (a reference to Venezuelan oil) while signaling that U.S. oil companies would move in to restart production and profit from it.

### Comment:

When a U.S. president announces that the United States has taken another country's leader and will "run the country," he is not describing a normal law-enforcement action. He is describing regime change and is even trying to make it sound like a financial transaction. This is the law of the jungle unmasked! The U.S. wants to fool the world by rephrasing Venezuelan sovereignty as a debt relation and its oil as the collateral. Trump repeatedly framed Venezuela's oil as something the U.S. is owed, saying that Venezuela "stole" it and therefore the U.S. can step in, administer the state, and get "paid back." That is the classic imperial story: power takes, then calls the taking "restitution."

Trump's propaganda speech has confused investment with ownership. It is what the British in the 19<sup>th</sup> century called the "white man's burden" while stripping resources and starving its colonized peoples by the millions.

Foreign firms can build wells, pipelines, and refineries, but that does not grant permanent title over a country's subsoil resources, and it does not give the foreign firm's government a license to govern. After formal colonialism, newly independent states fought, with U.S. support, for international principles that reject that logic. The U.S. itself established the legitimacy of the United Nations, but only as a tool to roll back European colonialism when it could open the door for its neocolonial hegemony over world resources with its own companies, except when it didn't work in their favour! One of those instances was U.N. General Assembly Resolution 1803 (1962) on "permanent sovereignty over natural resources," which affirms that peoples and nations have rights over their natural wealth and that these resources should serve national development and public well-being. The U.S. here joined the UK as the only two countries to vote against it! This principle matters because it was designed to block exactly the claim Trump is making: that past foreign involvement can be converted into present-day ownership.

Trump claims that Venezuela stole U.S. oil, but history tells a very different story. Under Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez, a social democrat from the Democratic Action party and not a communist; Venezuela created its state oil company, PDVSA, through nationalization on 1 January 1976, formally asserting state control over the petroleum industry. Importantly, this was not a simple "take" with no

remedy: U.S. government records from the time note that by 28 October 1975 most U.S. petroleum companies covered by the nationalisation law had accepted Venezuela's compensation offer, and that Venezuela indemnified the expropriated companies about \$1.03 billion in a negotiated, legal settlement process, which was not "theft."

Later, Venezuela had conflicts with foreign companies over contracts, taxes, and control; especially under Hugo Chávez. Some disputes ended in arbitration and court rulings, and some awards were substantial. If a state acts unlawfully or breaks a contract, the remedy is legal process with arbitration, litigation towards negotiated settlement, not foreign administration by force.

So, Trump was lying when he said: "We built Venezuela's oil industry... and the socialist regime stole it from us". Trump's remaking of the Monroe doctrine as a reassertion of imperialism in the Western Hemisphere treats development as a chain of ownership: if U.S. capital once profited there, Venezuela's later assertion of control over its resources is falsely called "theft." This U.S. piracy motive is hard to miss. Trump said the occupation "won't cost us a penny" because repayment will come from "money coming out of the ground," and he pointed to U.S. oil companies spending billions and making money as production resumes. That is not a humanitarian "transition" to "freedom" as Trump claimed; it is an extraction plan for a huge prize by an occupying power described as reimbursement. The scale of the prize is huge. The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates Venezuela has 303 billion barrels of proved crude reserves, which is one of the largest totals on Earth.

Trump is aggressively reviving the Monroe doctrine as an operating rule for the hemisphere. The administration's National Security Strategy explicitly advances a "Trump Corollary" to "restore American preeminence" in the Western Hemisphere, and Trump himself has promoted this revival as the doctrine being "alive and well." Thus, Venezuela is not an exception but an opening test of a broader colonial vision: the same worldview that has floated "taking back" the Panama Canal and even annexing Canada and Greenland, treating the Americas as a U.S.-managed zone rather than a region of sovereign states.

The U.S. government tries to frame all of this as policing. The U.S. has accused Maduro of serious crimes and indicted him. But there is a categorical difference between prosecution and invasion. Once a head of state is seized through a military operation and U.S. rule is declared, it is no longer enforcing law, it is naked aggression and here the U.S. cowboy is the thief pretending to be a modern-day Robin-Hood taking from the rich to the poor.

Who will stand against this bully? The US was angry because Venezuela was helping Russia and trading with China, but neither Russia nor China could stand against America. The world is waiting and in need of a new power to be reborn and spread righteousness.

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