
Washington uses Colombia for 'cheap spectacles' against Caracas – Venezuelan FM

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Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza accused US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo of using the tensions on the border with Colombia to stage a publicity stunt as part of a smear campaign against Caracas.

The US and Colombia turned the beleaguered Colombian border town of Cucuta into a “*regular stage for their most decadent and cheap spectacles*,” Arreaza [tweeted](#) on Sunday in response to Pompeo’s visit in the area.

The consequences of the criminal blockade imposed by his [Pompeo] government on Venezuela are too grave to count. It has created death, suffering and need.

Earlier, Venezuelan migrants living in camps on the Colombian side of the border rioted over food rations and clashed with local police. Towns on the Venezuelan side also saw clashes between law enforcement and protesters.

The unrest was exacerbated by the opposition’s attempts to drive trucks filled with US-sponsored aid into Venezuela. The authorities refused to let them pass, denouncing the move as a “*PR stunt*,” and citing suspicions that Washington might use the trucks to smuggle in weapons.

Read more [Venezuela aid truck torched by protesters, MSM finally admit... but of course Maduro's still to blame](#)

As tensions mounted, US officials and some in the Western media accused the Venezuelan government of setting one of the trucks on fire during a dramatic confrontation at a border bridge with Colombia, but footage from the scene and additional reporting revealed that the truck was in fact set on fire by opposition activists.

Nevertheless, during his stay in Cucuta, Mike Pompeo met with a group of Venezuelan migrants and once again urged Caracas to accept the US-sent *"humanitarian aid."*

Venezuela for its part stated that it will only accept aid sponsored by the UN and global relief organizations like the Red Cross, which Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro [struck](#) a deal with earlier this week.

On Sunday, Pompeo further blasted Maduro from Colombia, saying the US *"will continue to utilize every economic and political means at our disposal to help the Venezuelan people."* He mentioned economic sanctions and visa revocations for Venezuelan officials among the means to pressure the government into succumbing to the opposition.

Washington openly backed opposition leader Juan Guaido when he declared himself 'interim president' of Venezuela in January. The US slapped Caracas with a number of economic restrictions and urged others to follow suit. US President Donald Trump refused to rule out military intervention should the other methods to oust Maduro fail.

Maduro, meanwhile, vowed to continue to defend the nation's sovereignty against any foreign attack. He has repeatedly slammed the US for plotting to launch a coup to topple him. That aside, officials in Caracas also [accused](#) Washington of having a hand in the country's recent major blackouts.
