
Venezuela to Send Troops to Train at Bolivia's 'Anti-Imperialist' Military Academy

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The school is seen as the anti-School of the Americas, which the U.S. used to train Latin American soldiers in torture and counterinsurgency methods.

Venezuela will send troops to train at [Bolivia's "anti-imperialist" military academy](#), the country's defense minister announced Monday.

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"I have been instructed by Mr. Pdte @ NicolasMaduro to send FANB military professionals to train in Bolivia's Anti-imperialist School," Venezuelan Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino Lopez announced on his Twitter account.

The announcement came shortly after Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro met briefly with Bolivian President Evo Morales at the airport in Maiquetía, Venezuela, with Morales en route to New York for the U.N. Oceans summit.

Morales expressed his solidarity with Maduro, as Venezuela continues to suffer from political turmoil and sometimes violent [anti-government protests](#) that have resulted in the deaths of at least 73 people since April.

The Juan José Torres Anti-Imperialist School was created in November 2015, but [officially opened in August](#) of last year. Soldiers from Venezuela's National Bolivarian Armed Forces, known by its Spanish acronym FANB, will attend the school that seeks to change the

"repressive and imperialist" doctrines of military entities.

"We want to build anti-colonial and anti-capitalist thinking with this school that binds the armed forces to social movements and counteracts the influence of the School of the Americas that always saw the indigenous as internal enemies," said Morales at the opening of the school.

[The School of the Americas](#), later renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, was started during the Cold War to provide "anti-communist counterinsurgency training" to soldiers from U.S.-allied right-wing nations. Its graduates have gone on to be dictators, war criminals and death squad members, with notorious alumni including former Guatemalan dictator [Efraim Rios Montt](#), Salvadoran death squad leader [Roberto D'Aubuisson](#), and former Bolivian dictator [Hugo Banzer Suarez](#). In 1996 the New York Times, in an editorial titled the "School of Dictators," revealed that the school taught torture.

"A training manual recently released by the Pentagon recommended interrogation techniques like torture, execution, blackmail and arresting the relatives of those being questioned," the newspaper reported.

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The "anti-imperialist" school was built as a political and ethical commitment to the country and teaches history, geopolitics and military strategy. It also prepares pupils in the specialties of piloting, air defense and operational support.

Last week, Morales delivered a new Jatun Puma helicopter and two Cessna aircrafts to the military school and announced plans for more training aircraft to train cadets and officers of the Bolivian Air Force.

"All this is possible because we have changed the economic model of our country, thanks to the struggle of social movements," Morales said.